
Chechnya, The Russian Sicily

The unfolding of Russia's 'Great Criminal Revolution'

by Roman Bessonov

The following is the second and final part of an analysis on Chechnya, the first and most outstanding example of Russia's "Great Criminal Revolution," where fighting has already claimed over 40,000 lives. Part 1 was in last week's issue.

Moscow politics

Recently Gen. Lev Rokhlin, commander of one of the two Russian military units that proved able to score victories against Chechnya leader Dzhokhar Dudayev's forces, explained the reason for the outcome (or the half-outcome, more precisely) of the war in one sentence: "Dudayev was relying upon Moscow, his people in Moscow, but they could not help him."

This usually untalkative general did not mention support from Afghanistan or Iran, from Lithuanian and Ukrainian radical nationalists, or from supporters of Dudayev in the United States. The "Moscow factor" in the Chechnya events has to be examined in earnest.

Not only ordinary Russians, but even members of the Russian Federation Council (the upper house of Parliament) are puzzled. Why, they say, if it was desirable to prevent Chechnya's separation from Russia, wasn't it stopped at the outset, when Dudayev declared independence? Why not defeat him before he created his own army, why not block the fuel supplies to Grozny, why give him arms, including heavy artillery and aviation?

People who ask such questions seem to have forgotten what the real situation in Russia was when Dudayev declared Chechnya independent. This was in September 1991—after Boris Yeltsin had won power in Russia, but when Mikhail Gorbachov was still President of the U.S.S.R. It was *before* the Belaya Vezha agreement (which created the Community of Independent States), among the Presidents of Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus, when it became finally clear that Gorbachov had no entity over which to rule any more. It was when Yeltsin, lacking as yet any reliable team of his own, had to use his unqualified and inexperienced people from the Ural Mountains city of Sverdlovsk (where he had been a Communist Party official) to solve complex interna-

tional and regional conflicts.

Yeltsin's coming to power in August 1991 was not a result of a decision by some "unanimous majority" in the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU). Actually, that was not even the case with Gorbachov in 1984-85. But more crucial changes between 1984 and 1991 affected the character of the power transition.

When Eduard Shevardnadze suddenly left his post as Soviet foreign minister in late 1990, it was already clear to the upper echelons of the U.S.S.R. leadership that something would happen in the summer and autumn of the next year. That is when CPSU funds were hurriedly placed in many banks and into many kinds of business. The last Central Committee of the CPSU evidently had a replacement for Gorbachov ready; in May 1991, according to unofficial sources, Shevardnadze was supposed to become his successor. Even after the "August Revolution" of 1991, Kremlin intriguer Aleksandr Yakovlev said at a round table of activists from all political parties: "We have saved not the President [Gorbachov] but the *status of the President* [of the Soviet Union]."

Thus the secret meeting of Yakovlev, Yeltsin, Aleksandr Rutskoy, Shevardnadze, and Gavriil Popov in the White House (the Russian Parliament building) as they waited for it to be stormed on the night of Aug. 21, 1991, was *not* the moment when the final decision was made. Only several days later, after three sudden deaths—of CPSU financial manager Nikolai Kruchina, Soviet Internal Affairs Minister Boris Pugo, and Marshal Sergei Akhromeyev; after Gorbachov, returned from his detention by the coup-makers' forces, made two speeches within an interval of one day, in the first of which he still spoke about a "communist perspective," while in the second only about the "free market" economy; and after the CPSU was at last dissolved—only then did it become clear that Yeltsin was top man in the U.S.S.R. and that Gorbachov would be the last President of that state. The CPSU was the last *political* structure holding the remainder of the U.S.S.R. together. There were other structures, not yet split up—including the army.

FIGURE 1

Chechnya and the Transcaucasus region



The new pillars of power

How was it that the system of all-Union ministries, the powerful and numerous structures through which the Soviet economy was organized, gave up so quickly, without any resistance? They *didn't*. By this time, they had already been transformed into semi-private commercial structures. This was part of Gorbachov's reforms, which had fostered the creation of a number of powerful concentrations of capital. As events unfolded, these became the basis for a *nomenklatura*-based opposition to Yeltsin, who meanwhile relied on other sections of the *nomenklatura*, the old Soviet hierarchy.

This was the political basis for the future activities of Yuri Skokov, Aleksandr Sterligov, Arkady Volsky, and others who not only opposed the radical liberalizers around Prime Minister Yegor Gaidar, but eventually Yeltsin's own authority and power. (This did not, however, happen right away, for Yeltsin tried to satisfy their demands as long as he could.)

This was the source of power for Yuri Luzhkov, now mayor of Moscow, whom Yeltsin was forced to appoint instead of the inexperienced Gavriil Popov, who too openly tried to build up his own financial empire, also on the base of real-estate speculation.

This was the source of power for Yaragi Mamodayev in Chechnya.

This was the source of power for the "Great Criminal Revolution." The unofficial monopolies, left to their own devices, were feeding themselves and not the country. They

exerted control now not with the mechanisms of "party will," but with financial nooses, unsupervised and feeling no responsibility for the development of industries, infrastructure, science, and social aid. They were busy dividing up money, traveling abroad for "business trips" and again sharing money, lobbying their relatives and again dividing up money, selling raw materials abroad and real estate and again dividing up, dividing up, and dividing up money, converting and reconverting former state property. Where they could not manage for themselves, they hired bankers to "turn their money around," for a fast profit, making Russia "the country of banks." They hired KGB officers to acquire information about rival monopolies. Others hired pure criminals and energetic young fellows right off the street as debt-collectors. They were following Gorbachov's instruction, borrowed from the Soviet leader Bukharin in the 1920s: "Enrich yourselves!"

Foolish democratic activists, meanwhile, were certain that *anybody* would be able to get rich, just as soon as "radical reforms" were in place.

When Gaidar became prime minister in November 1991, he just did what his predecessors had done, converting the Russian ministries into private companies and trying to concentrate more capital in new locations that his government could control. The economic liberalization, as well as the tax reform, were designed to undermine existing powerful rivals. Gaidar relied on these tested methods, creating new unofficial monopolies. His close friends called him an "institutionalist" rather than a monetarist, since he *institutionalized* existing criminal relations.

His and Yeltsin's careers also depended on the International Monetary Fund (IMF). But he needed more money, from any source. Gaidar had an interest in money-making by any means, e.g., from a Chechen invention—the false *aviso* (banking letter of advice). Gaidar forced the entire productive economy into crime, because his tax law could not be obeyed without hiding income. He criminalized the entire society. Gaidar was a *continuer* of the Great Criminal Revolution, his father being Gorbachov and his mother being the IMF.

A Soviet oil man

These Moscow notes are a necessary introduction to the third, most important aspect of the Chechen question, set against the total political, economic, and moral crisis that bred the Great Criminal Revolution.

Historians of Chechnya are quite right when they say that a *taip* (a tribal formation) is not a criminal structure, but a mode in which different groups of one people live together, understand each other, and share territory and influence without using force. It subsumes a mechanism for talks, or negotiation, which is also utilized in criminal relations, and in geopolitics. The special condition, however, is that *when money and personal ambitions become more important than*

the fate of the country and its people, criminal relations ensue.

The nationalist movement in Chechnya was criminalized when it became more important to amass big money, than anything else.

Doku Zavgayev (appointed First Secretary of the Chechen-Ingush Regional Committee of the CPSU in July 1989) was not the worst choice to rule Chechnya. He was the first Communist Party official in Russia to have allocated a portion of party property for the use of children and the aged. But he had power-hungry rivals, eager to control the oil and refined petroleum products in the whole republic.

Yaragi Mamodayev (who now heads "the Chechen government in exile" in London) had spent many years in Moscow, at the U.S.S.R. Ministry of Oil and Gas Extraction. He was quite happy away from home. But when the ministry system collapsed, a *nomenklatura* man accustomed to his perquisites was not about to give up what he had. He sought power and money, and the same privileges, but in another way. And he saw a brilliant opportunity to keep all this—not as a small parasite feeding on a lot of people, but as the *first parasite* on his own people. He launched a new career.

Mamodayev's people took absolute control at the All-People's Congress of Chechen People in May-June 1991. Yeltsin was not yet President of Russia. The future Chechen leadership, formed at this time under Mamodayev, was thus not controlled by Yeltsin. Nor was it loyal to Gorbachov; later, Dudayev would say he regretted the destruction of the U.S.S.R., but this is pure populist posturing, to attract communists and pensioners.

Zavgayev was making mistake after mistake, trying to please everybody. As a result, he looked weak and got a reputation as a local Gorbachov.

For Mamodayev, as for others who built financial clout on the basis of their former jobs, a former regional CPSU leader like Yeltsin was no great authority. Becoming the effective leader of an independent state, he considered himself Yeltsin's equal. But rather than run for President of Chechnya himself, he looked for a younger and easily manipulated man. He found him in Gen. Dzhokhar Dudayev, one of the two Chechen generals in the Soviet Armed Forces, an emotional person and a good orator.

On Aug. 19, 1991, Zavgayev made his last, fatal mistake—he supported the coupsters of the State Committee for the Emergency (GKChP) and not Yeltsin, being under the illusion that there still was reliable central authority. This spelled the end of his career.

Power shift in Grozny

The leaders of the separatist opposition in Chechnya already in 1991 had their eyes on the Baku oil agreement, expecting it to be signed very soon. They knew that the most probable oil transportation route would lie across Chechnya

and Kabardino, or, otherwise, across Georgia. They were interested in exploiting any suitable occasion to take power, acquiring the oil-refining industry and local oil extraction. They were clever enough to hide their appetites behind a screen of anti-communist rhetoric, playing for time and additional support to seize power.

On Aug. 19, 1991, a great rally convened in Grozny under nationalist, anti-communist slogans. It lasted for two weeks, being declared the United Congress of the Chechen

There are two great lies about the Chechnya tragedy. The first is that there are patriots on one side and gangsters on the other. The second is that there are aggressors on one side and a courageous, bold, freedom-loving people on the other. It is not true.

People. Then, Zavgayev, chief of the Chechen Supreme Soviet, was kicked out of his building, with other councilmen.

This "people's revolution," sponsored by Mamodayev, took place on Sept. 6, 1991. Days later, Yeltsin's officials made their first visit to Chechnya: State Secretary Gennadi Burbulis, head of the Ministry of Press and Information Mikhail Poltoranin, Deputy Foreign Minister Fyodor Shelov-Kovedyayev, special presidential adviser on national relations Galina Starovoitova, and future Speaker of the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet Ruslan Khasbulatov. Eduard Shevardnadze also visited Chechnya. Burbulis and Poltoranin promised Dudayev a higher general's rank.

Khasbulatov took Dudayev at his word, that he would lift the blockade of government buildings, the former Chechen Supreme Soviet and the TV station. With Khasbulatov's assistance, former Supreme Soviet members met to elect 35 of their number to a Temporary Supreme Soviet, which was to conduct free elections to the new Chechen Parliament on Nov. 18, 1991.

Independence declared

On Oct. 8, 1991, however, Dudayev dissolved the Temporary Soviet and set parliamentary and presidential elections in Chechnya for Oct. 27. Then he declared he had been elected President, although only about 17% really voted for him. Next, he declared Chechnya independent, and appointed his government. The prime minister was Yaragi Mamodayev.

On Nov. 6, 1991, Yeltsin ordered a state of emergency in Chechnya. The order was sabotaged.

'Human rights' protectors play a double game

Five months after war flared in Chechnya, Russian politicians and journalists learned that President Yeltsin had issued a decree earlier than his Dec. 9, 1994 order No. 2166. His secret statement No. 2137, with a description similar to No. 2166, was dated Nov. 30, 1994, before his ultimatum to stop the fighting in Chechnya expired. Statement No. 2137 formed a secret group under Gen. Pavel Grachov, the defense minister, to "direct the actions to disarm and dissolve armed formations" in Chechnya. On the secret group were Speaker of the Federation Council Vladimir Shumeiko and Speaker of the Duma Ivan Rybkin, as well as the heads of the defense committees in those respective houses of Parliament, Pyotr Shirshov and Sergei Yushenkov.

Thus, only on April 13, 1995 did it emerge that Yushenkov, probably one of the most violent opponents of Grachov and President Boris Yeltsin on the Chechnya question, was a member of the secret group overseeing the start of the war. On Jan. 15, 1995, Yushenkov told a Russian TV reporter that he was not alone in his opposition to Grachov and in backing the actions of the Russian military in Chechnya. He declared that the Bertrand Russell Foundation in Brussels, Belgium had launched a special commission to investigate human rights violations in Chechnya. Participation in launching a war and then a public struggle against the same war, however, are not as

contradictory as it might seem.

Yushenkov was never a recognized human rights activist before the Chechen war. As with many middle-rank liberal functionaries, he was granted a building for some "democracy-promoting" foundation in 1992, when he also took part in setting up the Russian Union of Cossacks Troops. His heroism was further displayed in his hearty support for Yeltsin's violent abolition of the Russian Supreme Soviet (Parliament) in October 1993, and then in organizing the electoral campaign for Yegor Gaidar's Russia's Choice liberal bloc in November-December 1993.

A sudden alliance

Many Russians were astonished to see Gaidar's people, and radical left, Working Russia activists, together at public rallies in Moscow and St. Petersburg, in support of the "Chechen national-liberation movement." It was a sudden alliance begging attention not to the color of banners, but to the geopolitical background of the Chechen affair.

But the main part in the human rights performance was played by the Moscow mass media, controlled by Moscow Mayor Yuri Luzhkov and his close associates from Vladimir Gusinsky's Most Bank group. This financial group was also involved with the arms deals of "Rosvooruzheniye." In the summer of 1994, it was already clear that Gusinsky's networks were deeply involved in geopolitical games around Chechnya, even as they developed a widening system of contacts in the state leadership, including high officials in the Army and counterintelligence agencies, prepared to intrigue against Yeltsin. On July 30, the Most Bank-financed NTV television program

Khasbulatov related what happened, in a Jan. 27, 1995 interview in *Smena*: "Several planes with unarmed commandos arrived at the Grozny airports, while the weapons went to . . . Mozdok, North Ossetia. For two hours, the soldiers wandered around until they got an order from the Defense Ministry to fly back. [Minister of Nationalities Affairs] Shakh-ray asked me to fly to Grozny myself, explaining he 'could not find Yeltsin.' I called Arsanov, the head of Grozny administration. He said that the streets of the town were lifeless and Dudayev had fled. Dudayev really disappeared for some three hours but then was seen again, when it was clear that the state of emergency had failed. Then I was told that Marshal Yevgeny Shaposhnikov and General Barannikov (internal affairs minister at that time) refused to lead troops into the city, citing Gorbachov. I called Gorbachov and he told me that he had indeed ordered the troops not to be sent."

Thus, the dual-power situation—Yeltsin as President of Russia, Gorbachov of the U.S.S.R.—determined Yeltsin's

first flop in Chechnya. The fact that Gorbachov had greater influence on the Army than Yeltsin is easily explained: Not yet being "commercialized," Russian troops retained formal discipline, and obeyed U.S.S.R. commander Shaposhnikov, who was of higher rank than Russian Defense Minister Pavel Grachov.

Yeltsin's unlucky attempt to defeat Dudayev was evaluated by radical liberals, especially by the self-styled "antifascist" wing of Democratic Russia, as a "gross political mistake." The most pro-Dudayev person in the liberal circles was Galina Starovoitova, who had been active in the Caucasus region since her involvement in support of the Karabakh movement in Armenia in 1988. (Although vociferously pro-Armenian and anti-KGB, Starovoitova suddenly started speaking out in favor of Azerbaijan when Heidar Aliyev, the former Azerbaijan KGB chief and co-owner of the Caspian oil consortium, returned to power.) In 1991, she wanted to divide Russia into 72 separate countries; in the summer of

gave the floor to Sergei Filatov to declare that "there are healthy forces in the Chechen opposition to Dudayev, and Russia should support them."

If British Petroleum and/or other interests wished to block the Baku-Grozny-Novorossiysk oil pipeline project, they would welcome not a quick and effective military operation in Chechnya, but a long and bloody war that would destabilize the situation in the whole surrounding region. Both Yushenkov and the Luzhkov-Gusinsky media have given a boost to such geopolitical hopes, for the Caucasus and the Caspian Sea region.

The tilt toward arrangements preferred by London extends to the north, as well. When the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development refused to invest in the Primorsk port project on the Baltic Sea, one potential terminus for the Caspian Sea oil, its place was promptly taken by the Anglo-Dutch Shell Oil Co.

Control by British oil firms of the entire oil route from the Caspian Sea across Ukraine, Belarus, and Latvia to the Baltic, would reproduce the infamous East India Company that was designed not only for trade, but for long and bloody wars "in the queen's name." Today's oil pirates, assisted by the corrupt Russian elite, have created the bloodbath in Chechnya and will not hesitate if they have an opportunity to create bloodbaths in other countries and regions, too.—*Roman Bessonov*

Sources

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2. "Government Anxious About Future of Primorsk Port Project," *Delovoy Peterburg*, March 31, 1995.

1994, she spoke of "the peaceful return of Crimea to Russia." She often visits London, where her son already lives, and Washington.

Starovoitova insisted that the state of emergency be dropped, held phone talks with Dudayev, and explained to the mass media how "gallant" and "democratic" this person is. (Three cut-off heads of Dudayev's opponents were displayed in Grozny in November 1993 as a symbol of his power, perhaps also illustrating his gallantry.)

The arms caches

Supplies of weapons were left in Chechnya by withdrawing Russian troops. Recently, Shaposhnikov's name has figured foremost in this connection. But when Shakhray directly accused him during an Ostankino TV program in January 1995, the marshal replied that Grachov and Gaidar were responsible. The freshly appointed Gaidar had not been in a position to initiate such an arms deal, but it later emerged

that he had unofficial links to the same arms-trading companies and joint ventures in the Baltic states as Dudayev had.

Gaidar's team was more specifically involved in another notorious Chechen venture, the infamous false *aviso*. Criminal operations with huge amounts of money that appeared "out of thin air" started in March-April 1992, when it became clear that Gaidar's tax policy wasn't working, and the payments crisis could cause a social explosion.

The false letter of advice issue was exposed while Georgi Matyushin was Central Bank director; after his replacement by former U.S.S.R. Bank Director Viktor Gerashchenko, nothing more was heard about Matyushin. The mechanism of producing money "out of thin air" still functioned, but was used only by a limited number of special channels. This may explain the continuing material and propagandistic support for Dudayev from certain Moscow financial clans. The more than 4 trillion rubles, by preliminary accounts, derived from false *aviso* operations, along with the profits from unofficial arms sales, sufficed to create a powerful pro-Dudayev lobby in the Russian leadership.

In early 1992, Shaposhnikov, then commander-in-chief of the Community of Independent States (CIS) forces, reported to the Russian leadership that Dudayev had suggested sharing troops in two parts. Defense Minister Grachov later claimed that he had withdrawn all the weapons from Grozny. But the most reliable version is that none of them were withdrawn; when they were later sold, some high-ranking officials in Moscow shared the money, maybe in two parts.

When the two former state arms trading companies (the former Chief Engineering Department and Chief Technical Department of the Defense Ministry, after a two-year period of being half-privatized and, consequently, tremendously corrupted) were finally united into the State *Rosvooruzheniye* ("Russian Arms") Concern in 1993, Marshal Shaposhnikov was appointed the President's representative to the firm. It was later reported that First Vice Prime Minister Oleg Soskovets and Chairman of the Federation Council Vladimir Shumeiko were competing for influence in the concern. The former director of a military plant, Shumeiko was under investigation by the Supreme Soviet for large-scale corruption, in the summer of 1993. This resulted only in the resignation of Internal Affairs Minister Andrei Dunayev and Security Minister Victor Barannikov; Shumeiko did not resign. Subsequently, Yeltsin supported him to become chairman of the Federation Council, and for a while he was spoken of as a possible successor to Yeltsin.

Shumeiko and Dudayev

Shumeiko has evidently played an important role in the Chechnya events and in the personal fate of Dudayev.

In March 1992, when the anti-Dudayev opposition in Chechnya was planning its first demonstration to protest corruption and unemployment, the separatist Dudayev received 150 million rubles from Moscow. In August 1992, a week

before planned opposition actions, 500 million more rubles came from Moscow. In December 1992, Mamodayev himself went to Moscow, this time seeking 2.5 billion rubles. The opposition was preparing a republic-wide strike. The real problem was the deepening economic disaster, the starvation of old people who hadn't received their pensions for half a year, while casinos were booming and anybody who had the money could travel anywhere, to Saudi Arabia or the Emirates, even without a passport. The republic had become the most criminal region of Russia.

Yegor Gaidar forced the entire productive economy into crime, because his tax law could not be obeyed without hiding income. He criminalized the entire society. Gaidar was a continuer of the Great Criminal Revolution, his father being Gorbachov and his mother being the International Monetary Fund.

And, again, Mamodayev got the money, even despite the scandal with the false letters of advice. When, finally, Russian Supreme Soviet member Isa Aliroyev tried to find the source of these funds, he realized that the trail led to the First Vice Prime Minister of the Russian Government (today Speaker of the Federation Council) Vladimir Shumeiko.

Region in flames

Late autumn 1991 was a peak period for separatist activity in the Caucasus. The Chechen opposition was trying to make an alliance with Georgia under Zviad Gamsakhurdia. Another group of Chechens was trying to ally with Adygea and Circassia, supporting the idea of "Greater Shapsugia" (Adygea).

Here, Dudayev and Khasbulatov's interests intersected for a short time. Khasbulatov, a descendant of a Circassian-origin *taip*, later supported the idea of a Confederation of Highland Peoples (Adygea, Kabardino-Balkaria, Karachai-Circassia, Chechnya, and Ingushetia), while Dudayev tried to create a wider bloc under his own rule—the Caucasus Home, including both Georgians and Abkhazians. He failed, even before the outbreak of war between Georgia and Abkhazia.

The Adygean-Circassian union has a religious base that is quite different from Dudayev's Kadireia *tariqat* (way). After Dudayev allied with Gamsakhurdia, the Balkar, Circassian, and Adygey leadership stopped supporting him.

The situation in Georgia was crucial in 1991-92. There were reports that the Georgian-Abkhazian conflict was about

to start already in 1990, except that a group of high-ranking criminal authorities gathered in Sukhumi and decided that the tourist season would be more profitable than a war. The war came in 1992, started suddenly by Abkhazia with its declaration to join Russia. After the bombing of Poti port, it was clear that the Caspian oil would not flow across Georgia. It was also clear that not only the Russian leadership stood to gain from the Baku-Grozny-Novorossiysk oil transport route, but also the elites of the North Caucasus republics (Adygea, Circassia, Balkaria, North Ossetia). It's no wonder they stayed loyal to Moscow.

There were indications also of outside interests at work in the region. The emergence of ideas such as "Greater Circassia" and "Greater Adygea" smacks of British intelligence, and may have had encouragement also from Turkey or Saudi Arabia. Dudayev got little support from nearby Muslim republics, except for some signs of sympathy for him in Dagestan. Therefore he sought support from Turkey, which has its own reasons for opposing the northern oil shipment route. Turkey does not support him directly, but the pro-Dudayev activity of the Bos Gurd (Gray Wolves) radicals in Azerbaijan is a sign of indirect support.

Dudayev in scandal

In August 1994, some months after his brother's cut-off head was displayed in the central square of Grozny, Chechen opposition leader Ruslan Labazanov publicly revealed some secret Dudayev documents: Operation "Cobweb." Transportation of oil products to Minsk, Bryansk, and Alma-Ata. Five billion rubles [at 1992 rates!] deposited in a bank in Grozny. Oil products disappear. Dudayev orders a criminal investigation. Investigators are killed, case closed.

Another operation: 40 towns. A total of 640 million rubles and \$2 million. Money received, goods disappear. Again, investigator killed, case closed.

Operation "Impulse." In Dudayev's handwriting: "Close the case." Over two years, such operations have involved \$25 billion.

On March 20, 1993, some 18.2 tons of paper money with a total face value of 2.5 billion rubles were loaded onto two airplanes and sent to Chechnya from Tallin, Estonia. The old type of bills were to be exchanged for the new type. Nothing came back.

Once, Chechen officials themselves were fooled by a Mr. Krivoshapkin, who presented himself as an administrator of a nonexistent "Culture and Trade Center" in Yakutia, Siberia. He offered five tons of gold for 2.78 billion rubles. He took the money and was not seen again.

The easiest thing in Chechnya was to register a gun. You just said, "I bought it at a market," and it would be registered.

Thus, it is no exaggeration to call Chechnya a "free crime zone." When Dudayev approached his radical liberal friends in Lithuania and said, "We are your gate to the south and you are our gate to the West," everybody knew what he meant.

Drugs were sold openly in Chechen markets. More and more trains passing from Russia to Azerbaijan were robbed—559 of them in 1993, according to data from the Defense Committee of the Russian State Duma.

The more criminalized Chechen society was and the more chaotic its economy, the more tense the inter-*taip* relations became. In a criminal atmosphere, the authority of a person or a *taip* was determined by his or its amount of stolen money. Suspicions, envy, and hate flourished. The only way to get money was through speculation. Cultural life lay in ruins.

False independence, built upon doubled and tripled fraud, split the society. The richest *taips* were satisfied with the way of life as it was, but each wanted more influence. Ancient traditions that made *taips* a mechanism of concord were ruined. That is why Dudayev's power eroded. And that is why the inter-*taip* war became a Russo-Chechen war, when one of the *taips* called for help from Russia.

In the spring of 1993, Dudayev's position was deteriorating. After a huge opposition rally, he dissolved his Parliament on April 17 (just as Yeltsin was to do in Russia, five months later). The Parliament resisted and called a referendum. On July 4, Dudayev's people destroyed the election commission and referendum ballots. An opposition rally was crushed with armored personnel carriers.

Dudayev's cousin Shamil was killed. Dudayev dissolved the Town Assembly. Its chairman, Beslan Gantemirov, became his enemy. Four *taips* summoned Dudayev to a *shariat* trial. He would not come. Then, one of the opposition leaders, Umar Avturkhanov, declared the Nadterechnaya district to be the Terek Chechen Republic.

Political solution scrapped

That situation calmed down until early 1994, when Avturkhanov visited Moscow and met Sergei Shakhrai, the Minister of Nationalities Affairs. Shakhrai agreed to pass a law in the state Duma to "regulate relations between the ruling bodies of Russia and Chechnya." It resembled the treaty signed previously by Russia and Tatarstan.

At the same time, Shakhrai and Ramazan Abdulatipov (a prominent Russian politician, representing Dagestan in the Federation Council) suggested holding a "round table" of political organizations of the North Caucasus. Dudayev called Shakhrai, saying he would speak only to Yeltsin himself. Here, suddenly, Shumeiko interfered; he said that Yeltsin should recognize Dudayev as President. Shakhrai replied that it was impossible to override the statement of the (by then no longer existing) Russian Supreme Soviet, which had refused to recognize Chechnya's independence. He insisted that the Russian government should pay pensions to aged people in the Nadterechnaya district, and said that only free elections would solve Chechnya's problems. Several days later, Shakhrai suddenly resigned from his nationalities post, being replaced by Nikolai Yegorov. (Unofficial sources say that Shakhrai's resignation was not because of Chechnya,

but rather because Shumeiko was said to have been intriguing against him constantly.)

On May 27, 1994, an unknown terrorist tried to kill Dudayev; Dudayev used the attack to start an anti-Russia campaign. He wrote a harsh letter to Yeltsin, whereupon Yeltsin's chief of staff Sergei Filatov, having backed Dudayev until that moment, warned that "a Shevardnadze variant may happen in Chechnya"—meaning that Zavgayev might return to lead Chechnya, as Shevardnadze had in Georgia. Two months later, Avturkhanov (a member of Zavgayev's *taip*) met with Filatov. Avturkhanov now headed the Temporary Council, an institution the federal authorities in Moscow supported from this point on.

On Aug. 4, 1994, the Temporary Council issued a "Decree on Power," providing for free elections and an "agreement on distinguishing authorities" between Russia and Chechnya.

In July and August, Grozny was visited by the self-styled Russian nationalist General Sterligov and by Nikolai Kositsyn, an aide to Cossack leader Ataman Ratiyev. (The Russian Union of Cossack Troops, formerly led by Ratiyev, was originally formed as a guard service for "democratic businessmen." It is an alternative to the Cossack Union headed by Ataman Martynov.) Dudayev and Kositsyn, with Sterligov's assistance, signed a treaty under which the Cossack Troops and the Ichkeria Republic (Chechnya) promise to "follow and guard arms belonging to each other if they are for the defense of one of us." Stopping in the southern Russian city of Rostov, Sterligov tried to convince the Cossacks that they also should establish their own independent republic.

From that point, the following events unfolded:

Aug. 11, 1994: Dudayev announces the beginning of the military mobilization.

Sept. 1-5: Fighting between Dudayev's people and the opposition begins.

Sept. 10: Dudayev celebrates the third anniversary of independence.

Sept. 20: The Baku oil contract is signed.

Sept. 28: The first Russian *spetsnaz* soldiers are seen in Chechnya.

Sept. 30: Opposition helicopters attack Dudayev's airport.

Oct. 6: Russian Defense Minister Pavel Grachov meets in secret with President of Kabardino-Balkaria Valery Kokov.

Oct. 13: Zaindi Choltayev, head of administration of the Temporary Council, meets Sergei Filatov in Moscow.

Oct. 15: Opposition troops freely approach and enter the Presidential Palace in Grozny. The palace is empty. They withdraw and stop only 40 kilometers from the town. This foray is announced as a general rehearsal for the decisive battle with Dudayev.

Oct. 19: A sudden attack by Dudayev's troops. Beslan Gantemirov's unit is dissolved. Urus-Magan is occupied.

Coming soon in EIR

Next week's *EIR* will feature a *Special Report* on Britain's wars against the United States in Asia: in the 1890s, the 1920s, 1940-55, and again today. The conflict we are seeing now between London and Washington, is a conflict between the British monarchy and the United States which has been under way since 1763. The very existence of the United States has always depended upon Americans recognizing that our primary adversary on this planet was, and is, the British monarchy.

In this lengthy feature package, prepared under the direction of Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr., we shall analyze:

- The U.S. fight with the British Pacific Empire in the 19th century: Commodore Perry, Abraham Lincoln, Henry Carey, and E. Peshine Smith.

- Winston Churchill's Pacific war against the United States, 1941-55, and how Douglas MacArthur and Frank



lin Roosevelt ruined Churchill's plans;

- War Plan Red and War Plan Orange: U.S. war plans during the 1920s and later, to defend the United States against the British by annexing Canada, as Lincoln had intended to do after the Civil War;

- Britain's Pacific war against the United States today: case studies of Japan and Korea.

Oct. 21: Umar Avturkhanov asks Yeltsin, Chernomyrdin, and Grachov to intervene into the situation and to stop the slaughter of peaceful inhabitants.

Late October: A so-called "transport blockade" is begun under the supervision of Filatov, Shakhray, and Presidential adviser Emil Pain. Troops go around chaotically, appearing and disappearing again, leaving nothing really blockaded. Foreign observers can't make out what is going on.

Nov. 18: Shakhray is removed from all activities concerning Chechnya. In Mozdok, General Kotenkov forms nine battalions of Chechen volunteers.

Nov. 26: Opposition forces attack Grozny from nine directions. The battalions are not coordinated, commanders have no maps of the town. The tanks go forward, leaving the infantry behind. As they stop by the Presidential Palace, Dudayev's soldiers shoot at them from the back with grenade launchers. The infantry enters the palace and begins to loot. They retreat, abandoning tanks.

Nov. 29: Yeltsin gives an ultimatum to both sides, threatening a state of emergency.

Dec. 9: Yeltsin issues decree No. 2166 on "reestablishing the constitutional order and disarmament of the illegitimate military forces in the Chechen Republic."

The liberal 'moral creed'

The Sicilian mafia would have never appeared, if Italy itself were not ill at that time. The chronicle of events in Chechnya proves best of all, that it was the total criminalization of post-Soviet society that made Chechnya the Russian Sicily.

The liberal "moral creed"—live for yourself, for your

own pleasure, don't care for others and take as much as you can in any way possible—began to develop even before Gorbachov, during the so-called "stagnation" period of the 1970s and early 1980s, when leaders who could scarcely speak were unable to give the people any impulse of development. How could they, if they were just living for their own pleasure beyond the high fences of party dachas? That is the moral origin of Yegor Gaidar, a *nomenklatura* son of a *nomenklatura* general, brought up with no concern for his fellow citizens. That is the origin of the psychology of power based upon having property the proprietor never created. That is the origin of the criminal psychology, war psychology, and geopolitical psychology.

There are no heroes here. Yeltsin is no better than Dudayev, and Mamodayev no worse than Shumeiko. Relations are of the same quality in the Russian and the Chechen elites—relations of utmost mistrust, envy, and hatred.

There are two great lies about the Chechnya tragedy. The first is that there are patriots on one side and gangsters on the other. The second is that there are aggressors on one side and a courageous, bold, freedom-loving people on the other.

It is not true. The incessant war that goes on in Russia now is a war of half-criminal clans, just the same as in Chechnya. It is a war of one Russian *nomenklatura* clan manipulating its *nomenklatura* people in Chechnya against another *nomenklatura* clan with different allies in Chechnya. The tragedy is that neither those fighting, nor poor, good people killed on both sides, realize that all of them are manipulated by the same source of world evil, though in this case it is most evident.