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## **The Caucasus Conflict and Russian Security: The Russian Armed Forces Confront Chechnya III. The Battle for Grozny, 1-26 January 1995**

by Mr. Timothy L. Thomas  
Foreign Military Studies Office, Fort Leavenworth, KS.

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We mock that which we do not understand.  
Dan Akroyd, *Spies Like Us* (1985 motion picture)

### ***Introduction***

The Russian Republic of Chechnya started a small, localized revolution on 21 August 1991, two days after the August coup in the former Soviet Union, and declared its independence from Russia on 6 September 1991. A former Soviet Air Force General, Dzhokhar Dudayev was invited to the post of president by the Amalgamated Congress of the Chechen People from Estonia (where some Chechens were in exile). Later, he was popularly elected and stated he wanted to free Chechnya from Russia. Many Russians in the current regime considered the elections illegal and therefore characterized Dudayev's presidency as illegitimate.<sup>1</sup> Russia's Fifth Congress of People's Deputies decreed the elections illegal and Dudayev's regime unconstitutional.<sup>2</sup> In the spring of 1993, Dudayev dissolved the Chechen parliament, and in June of 1993 his presidential guard clashed with those protesting parliament's dissolution and killed nearly 50 people. By the latter half of 1993, a Dudayev-opposition developed and initiated a small-scale guerrilla war. By the spring of 1994 the Dudayev-opposition had called upon Russia to support it and help establish constitutional order. This led to an unsuccessful attack in November of 1994 led by the Dudayev opposition and supported by the Russian security services.<sup>3</sup>

On 11 December 1994, Russian troops moved into the Russian Republic of Chechnya. The intervention took the form of a forced march from three directions and was designed to surround and cut off the capital city of Grozny, all in support of the Dudayev-opposition. Russian forces were met by resistance from Dudayev's forces along the way. By the end of December, the forces had surrounded Grozny on three sides but the Chechen forces refused to capitulate. As a result, Russian and Chechen forces began the battle for Grozny.

The battle for Grozny took place in the first days of January 1995. It began on New Year's Eve, 31 December 1994. It is more difficult to pinpoint exactly when the battle ended. Defense Minister Pavel Grachev stated that the battle was over when the Presidential Palace was secured from the rebel Chechens on 20 January. On 26 January the armed forces turned responsibility for Grozny over to the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD). This indicated that the law enforcement agencies now would restore law and order. This latter date has been used as the endpoint for the battle of Grozny for this article. The actual clearing of the city of Grozny of rebels by the MVD, however, did not occur until nearly a month later, around 26 February.

This article provides an overview of the fighting in and around Grozny from 1 to 26 January 1995. It also addresses issues associated with lessons learned by the Russian armed forces and internal affairs troops during the course of the fighting in Grozny.<sup>4</sup> This is a Russian perception filtered through an American analyst. It does not attempt to present the fighting from a Chechen point of view. Hopefully, there will be a time in the future when this analysis can be performed as well.

Readers should keep the following well-phrased warning from 6 January 1995 in mind, since the majority of the reports for this analysis came from government and independent Russian press sources operating in the conflict region:

Government information so contradicted press reports that an outside observer, collating all the available data, is incapable of producing a clear picture of what was really happening in Grozny.<sup>5</sup>

The following account, written a year after the event by a truly outside observer, is an attempt at this task with the assistance of hindsight. The story line itself is so instructive from a low-intensity conflict perspective that the effort is valuable regardless of how correctly the facts are pieced together and interpreted.

### ***The Initial Disaster***

On the night of 31 December and morning of 1 January the Russian army unleashed its attack on Grozny with the hopes of quickly taking Chechen President Dudayev's Presidential Palace with few losses.<sup>6</sup> The first of January is also the birthday of Russian Minister of Defense Pavel Grachev, who planned the attack and hoped to celebrate his birthday with the rout of the Chechen rebels. Judging from the interview he gave to Mayak Radio on 1 January he had accomplished his mission. He estimated that in 5-6 days the town would be fully cleansed of bandit formations, and he reported that the entire center of the town was under the full control of federal troops.<sup>7</sup>

Nothing could have been further from the truth. By 2 January Radio Ekho Moskvyy had called such information "blatant lies". The radio station was in possession of eye witness information from State Duma deputy Viktor Sheynis that directly contradicted Grachev's report. In fact, the initial attack was a total disaster. According to an interview with a participant of the operation, the 131st Motorized Rifle Brigade (MRBde) and the 81st Motorized Rifle Regiment (MRR) took the brunt of the losses. In one column alone 102 out of 120 armored personnel carriers and 20

out of 26 tanks were destroyed by Chechen anti-tank fire; and all six 'Tunguska' surface-to-air missile systems were also destroyed. Seventy four servicemen, including a corps' operations officer, were captured.<sup>8</sup> The commander of a division surface-to-air missile platoon, LTC Aleksandr Labzenko, added that:

...they were not trained to fight in cities and an enormous amount of armored equipment, thoughtlessly left in narrow streets without any cover, was not protected by the infantry...there is a lack of even basic cooperation between different subunits and their commanders and subordinates.<sup>9</sup>

In short, the Chechens nearly brought the Russian force to its knees from the first to the third of January. One Russian close to the fighting reported:

General Grachev was in overall charge of planning the attack on Grozny that began on December 31, 1994, and led to heavy Russian Army losses and a near complete breakdown of morale. The official toll, as reported to the General Staff in Moscow, was over a hundred servicemen dead a day in the beginning of January 1995. Many officers in Chechnya have confessed to me in mid January 1995 that at the beginning of that month the Russian Army was on the verge of refusing to obey the ridiculous orders of its commanders and the government.<sup>10</sup>

Later in the year, the head of President Yeltsin's personal security force, Alexander Korzhakov, allegedly noted that 'Grachev dragged Yeltsin into the Chechen mess, and a man of integrity [in Grachev's shoes] would have shot himself.'<sup>11</sup>

Both Russian and international observers asked 'how could such a catastrophe happen'? Military specialists with experience in combat in urban areas understood full well the complexities involved and difficulty of Grachev's mission. Americans who fought in Somalia would be the first to tell you that the limited operation in Mogadishu involved intricate planning yet still failed. In spite of the wonders of Force XXI technology the U.S. could not quickly find and capture Adid and his "technicals." Was it any wonder, then, that the Russians couldn't find and eliminate Dudayev and his tanks, multiple rocket launchers, and artillery for over a year? And Grachev's force was transitioning from a Soviet to a Russian army, was stripped of money, and was poorly fed, trained, and equipped in December 1994. It was far from being considered a Force XXI competitor. Anyone who mocked the Russian debacle most likely did not understand the difficulties involved with urban operations, or the complexities of the Chechen environment in which Russian forces were operating. However, what also should have been crystal clear were the deadly consequences for soldiers when hasty political decisions and incomplete military planning are implemented, not to mention the quality and tenaciousness of the Chechen resistance.

According to retrospective reports, there were four principal reasons for the disaster. *First*, the army worked under severe restrictions, some self-imposed and some imposed by nature. One officer noted that the rules of engagement did not allow for the Russian force to open fire first, resulting in the deaths or wounding of many soldiers.<sup>12</sup> Military support was most severely affected, however, by the refusal of some commanders to participate in the coordinated attack on

Grozny (in particular, the commanders of axes West and East who did not enter the city despite their radio reports that they had; this most likely was not due to cowardice on the part of the officer's in charge but rather on the lack of administrative and air support available, leaving the force vulnerable). This left the 131st MRB and 81st MRR without support and at the mercy of the Chechen rebels. In addition, nature worked against the Russian force. Not only was it winter, but bad weather limited air support on the 1st and 2nd of January.

*Second*, the Russian army was unprepared and untrained for immediate combat, let alone combat in cities. To fight under such circumstances was simply absurd and doomed to failure. Anne Garrels of National Public Radio, who was in the basement of the Presidential Palace on 3 January, interviewed Russian prisoners of war.<sup>13</sup> Some of the young recruits told her that they did not know with whom they were fighting as they entered the city, since they had only been thrown together as a crew a day or so before; that they did not understand who was fighting who; that some of the soldiers thought they were going into Grozny for police or law enforcement duty and not to fight; and that some of the soldiers had neither a weapon, ammunition, a map, or a mission. Some, in fact, were sleeping in the back of their BMP or BTR as it entered the city. In addition, there was little training to coordinate actions of units and subunits. This was particularly true for missions involving the armed forces and the troops of the MVD.

*Third*, the Russian leadership did not do a good job of preparing the "theater" for warfare. The High Command did not properly seal off the republic's borders, nor did it take the time required to properly rehearse for the potential scenarios that Dudayev had prepared for them. One general, choosing anonymity, noted that after liberating several city districts, Russian forces realized that Dudayev had created numerous firing points, communications nets, and underground command points which made the job much more difficult. In this respect, the main military intelligence (GRU) and federal counterintelligence service (FSK) did poor jobs of providing information on the illegal armed formations that the Russian force faced, compounding the fate of the untrained soldiers.<sup>14</sup> According to one analyst, Russian generals not only failed to properly train their forces for combat in built-up areas, but they had also poorly mastered the lessons of the Persian Gulf War, failing to initially destroy Chechnya's administrative and military command and control facilities, communication hubs, and key elements of the infrastructure. As a result the Russian Air Force bombed housing areas instead of television centers and the Presidential Palace. Russian intelligence failed to provide and disseminate timely and reliable data from agent sources or technical reconnaissance systems. On the other hand, the analyst noted, perhaps the Russian authorities assumed that the Chechen capital would fall quickly and the Chechen Republic puppet government of national salvation would issue a decree to legalize the introduction of Russian troops, and therefore destroying key facilities would do little good.<sup>15</sup>

*Finally*, it became clear that the political leadership did not know how and when to use military force. It was equally clear that coordination between the armed forces and political structures was very weak. Politicians tried to push an untenable situation on Grachev and he was unable to solve the Chechen dilemma in short order using available forces. This enabled the Chechen force not only to repulse the initial Russian assault but also to nearly destroy Russian morale and fighting spirit. Army morale was already weakened by infighting among generals over the army's role in Chechnya and by the negative reaction among the populace to the press coverage of the intervention.

Lieutenant General Leonid Ivashov, a dedicated communist who was in charge of cadres under former Defense Minister Yazov and now works in the Ministry of Defense, summarized his disgust with the army's performance (which he termed a disgrace) in the following manner:

But a military operation is the last resort: political, economic, and all other measures should be employed before that, possibly with military pressure...First, the political and military objectives of the operation and the means of attaining them should be defined and, second, the necessary forces and means--bearing in mind a comprehensive evaluation of the enemy, the nature of the locality, and so on, including the weather conditions. It is necessary to thoroughly prepare the troops by holding training sessions for both units and subunits and staffs...Tremendous political-educational work is also needed to ensure that the troops...are in no doubt as to its [the operation] political and military advisability...not to mention ensuring political backup for the operation by the public, instead of which we have had constant lies which only put a considerable proportion of Russia's population in a negative mood and demoralized the troops.<sup>16</sup>

### ***The Initial Plan and Fight for Grozny***

To the leadership, it appeared that the Russian army had a sound plan, advancing on three axes and meeting at the Presidential Palace. Commander Lev Rokhlin advanced from the North, General V. Petruk of the 19th Motorized Rifle Division advanced from the West, General Nikolai Staskov, deputy commander in chief of the airborne, advanced from the East, and General Anatoly Kvashin commanded the Main Assault Force, advancing ahead of Rokhlin in the North. As Kvashin advanced, the Chechen's focused most of their firepower on his force because, unknown to Kvashin, co-commanders Petruk and Staskov gave false reports about their whereabouts. It wasn't until the second day that Kvashin realized that he was fighting in the city alone and not with the help of Groups East and West, even though they reported being in the vicinity. As a result of their conduct, Petruk and Staskov were relieved from command. One commander was accused of cowardice and the other of failing to properly support the 131st brigade, while the officers themselves noted the lack of administrative and air support as their reasons for hesitation. General Babichev replaced Petruk.<sup>17</sup>

Still unexplained in the initial plan is the apparent disregard by Russian commanders of the lessons learned by opposition forces (supported by the Russian army) that attacked Grozny in a separate assault in November 1994. For example, Major Valeriy Ivanov, speaking to State Duma deputies about the failed 26 November attack, noted that he was told "special forces would be at work there [in Grozny] and helicopters would provide fire support from the air. Infantry would be attached to the tanks." None of this support appeared. Lieutenant Dmitriy Volfovich supported Ivanov, noting that the tankers could not respond with machine gun fire because "the machine guns were not loaded." And a plan to paint tank hatches white to allow helicopter pilots tell friend from foe backfired when no helicopter support appeared and Dudayev's force fired on "white caps" against a gray background.<sup>18</sup>

None of these earlier lessons and problems, it appears, were taken into consideration.<sup>19</sup> It was only the time-honored oath of allegiance of the Russian officer to his duty and his ability to improvise that enabled the army to eventually drive the Chechen force from Grozny.

In the move into Grozny the Russian troops occupied the high ground around the city to ensure reliable communications. To fight resistance in the city, the command created assault detachments within the shock groupings of the troops. Large scale maps, plans of the city, and photographs of the regions of expected conflict were prepared and provided for every assault detachment and assault group commander (according to Grachev). This contradicts the information obtained by Garrels and other reporters.<sup>20</sup> Special attention was paid to methods of mutual recognition for the units and subunits of the armed forces and MVD internal troops. The concept was to seize the Presidential Palace, the government, television, and radio buildings, the railroad station, and other important establishments in the city center. Airborne forces blocked the Zavodskiy Rayon and the Katayama region to prevent ecological disasters and to prevent fighting in the western part of the city.<sup>21</sup>

According to Defense Minister Grachev, Chechen forces conducted attacks under cover of civilian "human shields" from positions in hospitals, schools, and apartment blocks.<sup>22</sup> He added that the Chechen command created three defense lines to defend Grozny: an inner one with a radius of 1-1.5 km around the Presidential Palace; a middle one to a distance of up to 1 km from the inner borderline in the northwestern part of the city and up to 5 km in its southwestern and southeastern parts; and an outer border that passed mainly through the city outskirts. The outer and middle defense lines were based on strongpoints while the inner line consisted of prepared positions for direct artillery and tank fire. Lower and upper floors of buildings were prepared for fire from firearms and antitank weapons.<sup>23</sup> It was reported that a Chechen mercenary received \$1000 for each day of combat. He received an \$800 bonus for killing an officer, \$600 for a soldier, and \$1200 for knocking out a tank or other combat vehicle.<sup>24</sup>

Later, these monetary figures were contested. A spetsnaz (special designation) officer caught a Russian mercenary fighting on the side of the Chechens. The Russian mercenary had signed a contract for three months for only \$1200, according to the spetsnaz official. The contract included the address of the man and the names of his relatives, wife, and children. According to the mercenary, if he left earlier than the contract specified they would be killed. Thus this man refuted the talk of big money as nothing more than Dudayev propaganda. The spetsnaz official killed the Russian after interrogating him.<sup>25</sup>

According to Russian guidelines, the Russian force was undermanned for the operation. For combat in cities the ratio of offensive and defensive forces must be four or five to one in favor of the attacker.<sup>26</sup> One report highlighting this deficiency noted that: The Russian forces assembled near Grozny numbered 38,000 men, armed with 230 tanks, 454 ACVs, 388 guns and mortars. The enemy force was estimated by military intelligence at up to 15,000 men, 50 tanks, 100 ACVs and 60 guns and mortars and 30 BM-21 "Grad" MRLs.<sup>27</sup>

In addition, as noted earlier, the Russian force appeared unprepared in both training and planning to fight in built-up areas. For example, there were few local guides for moving Russian forces through the city. As a result, Russian forces ended up in gardens and dead end streets. The



Chechen force took advantage of this by moving behind and parallel to a Russian force once it entered the city. They proceeded to block narrow streets entered by a Russian force (sometimes with concrete blocks), destroying the lead and rear vehicles to limit mobility, and stalling the force in a kill zone. Chechen fighters in windows overlooking the street and covered by sniper fire then went about the task of eliminating the vehicles one by one. Coordination was effected primarily through the use of Motorola hand held radios. Two other initial Russian mistakes were that they did not always properly employ infantrymen in support of the attack on the ground, and they did not hold an area once it had been cleared in the city. According to some Russian officers, the antitank or rocket-propelled grenade launcher (RPG) employed by the Chechens turned out to be the most effective weapon in the city. It could be used in the direct or indirect (that is, set up like a mortar) fire mode, yet was more effective than mortars. The flame thrower on the Russian side was touted for its ability to drive snipers from their nests and to clear buildings for the initial entry of Russian forces. It was viewed as one of the most important weapons in the combat in cities arsenal of the Russian force.<sup>28</sup> Over a year later it would be used by the Chechen rebels against a Russian convoy (on 16 April 1996) and resulted in the deaths of 73 Russian soldiers.

A major problem encountered by both the MVD and the Army was identifying Chechen guerilla forces who would walk around the city, sometimes wearing Red Cross arm bands, and then fire at Russian personnel from windows or dark alleyways. To distinguish fighters from peaceful city dwellers, the army and MVD began looking at shoulders of men to see if they were bruised (from firing weapons) and at forearms to see if there was evidence of burned hair or flesh from the extraction of hot cartridges. They closely examined clothing and smelled for gunpowder residue.<sup>29</sup> Further, in order to identify a Chechen artilleryman, Russian soldiers looked for glossy spots left by artillery and mortar rounds on the bends and cuffs of sleeves. Pockets that carried cartridges, if turned inside out, showed a shiny, silvery-lead hue. A grenade launcher operator or mortar man was recognized from fibers and crumpled pieces of gun cotton (cotton wool in the original) on clothing.<sup>30</sup>

To overcome initial deficiencies, the Russians made adjustments. Major General Sergey Zdorikov, head of the Main Department for Educational Work of the Russian Armed Forces, said that new conscripts were given preliminary training in Mozdok before being committed to battle. Those who had already served for six months were allowed to ease into the fighting, first patrolling designated facilities on the outskirts of Grozny and then on the streets of the Chechen capital. Only after that did they become part of a combat patrol or serve in an outpost.<sup>31</sup>

Adjustments were also made in the area of psychological training. Deputy commanders for educational work gave servicemen information on local customs and traditions. It was noted that a minor insult may become a deadly one in the Caucasus. Soldiers were advised not to trust even the most friendly disposed mountain residents, and not to use local guides or to receive any other assistance from the locals. Experts urged servicemen to "forget that Chechnya is part of Russia [that is for the time being]."<sup>32</sup>

Other processes were at work, however, which took on their own momentum and eventually ensured that the fighting in Chechnya would last a long time. In attempting to stir up public and local empathy for their cause, the sides became involved in a war of provocations, intimidation,

and persuasion. Utilizing simple tricks associated with deception and *maskirovka* at first, participants quickly moved to brutality and barbarity. As a result, both soldiers and inhabitants stopped trusting one another, as well as anything that officials said or did. Mental images of a wild Chechen race and inhuman Russians took hold among the combatants as a consequence of some very perverse actions. These actions, explained below, need to be inculcated into the low-intensity "lessons learned" instruction of armies worldwide. The result appears to be that the Chechen conflict will not end until deaths are avenged and reciprocity exacted, or until some new and radical thinking is introduced into the negotiating process.

### ***The Psychological Environment: A Vital Consideration in Low-Intensity Conflict Situations***

"Guys who have taken part in the fighting claim that the Chechens strung up our wounded by their feet in the windows of the Council of Ministers building and aimed their fire from behind their bodies."<sup>33</sup>

"Yes, the Russian authorities lost the information war...How splendidly Chechnya information Minister Movladi Udugov is operating, how skillful and adroit he is at feeding the press with all kinds of lies, distortions, and misrepresentations of the facts..."<sup>34</sup>

Minister of Defense Grachev, in a March speech about Grozny, noted that the Chechens were using *psychological warfare* means in general "to provoke a negative reaction from the Chechens to the Russian presence." He stated that Dudayev's forces were preparing for acts of subversion and terrorism in the rear of the Russian troop formation, and that bellicose slogans of nationalism and separatism were used to try and drag the population of regions bordering on Chechnya in the North Caucasus into armed resistance to federal authorities.

There were four kinds of specific psychological operations employed during the battle for Grozny: intimidation, provocation, deception, and persuasion. Their purpose was to change Chechen or Russian attitudes, depending on the source of the operation. The operation's initiator may or may not have orchestrated an action by design or with a plan in mind but the effect, whether intended or not, persisted and affected other operations. These operations did not always take the simple form of leaflets and loudspeakers, that is, traditional psychological operations. Rather they are associated with attitude change that resulted from exploiting fear and anger. All four operations are important because they shape the environment in which troops must make decisions. Properly applied and manipulated, these factors cause tension among soldiers, frustrate or anger combatants and non-combatants, and lead not only to an escalation of the conflict but also feeds the desire for revenge that greatly hinders any peace process.

The first type of psychological operation was *intimidation*. Examples of this type of operation--or at least claims of such actions--abound in the Grozny environment. Chechens shot non-combatants who were unwilling to serve as human shields for Dudayev's militants in the legs in one act of intimidation. The militants desecrated the bodies of enemy soldiers to intimidate others. Without a doubt, soldiers were intimidated not to become POWs!! Second echelon soldiers were ordered to shoot 1st echelon soldiers if the latter declined to fight or tried to evade battle. Dudayev repeatedly attempted to blackmail the Russian political process by threatening to use nuclear weapons or to commit acts of "nuclear terrorism" in another act of intimidation.<sup>35</sup>



Chechens warned the Russians that they knew the names of pilots who were bombing them, their addresses, and the names of their family members, all designed to intimidate pilots into avoiding flying. Officers' families, whether ground troops or pilots, received threatening phone calls warning the father not to fight or bomb Chechens.<sup>36</sup> On 14 January Rustam Susayev, a war correspondent for CHECHEN-PRESS, noted that if Grozny fell Chechnya would first blow up the reservoir near Grozny and flood it to a height of 7-8 meters. Then the oil refinery and ammonia factory would be blown up. And then Chechens would blow up their nuclear arsenal, although Susayev did not say if they bought or simply stole these weapons.<sup>37</sup>

Psychological intimidation (used by terror-mercenaries) also targeted local citizens. At a kindergarten, militants allegedly raped the teacher and all the children (this was both intimidation and provocation).<sup>38</sup> Dudayev tried to intimidate Moscovites by telling them if a young German could penetrate Red Square, he could too.<sup>39</sup> Vice-Premier Shakhrai noted that Dudayev had tried to intimidate all Russians by stating he used a communications channel to request bombers from Turkey for strikes against Moscow. Dudayev also was said to be working out plans for acts of sabotage at Russia's nuclear power stations.<sup>40</sup>

Russian TV, indicating that Dudayev's propaganda was working, attempted to refute some of his propaganda. The TV station noted that Dudayev's friends (such as Turkey) would not give him aircraft as Dudayev had indicated, and that the only damage done to Russia was that everyone had been hit by a Dudayev propaganda strike.<sup>41</sup> In one other act of intimidation, Dudayev skillfully utilized a Russian map of Chechnya reportedly seized by his special forces. The map divided the republic into 31 squares, and showed the homes of people who were to be deported or annihilated. The military program to carry out this plan was also listed (that is convoys, movement plans, distances, attacks, etc.).<sup>42</sup> This map, whether genuine or not, intimidated local Chechens to support Dudayev.

Russian forces used the lethality of its force to intimidate as well. They broadcast an ultimatum to the residents of Komsomolskoye and Alkhazurovo villages, for example, that they would be destroyed by air strikes unless paratroopers captured by rebels and held in the villages were released. The ultimatum was broadcast from loudspeakers from a helicopter.<sup>43</sup> Ultranationalist Russian Presidential candidate and politician Vladimir Zhirinovskiy took advantage of Chechen hysteria among Russians and announced that 100,000 Chechen militants had arrived in Moscow, which set off a wave of investigations and intimidated Russians to be on the lookout for Chechens everywhere.<sup>44</sup> In short, Chechen and Russian operations made it difficult to tell what was real, what was alleged, and what was deliberate psyop. As events became fostered by time, other psyop purposes were served as well.

A second type of psychological operation was *provocation*. These operations are rather tricky in that they could backfire on the initiator or implementor. There is also the probability that the initiator may not properly understand or foresee the short and long range consequences of his provocation. Provocation operations ranged from Chechen militants bribing people to provoke aggression against the Russian federal forces by organizing rallies with provocative extremist slogans; to Chechen militants firing at the armed forces from buildings where mostly Russians lived.<sup>45</sup> Another use of this technique involved the use of Russian aircraft. Whenever one flew over a village, militants in the village would often open fire on the plane if they had the assets,

hoping not so much to hit the plane (still an important secondary goal) as to draw return fire. Since the aircraft would usually miss the weapon system (a point target) firing at it, no harm was done to the militant, but it was not uncommon for a house or road to be destroyed. This incurred the wrath of the local villagers, and the militants used this anger to recruit more local fighters. In another case, Chechen artillery would fire at villages that Russian planes were flying over, and often the inhabitants of the village thought the plane had just bombed it for no apparent reason. In an example of damage limitation from one such episode, the Russian Counterintelligence service released a text stating that Dudayev's forces had dug trenches and filled them with oil, and then set the trenches on fire. This explanation countered false Chechen reports of Russian bombs falling on the refineries.<sup>46</sup> Dudayev tried to exploit his "trench trick" by urging the U.S. and the governments of Europe and Islamic and Arab countries to provide assistance to Chechnya to help it fight these oil fires that, in his terms, could prompt an environmental disaster.<sup>47</sup>

The Chechens also used provocation against the Russian leadership by provoking an adverse reaction from populations adjoining Chechnya. The Muslim clergy here overtly called for terror against Russian servicemen.<sup>48</sup> Dudayev's militants also blew up houses of local civilians to lead the world community to believe that Russian federal forces were committing atrocious crimes, according to refugees from the area.<sup>49</sup> And Chechens reported Russian air force attacks on the civilian population as responsible for many deaths in the mountainous villages of Dyshni-Vedeno, attacks considered by the command as blatant Chechen provocations, according to a Russian spokesman.<sup>50</sup>

A third type of operation, *deception*, is a subset of provocation. It is used to misinform the enemy about friendly intentions or actual plans. It can take the form of fake radio messages that are intended to be intercepted, or of dummy units or mockups that give the impression that a unit is stronger or weaker than in reality, or that it is located somewhere that it isn't. Deception operations also took the form of soldiers wearing Russian army uniforms; or Chechen militants entering Russian front lines as apparent non-combatants to allegedly retrieve the dead or to guide Russian units, as happened in Grozny. Chechen militants also posed as Red Cross workers.

During the initial assault on Grozny on 31 December, Russians conducted dummy preparations to simulate a main strike from the eastern salient.<sup>51</sup> General Babichev, noting that the guerillas responded to the sound of motors and tracks, organized ambushes during the night at likely points where an advancing convoy might come under fire from grenade launchers. As expected, the guerillas responded and the ambushes successfully destroyed them.<sup>52</sup> The Russians fed the Chechens dummy "secret" information, both over radio nets and in Moscow newspapers, that the main Russian strike at the end of January was to be on the villages of Argun, Shali, and Gudermes. However, the real attack was on the southeastern half of Grozny.<sup>53</sup> In an attempt to counter Chechen deception, President Yeltsin, in an address on 30 December, accused the Chechens of supplying money to journalists to plant specific articles in the Russian mass media, drawing world attention to this fact.

There was one deception action allegedly undertaken by the Russian force on the eve of the attack on Grozny. General Aleksandr Kvashnin, commander of the North Caucasus Military District at the time, allegedly stated that odd and absurd Russian troop maneuvers on the eve of

the attack were meant to deceive Dudayev's excellent intelligence and communication means. Russian troops began to appear in areas and proceeded to walk around in an incomprehensible manner known as "goofing". Kvashin also was astounded after his arrival in theater to find that the *MOD had almost ignored any preparations for psychological warfare*.<sup>54</sup> Dudayev's forces had nearly demoralized the 19th Division, Kvashin noted, by sending radio messages that worked on the officers' minds by addressing them by name, telling them where their wives and children were, and what would happen to them in the event of an attack on Grozny.<sup>55</sup> And not only were Russian officers facing their own citizens, but also fellow officer comrades in arms. These psychological factors greatly impaired the fighting ability of the Russian soldier in the early going. Some type of counterpsyop was badly required.

Ukrainian nationalists fighting for Dudayev and dressed in Russian uniforms also participated in the deception effort. They took several unsuspecting Russian servicemen, who thought they were in the custody of a Russian officer and were being taken away from the zone of shelling, to Dudayev as prisoners of war.<sup>56</sup> Ukrainian nationalists also disguised themselves as members of the Red Cross and Doctors without Borders. They appeared on occasion at checkpoints. Once inside these organizations, they would employ technical reconnaissance devices and question refugees, prisoners, and local residents about events in Chechnya.<sup>57</sup> Russian counterintelligence noted that Chechen agents were sent to subunits of the federal forces as "supporters of the Chechen opposition," and they offered their assistance to the Russian armed forces to fight against illegal armed formations.<sup>58</sup> In fact, they were reporting on Russian unit strengths and locations. Chechnya's defense force also had a special plan to misinform Russian subunits by means of guides-informants who led Russian subunits into ambushes, mine fields, and dummy facilities.<sup>59</sup>

One other type of deception psyop is the use of a concept known as reflexive control. Reflexive control is an act to get inside an opponents or even the international communities' decision-making process. One of the methods of using it, as suggested by one Russian military author, is to commit a horrendous act, one that couldn't possibly be associated with a logical or rational act (such as the bombing of one's own people). In the case of Chechnya, reflexive control may have been used during the bombing of Grozny. It would have required Chechens committing an act against their own people, an act the international community would find impossible to believe. Therefore they would blame Russia with no questions asked. A more logical explanation for the bombing of Grozny, even after Yeltsin said he had given Minister Grachev an order to cease the assault, was that Grachev simply lied to Yeltsin and continued the siege.

The final type of psychological operation is *persuasion*. It usually takes the more traditional form of psychological operation, using leaflets and loudspeakers. It can also involve the use of rumors or recruiting techniques. Both Russia's armed forces and the MVD have psyop units. Since 1992 the existence of psyop units and their training is no longer secret according to the law, but it remains difficult to obtain information in the open press on these units to this day. Some believe the military's intelligence service (the GRU) controls these organizations. Both the regular and MVD forces used the leaflet and loudspeaker during the battle for Grozny. Each has the capability to print leaflets independently of the other. As but one example of their use, at the end of the fighting for Grozny Russian helicopters flew over Chechen settlements housing militants and used loudspeakers to talk them into surrendering their weapons.<sup>60</sup>

Dudayev surprisingly used this variant of psyop as much if not more than the federal troops. He spread leaflets in Dagestan to try and persuade the Dagestanis to support the Chechens, although who did this for him is unknown.<sup>61</sup> This action was reported before the attack and as late as 25 January, well after the attack had started. The latter use involved leaflets signed by Salman Raduyev, who then called himself the commander-in-chief of the Chechen Armed Forces "in the eastern defense zone" but who later would gain fame as the commander of the assault on Kisilyar in Dagestan. As a result, the situation in Dagestan and Ingushetia deteriorated.

Chechen representatives and nationalists from the Confederation of the Peoples of the Caucasus also conducted anti-Russian and anti-army propaganda. Dudayev's special services also carried out special propaganda tricks to urge home guards to engage in sabotage, and to persuade inhabitants that Russia's military actions, and the conflict in general, have a religious slant aimed against Muslims and Islam.<sup>62</sup> Dudayev's forces exerted psychological pressure on Russian troops by broadcasting messages on the troops' radio network. They attempted to persuade troops to commit a specific act, and offered large sums of money if they would desert, open fire on their own troops, or physically annihilate their commanders.<sup>63</sup> Dudayev's propaganda services used rumors to spread reports that a new wave of marauding by Russian servicemen was underway.<sup>64</sup> The Interior Ministry reported that Dudayev's representatives continued an active propaganda campaign designed to recruit locals into illegal armed formations.<sup>65</sup> Dudayev used the foreign media well as a psyop means, allowing his word and version of things to reach the Russian and Chechen public *through a so-called third party or independent source*. This was most effectively done through Poland, the Baltic states, and specific groups in some western countries, all of which had a pro-Chechen slant.

The Russians also conducted some preventive psychological operations mainly by jamming and other forms of electronic warfare. The Chechens also used a radio jamming system to limit the influence of Russian mass media on the republic, and Radio Russia was jammed. On several occasions Dudayev used mobile TV platforms with Sony radio and TV equipment to override Russian TV programming in order to transmit a personal taped message. Ingushetia's TV conducted pro-Dudayev propaganda as well.<sup>66</sup>

Sergei Stepashin, head of the Russian counterintelligence service, noted with disappointment in a briefing on 21 January 1995, that "*the information war was lost.*" Stepashin added that "we were almost totally unprepared for ideological and propaganda work. The journalists at first were not allowed to come here (Mosdok) so they went 'over there'[to the Chechen side for information]. There was nothing to fill the vacuum of a very powerful ideological machine after the elimination of the Union. Now we have seen the result of this and our leaders have to draw certain conclusions."<sup>67</sup> Stepashin believed that a difficult task for Russian mass media in the future would be to "change the psychological stereotype drummed by Dudayev's ultra nationalist propaganda into the consciousness of ordinary Chechens, particularly rural inhabitants."<sup>68</sup>

By allowing the Chechens to present their version of events, world attention was drawn to the Chechen cause. Their difficulties were highlighted against the backdrop of Russian brutality. Barely a word was said about Chechen brutality. Even members of Russia's parliament rushed to criticize the actions of their own army. On 6 January some parliament members (Kurochkin, Ponomarev, Sheinin, Yakunin, Osovtsov, and Shabad) applied to start legal proceedings over the

activity of troops of the MOD and MVD for the killing and maiming of hundreds of civilians.<sup>69</sup> As a result, morale among Russian servicemen plummeted as they fought a war no one appreciated or understood. Russian public opinion had been manipulated, in large part because the military did not understand how to interact with the press. In a "lessons learned" talk given in March on the battle for Grozny, the head of the main assault on 1 January, Colonel-General Kvashin, noted that "...serious attention must be paid to questions of information and the psychological impact on the opposing side."<sup>70</sup> His was the voice of experience.

### ***Nation-building and EMERCOM***

One of the most important, and most overlooked, operations of the fight for Grozny was the support offered by the Russian Ministry of Emergency Situations (EMERCOM). This organization, headed by Sergei Shoygu and similar in function to FEMA, was very active in handing out humanitarian aid, helping to extinguish oil and chemical fires, and assisting refugees with their resettlement. By 3 January it had delivered 2,124 tons of humanitarian supplies by plane, train, and car to Mozdok. They formed five mobile task forces to restore operations at oil refineries and other chemical and industrial enterprises damaged during the conflict.<sup>71</sup> By 10 January EMERCOM had delivered 800 tons of flour, rice, wheat, sugar, tinned meat, fish, baby foods, soap, and medical supplies to towns in Dagestan, Ingushetia, and Chechnya.<sup>72</sup> On 19 January the Ministry of Emergency Situations delivered and unloaded 72 tons of foodstuffs in Grozny and evacuated 170 refugees from the capital. EMERCOM's teams performed construction work in Tolstoy-Yurt, and unloaded 21 tons of medical supplies in Mozdok.<sup>73</sup> Minister Shoygu said his ministry had created a field hospital in the area of Grozny's old airport.<sup>74</sup>

Railroad units, a structure separate from EMERCOM, restored 223 km of railways, checked over 200 train cars and platforms for mines, and cleared over 49 km of rail of mines.<sup>75</sup> Their work was crucial to the continuous flow of supplies and was often overlooked. These units and EMERCOM were just two of many unsung agencies of the Grozny operation. According to some high-ranking members of the Russian government, the restoration plan for Chechnya began earlier than expected thanks in large part to the assistance of these units. The first structures to be restored included the Finance Ministry, the Central Bank, and social insurance system. This was followed by the transportation and communication systems, the republic's industrial potential, and the republic's health system. The Ministry of Construction and the Ministry of Fuel and Energy spearheaded these efforts.<sup>76</sup>

### ***A More Detailed Analysis: The Fighting from 1-8 January***

...as far as I can judge, we have an infamous operation that lacks even an integral plan. Military convoys are for some reason marking time on the approaches to the city and regrouping. Military commanders have not even worried about feeding soldiers. Nor about removing the dead and injured from the battlefield, something we made sure was done during the large scale World War II operations. Nikolay Tsymbal, "A Demoralized Army Cannot Be Combat Capable," *Rossiyskiye Vesti*, 10 January 1995 <sup>77</sup>



The fighting in Chechnya also prompted other "wars" than merely the one many saw on their televisions or read about in the papers. Woven into the day-by-day explanation of the fighting below are these additional wars between individuals (Minister of Defense Grachev versus Human Rights activist Kovalev, etc.); between the ideas of reformers and those for a stronger Russian state (Alexi Arbatov, Vladimir Lobov versus Vladimir Zhirinovskiy); between the mass media's image-makers (government run ITAR-TASS versus a more independent station such as Radio Ecko Moskva); between criminal Russia and the Russian army; and between perceptions and consequences (was the conflict a Chechen war of liberation or an attempt to regain prestige by an army in despair?). The situation in Chechnya was exacerbated by these other "wars." At their root cause lie many of the problems with which Russian society must now contend in a lessons learned format. They are considerations to which U.S. and other international planners must be aware when contemplating such operations

ITAR-TASS news service reported on 1 January that when federal troops approached Grozny the Chechens detonated *radio controlled mines filled with chlorine, and that hydrocyanic acid* was spilt on some of the highways to divert Russian forces (of course, this also had a psychological effect as well).<sup>78</sup> More information on this so-called use of chemical weapons was to have been disseminated to the international press. It was not until 13 January that a commission was sent to Grozny to investigate. Led by Justice Minister Valentin Kovalev, no evidence was found that could definitely be interpreted as the use of chemicals by the Chechens.<sup>79</sup> On 4 or 5 January, Yabloko Group leader Grigoriy Yavlinskiy had sent a letter to the State Duma noting that rumors spread by Russia about Chechens using chemical weapons are being planted to justify the use of the same weapons (reflexive control?) by Russia.<sup>80</sup>

Despite the shock and heavy losses suffered in the attack of the 1-3 January, it was thought that the worse was over by 4-5 January. Moscow's official mood once again appeared to be one of optimism. First, there were reports of Chechen rebels retreating from Grozny, and aircraft strikes on their columns of tanks and other combat vehicles.<sup>81</sup> These convoys, moving in a southerly and southeastern direction, were passing along two routes, Shali, Serzhen-Yurt, and Benoy-Vedeno, and Shali, Kirov-yurt, and Makhkety, while the town center of Grozny remained under Chechen control.<sup>82</sup> Enemy groups were also moving in a northeasterly direction and were repulsed from entering Dagestan by OMON (special purpose militia detachments), border troops, and internal troops, as well as fire support from the air, according to official sources.<sup>83</sup> Vice- premier Yegorov noted that Grozny should be taken on 5 January without any fighting, and the legitimate government established simultaneously.<sup>84</sup> This information was contradicted by live reporting from the area by Russian journalists who reported that Dudayev subunits controlled the streets and had many Russian units surrounded.<sup>85</sup> So the disinformation war was continuing just as it did with Grachev's hearty appraisal of the initial days of the fight.

On 6 January, in a radio interview, Security Council member Vladimir Shumeiko discussed some of the proceedings of the most recent meeting of the Russian Security Council. One of the most bizarre moments was the affirmation by Defense Minister Grachev that since 23 December no Russian plane had bombed Grozny, a statement that directly contradicted what thousands of Russians and westerners had seen for themselves on their televisions. One explanation offered was that the "Chechens had bombed themselves" as noted above in the section on psychological operations.<sup>86</sup> If the latter did occur, the Russian media was a victim of "reflexive control" or



deception psyop.<sup>87</sup> The only other explanation was that Grachev was lying. The latter appears more correct, if one is to view the evidence.<sup>88</sup> For example, on the 6th of January airborne commander Colonel-General Yevgeniy Podkolzin noted that any cessation of air strikes on Dudayev's military locations would damage the fighting ability of Russian units inside the city. Chechens then could then easily fire from windows, basements and behind any available corner *if the bombing stops*, implying that it was ongoing.<sup>89</sup> There were also the film clips from CNN of the bombing that people all over the world viewed for themselves.

Also on the 6th, INTERFAX reported that special units of the Russian MOD destroyed a Chechen commando group *using weapons "with elements of artificial intelligence."* The unit made use of aerial reconnaissance and satellite data as well as laser and TV guided air-to-surface missiles. According to the source, this would not be the last use of weapons designed for other "theaters of operation."<sup>90</sup> This was the first and last use of the term artificial intelligence in the press during the attack on Grozny.

By 7 January, Orthodox Christmas, it was evident that the Russian military was in a dogfight and no amount of optimistic press reports would change the story. Ostankino TV noted that the fighting was the most fierce since the 31st of December-1st of January, reporting that the entire town was ablaze along with the refinery and other industrial companies.<sup>91</sup> Clearly the war was not getting any easier for the Russian forces. Ham radio operators in Chechnya transmitted information on Russian troops to illegal armed formations that allowed the rebels to pinpoint Russian locations.<sup>92</sup> In one case Chechen fighters captured 48 of 50 assault troops airdropped into the mountains.<sup>93</sup> It is unknown whether the ham operators helped with this capture, but the operation was yet another early Russian military failure.

Russian reconnaissance units searched for Russian prisoners of war while federal troops continued to fight well-armed mobile groups of Chechen rebels. The rebels were using civil defense as well as underground sewage and water tunnels to both flank and get into the rear of military units. In addition, there were reports that tank trucks were booby trapped and ready to explode when Russian convoys passed; that militants armed with firearms, grenade launchers and mortars were holding civilians hostage; that many mines had been located on roads and on road shoulders;<sup>94</sup> and, if there was any doubt as to the intensity of the fighting, there was a report that Russian artillery shells were falling in the city of Grozny at a rate of 15-20 per minute ( the latter report from a Duma representative).<sup>95</sup>

Critics of the war continued to forcefully offer dissenting opinions on the fighting. General Aleksandr Lebed, former Commander of the 14th Army, said the Russian situation was reminiscent of the campaign against Finland in 1940. He intimated wrongdoing by the commanders of the Chechen operation, noting that "if there have indeed been cases of mass burials of Russian Federation servicemen without their relatives being notified, the federal commanders of the Chechnya operation must be declared war criminals."<sup>96</sup> Both active and retired officers wrote about the demoralized state of the army from the fighting. As one general noted: a demoralized army cannot be combat capable. The army was demoralized long before Chechnya by sluggish reform...the involvement in last October's events..[and] corruption exists within the supreme command...there can be nothing worse in this situation.<sup>97</sup>

At the same time, journalists were striking back at military leaders for the latter's criticism of the reporting from Grozny. Members of the mass media pointed out that it was nearly impossible to report from military bases because they could not go anywhere and their cameras and film were confiscated, whereas the Dudayevites helped reporters. This resulted in the "one-sided" reporting from the Dudayev perspective, in the journalists' opinion. The latter asked who was to blame for the portrayal of events under such conditions?<sup>98</sup> Even the Russian command indicated they had made a serious mistake in this area. Counterintelligence head Sergei Stepashin noted that "we began the operation in Chechnya without having prepared public opinion for it at all...I would include the simply absurd ban on journalists working among our troops, ...while journalists were his [Dudayev's] invited guests."<sup>99</sup>

Broadcasts from Azerbaijan caused further mistrust among the military and the press. Baku TURAN reported on 7 and 9 January that Russian forces attacked Kizlyar in Dagestan (and suffered 20 losses) and chemical bombs were being dropped on Grozny.<sup>100</sup> These reports were never confirmed by any independent reporting agency and were most likely intended to stir popular opinion against the Russian military, probably by Chechen sympathizers. But the mistrust of the Russian military continued. Mothers of soldiers from the Siberian city of Chelyabinsk went to the conflict zone on their own to find out the fate of their sons. Many had tried to call MOD but the number provided by the press did not work. Mistrust was so intense that the mothers entered Chechnya through Ingushetia, relying more on the promises of Ingush President Ruslan Aushev to help them than on the Russian MOD.<sup>101</sup>

An attempt to solve this problem was undertaken in late January. In a round table on media reporting, it was noted that a legal mechanism needed to be created so that society could receive reliable information about parties at war. Vladimir Vorozhtsov of the MVD said "the Russian side, unlike the Chechen side, has failed to provide journalists conditions for normal work" and that Russian society was in a tragic situation due to "a shortage of truth about what has been going on in interior and special-purpose (OMON) troops in Chechnya."<sup>102</sup>

The 8th and 9th of January were marked by days of regrouping after the ferocious fighting of the 7th and, on occasion, good intentions that went astray. Interior forces busily tried to restore the Chechen police force, a necessity to return Grozny to self-rule. They appealed to anyone among the local populace who wished to work to restore law and order.<sup>103</sup> Russian military commanders talked to militants in buildings through megaphones, urging them to lay down their arms. At the same time, trucks of young Chechen volunteers aged 16-18 arrived to reinforce the illegal formations, as well as 'a regiment of kamikazes' wearing black headbands<sup>104</sup> while:

...some groups of militants, under the guise of civilians, arrive in the center of Grozny allegedly to bury their killed relatives. They receive weapons in the bunker and fight against the federal troops. After that they return the weapons and leave the city citing the same excuse.<sup>105</sup>

Chechens also were being sent to the Russian side to misinform the federal armed forces about Chechen plans; and a network of informers were reporting on all movements of Interior and Defense troops as they moved through North Ossetia, Ingushetia, and Dagestan.<sup>106</sup> Another report indicated that in early January a group of 60 fighters, half of them women, swore an oath

of allegiance to sovereign Chechnya and its president on the Koran, vowing to go to Moscow to commit subversive and terrorist actions;<sup>107</sup> and there was a report that up to 100 Russians had surrendered in Grozny on the 7th and 8th, some of them special forces troops and, in a few instances, some soldiers were drunk. Reporting ended on the stark note that in recent days, in the freezing basements where the civilians were huddled, babies were being born.<sup>108</sup>

### ***A Cease Fire Takes Effect--For Awhile***

The Russians reported on the 10th of January that the Chechens were breaking the cease fire of the 9th (which the Chechens reported was already broken by the Russians), and so federal troops were merely responding according to the principle of "adequate response."<sup>109</sup>

On 9 January the Russian government declared a cease fire. It would begin at 0800 on 10 January and last for 48 hours, according to the official announcement. Just two hours after the cease fire started on the 10th, Russian artillery shells began raining down on the Chechen Presidential Palace.<sup>110</sup> The head of the Chechen General Staff, Aslan Moskhadov, declared the 48 hour cease fire a Moscow 'trick'. It is not known if Russia's forces simply disobeyed the order on purpose or if the continuation of firing was due Chechen actions and the Russian forces were merely acting out of self-defense. This tactic of double-crossing one another after an agreement was to be repeated many times in the coming months.

By this time the Russian force had managed to make two corridors into the city for supplying the army and evacuating wounded servicemen to hospitals.<sup>111</sup> But talks with authorities to remove the bodies of Russian soldiers lying on Grozny's streets were fruitless, even though the Chechens allowed prisoner of war Colonel Kolobkov and representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church in Grozny to do the negotiating with the Russian side (with General Babichev). Moscow radio reported that the Chechens had gathered the bodies of Russians lying near the Presidential Palace and piled them in one place, with sentries firing short volleys to drive hungry dogs away from the bodies.<sup>112</sup>

During the cease fire conflicting reports caused confusion over whether the cease fire had been broken and by whom. On the 10th one report indicated that federal forces attacked in the direction of the Presidential Palace but were beaten back. If the attack occurred it was not a serious one and only rarely were mortars heard. Russian troops remained about 400 meters to the north and 1.5 km to the west of the city center.<sup>113</sup> Radio Ekho Moskvyy was, as usual, much more negative in its reporting, noting that two Chechen negotiators carrying white flags were killed, Chechen villages were bombed, and that Russian units appeared to be preparing for a new assault on the 12th, when the cease fire officially ends.<sup>114</sup> The contradictions in these two reports indicates just how much *ITAR-TASS's official reporting and the non-governmental reporting from agencies such as Ekho Moskvyy differed*. This raises an interesting set of questions: were their stark differences in points of view always pitted against one another due to differing views of the conflict? Or was reporting simply affected by whose side allowed you access to either information or participation in an operation?

During the cease fire time period, Prime Minister Chernomyrdin offered an interesting concession worthy of note. He proposed to villagers in Chechnya that if they ensured that illegal armed formations did not open fire from or within populated areas, then he would guarantee that the federal troops would not conduct combat operations there.<sup>115</sup>

On 11 January, still under a cease fire, the Russian press reported on the results of a commission sent to Chechnya to supervise the observance of constitutional rights and freedoms of Russian citizens there. Coverage was especially afforded Deputy Yuriy Rodyonov, who spoke before the Duma and reported that Russia's human rights commissioner Sergei Kovalev was taking a one-sided approach to human rights, defending Dudayev at the expense of Russia. He cited the ruthless treatment and humiliation of federal soldiers and Russian citizens by Dudayev's supporters, and explained how children and their teacher were violated by the Dudayev force. He added that occupants of houses were tortured, soldiers were killed on the way to prisoner camps, and civilians were used as human shields by Dudayev's men, closing on the note that the law enforcement system simply did not exist anymore in Chechnya.<sup>116</sup>

Rodyonov's charges were indicative of a larger battle that was shaping up in the press over the situation in Chechnya. *A confrontation had evolved among reformers* (represented by individuals such as human rights commissioner Sergei Kovalev and head of the Duma Defense Committee Sergei Yushenkov) *and the supporters of a strengthened Russian statehood* (such as the speeches before the Duma of Vladimir Zhirinovskiy). The differences between the groups were in some cases based on perception and availability to facts, and in others simply due to the opportunity to use the situation for one's own agenda. Clearly, the situation in Chechnya was beginning to tear at the domestic fabric of the nation as people lined up with one group or another. The Liberal-Democratic Union of Boris Fedorov even called for early presidential and parliamentary elections.

The issue of reform was refuted by First Deputy Prime Minister Oleg Soskovets. He noted that "reform is possible only in conditions of political stability and territorial integrity" and such a situation does not exist today.<sup>117</sup> The State Duma refrained from discussing army reform (a proposal from the communists) of the structural hierarchy for the present time<sup>118</sup>, but Sergei Yushenkov, head of the Duma Defense Committee, was for the action. He feared that the timing was not right, believing that this was an attempt to get Grachev out of danger and shift the entire blame for the failure in Chechnya to the General Staff. On the other hand, Yushenkov noted with sarcasm, perhaps the idea is to protect the armed forces from the stupid orders of an incompetent minister.<sup>119</sup>

On the combat front, Dudayev's militants continued to resist but in scattered regions of the city, especially in the Katayama, Baranovka, and Oktyabrskiy districts, and they continued to disguise themselves as local inhabitants or even Russian soldiers. Interior Troops focused on guarding administrative borders of the Chechen republic and on the conduct of operations to locate local gangs to disarm and in some cases liquidate them. Federal troops continued the search for POWs.<sup>120</sup> Also on the 11th, a TV documentary was shown on the fighting in Chechnya. Entitled "Hell" and produced by Aleksandr Nevzorov, who previously held anti-Yeltsin views, the documentary clearly was a pro-government production designed to bolster the soldier's morale and to show the country the difficulties faced by the average soldier in Chechnya. For the first

time, the character of the conflict was given a new understanding. Nevzorov, speaking with commander Lev Rokhlin, noted that the Chechens could only be considered an army and not merely bandit formations. Rokhlin agreed and added that "it is a mercenary army."<sup>121</sup>

Stories of abandoning missions, surrendering, or deserting continued to plague the Russian armed forces and MVD. *Izvestiya* reported that 800 OMON policemen from the Yekaterinburg OMON refused to obey orders to remain in Chechnya. This indication of a revolt was indirectly denied by media reports from the MVD.<sup>122</sup> The OMON mission in Chechnya included disarming illegal units, maintaining law and order in areas liberated from militants, and security patrols of itineraries of food locations, locations holding humanitarian aid, and convoy routes.<sup>123</sup> Later, on 19 January, there was a report that an OMON unit in the Siberian city of Bratsk refused to go to Chechnya and was disbanded as a result.<sup>124</sup>

In another account with explosive potential, a newspaper recounted the story of an army officer who, in a televised interview, threatened to avenge the death of his friend not only on Chechens but also on Moscow politicians!<sup>125</sup> Another newspaper carried a story of a marine commander who refused to carry out an order to move his battalion to Chechnya since he was unable to obtain two weeks of intensive training before their departure. The officer was removed from his post as battalion commander.<sup>126</sup> Eventually, 13 marine officers were discharged from the Pacific Fleet for refusing to go to Chechnya.<sup>127</sup> Russian Minister of Justice Valentin Kovalev indicated this type of refusal was becoming far too common, noting that restoring law and order was hampered by refusals in the upper echelons of command to move units to places of combat deployment (three instances already where commanders refused to comply).<sup>128</sup> Some occurred in late December, when army field commanders opposed attacks by their subdivisions, ignoring their commanders orders.<sup>129</sup> In another report that is difficult to believe, Radio Ekho Moscow reported that Russian soldiers told the Radio (they tape recorded the conversation) that special troops stood behind them when they went into battle to shoot them if they retreated or tried to give up; and that they had an order to kill women, old people, and children.<sup>130</sup> This was reminiscent of the old People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs (NKVD) style blocking detachments to prevent Russian and Soviet desertions in the past.

Authorities were deeply concerned over the impact of such reporting. Ekho is not a government controlled radio station yet polls indicated non-government reporting was trusted 46% of the time versus only 14% for official government reporting.<sup>131</sup> Some tried to explain what was happening to the Russian army in light of such polls. When interviewed on the number of desertions, cases of insubordination, and cases of soldiers surrendering to the Chechens up to this point, Alexandr Lebed noted that for a Russian soldier to die with dignity he must know what he is dying for and that a just idea is being defended. To the Chechens, he noted, this is a war of liberation. Russian soldiers do not know why they are fighting and do not want to die in an unjust war of oppression.<sup>132</sup>

At 0800 on the 12th the cease fire officially ended. During the cease fire over the past two days an additional 100 vehicles arrived to reinforce the Russian position. Federal troops regrouped and rotated troops, and prepared for the next assault. Vladimir Vorozhtsov, director of public relations for the MVD, noted that interior troops were searching out bandit formations and the latter's military hardware. The troops performed this duty in districts under the control of the



federal troops. The MVD's emphasis, according to Vorozhtsov, is on "establishing close contacts with the elders and residents of inhabited areas."<sup>133</sup> Interior troops also repaired the Mozdok-Chervlennaya section of the railroad while the air force continued air reconnaissance and the transport of freight and personnel during the cease fire.<sup>134</sup>

The Russians apparently couldn't wait for 0800 to arrive. At 0700 on the 12th Russian forces pounded the city center incessantly with artillery (shells landed every 10 seconds for over three hours) and at 0930 40 Grad rockets slammed into the main city square. This prevented the Chechens from resupplying in the normal manner. Russian snipers also gained some ground.<sup>135</sup> Fighting was intense and the Russian assault continued during the 13th and 14th, with most of the combat activity centered at the Presidential Palace, the Council of Ministers, railway station, Chechen internal affairs, and security ministries buildings.<sup>136</sup> Simultaneously MVD forces blockaded the main departure routes out of Grozny as well as Chechnya's administrative borders. An indicator of how intense the fighting had become was that doctors no longer put on their white smocks because Chechen snipers were using them for targets. Earlier, three ambulance helicopters with red crosses were downed by Chechen militants.<sup>137</sup>

It was not until the 15th of January that the whole town had been sealed off, including its southern sector.<sup>138</sup> This was the first time the armed forces had succeeded in accomplishing this fact, one many viewed as a prerequisite to entering the town in the first place. Chechen forces immediately tried to deploy additional forces in the south to prevent the encirclement from taking a permanent hold.<sup>139</sup> The 15th also witnessed continued attacks by shock units and assault detachments to dislodge Dudayev's fighters from a number of buildings, and continued attempts by paratroopers, motorized infantry units, and marines to get inside the presidential palace (to include killing a woman sniper from Belarus),<sup>140</sup> an effort that would take another four days. But when asked his opinion, Russian commander of the 8th Army Corps Lev Rokhlin noted that the resistance of the militants had slackened and the only reason the Russians hadn't taken the presidential palace was to keep the casualty rate low, since Russian POWs reportedly were still in the basement. Rokhlin noted the militants were short of ammunition, supplies, and food and, on orders from the Chechen leadership, the militants were now being issued drugs, according to one radio intercept.<sup>141</sup>

### ***The Light at the End of the Tunnel? 19-26 January (The Presidential Palace Falls, and The Battle is Handed over to the MVD)***

On 19 January the Mayak Radio Network reported that the Russian Federation flag was flying over the Presidential Palace in Grozny. While many assumed that the fighting was over, the battle continued to rage in other sections of Grozny. Reinforcements continued to be rushed in from as far away as the Pacific Fleet. It was not until 21 January that group West and group North (now containing elements of group East and the remnants of the Main Assault Force) met in the center of Grozny. The Chechens moved to the southeast section of the city, and a few days later the Russian army began a final assault on these positions and established a bridgehead on the other side of the Sunzha River, located to the southeast of Grozny.<sup>142</sup> One Russian general predicted that "there will be no partisan war in Chechnya." He would be proven terribly wrong<sup>143</sup>, as would President Yeltsin, who remarked on the 19th:



I hereby inform them all that the military stage of restoring the Constitution of Russia in the Chechen Republic has practically been completed. The additional mission of restoring law, order, and the population's civil rights is being transferred to the sphere of competence of the Ministry of Internal Affairs.<sup>144</sup>

ITAR-TASS reported that Dudayev had lost control over his forces, that communications had become unreliable, and that foreign mercenaries were now in the second echelon, forcing Dudayev's militants to fight and killing those who ran away.<sup>145</sup> Dudayev's chief of staff, Aslan Maskhadov, reportedly moved to northwest districts of Grozny, Dudayev moved to the southeastern district of the town (and replaced his bodyguard with Lithuanian mercenaries), and the Chechen headquarters moved to the opposite side of the Sunzha River.<sup>146</sup> Another report had Dudayev taking refuge in the bombshelter of City Hospital No 5 along with a 150-200 man guard force, while a military district was being prepared for him in the mountain regions of Chechnya.<sup>147</sup>

Grachev noted in a later speech that at 1500 on 20 January the army had met its initial mission. It went into a support mode of the interior forces after that time. The official handover from the armed forces to the Interior troops occurred on 26 January, but this did not mean that the city had been completely secured. The commander of the Internal Forces in Chechnya, Anatoly Kulikov, who should know better than anyone, noted that Grozny was not really taken (that is, cleared of Chechen rebels) until 26 February. His account concurs with that of other specialists who have written on the subject after the fact. However, varying MVD accounts indicated confusion within the command. One officer reported that the hand off from the army to the MVD occurred about 20 January. At the same time Federation Council Chairman Vladimir Shumeyko said that a state of emergency might be introduced in Chechnya, which would provide the legal basis for the MVD to enforce law and order.<sup>148</sup> Some worried that the MVD may not be able to keep order, since reports indicated that they intended to replace the army with training units, who according to internal force regulations belong to the Minister of Internal Affairs (at that time General Yerin). A few days later an MVD representative gave an interview in which he stated that the MVD's task was the disarming of all illegal armed formations, especially separate groups of gunmen operating in the rear of Russian troops; guarding important life-support installations; escorting humanitarian aid columns; and in individual rayons and population centers maintaining public order by patrolling.<sup>149</sup> The deputy chief of the Stavropol Internal Affairs Directorate, Colonel Nikolay Kleptsov, noted that the interior forces inspired confidence among the population since the latter felt the force could protect them against Dudayev's army.<sup>150</sup> Residents of several Chechen populated localities, including Achkhoy-Martin, offered to ensure lawfulness and prevent penetration of militants into their settlements by their own means. The Russian command said this would help to avoid bloodshed and material damage to the population.<sup>151</sup> After the battle for Grozny ended, Russian federal troops remained outside the city ready to reinforce the MVD if need be while army aviation searched out and destroyed Chechen formations in the mountains.<sup>152</sup>

There was also concern over growing problems between the MVD and the federal forces. Some army officers believed that the Internal Affairs units unwillingness to "mop up" areas captured by the army and establish their posts were one reason for the failure of the military operation at the beginning of January.<sup>153</sup> The Interior troops, on the other hand, stated that they would not go

into Grozny until it was secured in the "classical sense", that is until the city had been completely surrounded and under federal control; and all entry points through which fresh troops or supplies for Dudayev could travel were eliminated.

Also on the 20th, border guards reported that on the border with Georgia, Azerbaijan, Dagestan and Ingushetia in particular, border guard units thwarted attempts of Chechen fighters to break through to these states and republics, respectively. Heavy fighting was especially noted in the area leading to Kizilyar, Dagestan, an area that would gain notoriety by January 1996.<sup>154</sup> On the same day Azerbaijani traffic police reported searching a truck with humanitarian aid and finding fire arms, grenade launchers, and ammunition.<sup>155</sup> By the 21st, Russian reporting indicated that the situation in the center of Grozny had somewhat eased.<sup>156</sup> Russian Federal Counterintelligence Service director Sergey Stepashin noted that about 3500 Chechen militants still remained in Grozny, however. Vladimir Polozhentsev of Ostankino TV reported that military and political leaders of the Chechen Republic were preparing provocations in the region, aiming to exacerbate ethnic tensions and destabilize the situation in the North Caucasus in general.<sup>157</sup> Chechen forces reported completing the establishment of task forces designed to conduct combat activities in the rear of Russian troops.<sup>158</sup> Near the Ingush border in Assinovskaya fierce fighting broke out and Russian forces used loudspeakers and helicopters to disperse a crowd at a flea market 9 kilometers away in case a stray shell fell among the many salespeople and buyers.<sup>159</sup> Clearly, the end was not yet in site.

Also on the 21st, there was the first detailed account of alleged Chechen atrocities on the radio, although allegations of this activity had spread by word of mouth since the first days of the fighting. A reporter witnessed the return of 39 corpses of Russian servicemen near the Grozny airfield. He reported seeing signs of torture such as: hands and ears cut off; eyes put out; corpses scalped; and 13 bodies had the genitals cut off. The reporter added that Chechen snipers reportedly would wound one soldier in the leg and then kill that serviceman and any soldier who tried to help the wounded serviceman; that Chechen militants also sharpened the cartridge head and make spiral stripes on the sides of the cartridges, causing it to open like a flower when it entered a body; and that POWs were used for rituals in order to raise the combat mood of Dudayev's supporters.<sup>160</sup> In an earlier report, doctors noted that many of the bodies were sliced in half and were beheaded. Bullet wounds indicated that Chechen fighters finished off those who were injured.<sup>161</sup> Whether the beheadings had anything to do with a supposed Dudayev decree on 15 January prohibiting followers to take prisoners and to pay money for the heads of Russian officers or servicemen is unknown.<sup>162</sup> Two weeks later Dudayev himself, in a radio interview, stated that the Chechen side would not show its previous tolerance toward POWs.<sup>163</sup>

A newspaper report listed other types of injuries and atrocities. Some doctors noted the unusual nature of the wounds, as children were coming into hospitals with so-called "blind wounds": there are entry holes, but no bullets or shrapnel could be found in the body. Some felt the Chechens were using a new type of weapon. Other parts of the article confirmed what had been on the radio earlier but in more detail. In addition to the maimings announced on the radio, there were additional descriptions of throats cut, arms severed, bodies charred, hearts cut out, and stomachs cut open and stuffed with cartridge casings. However, the starkest description of the horror of the battle was the following: Guys who have taken part in the fighting claim that the

Chechens strung up our wounded by their feet in the windows of the Council of Ministers building and aimed their fire from behind their bodies.<sup>164</sup>

On the 22nd there were reports that elements of the Chechen population were beginning to insist that Dudayev's men occupying their village must leave and take their weapons with them (to include mobile missile launchers, etc.).<sup>165</sup> In Grozny, however, militants continued to lay mines along the routes of their retreat, to recruit new fighters, to bring in reserves and to set up command posts to the south of the river Sunzha. Some of Dudayev's fighters appear headed for Khasav-yurt in Dagestan where Akinets Chechens live. Fifty new mercenaries with blue berets and the inscription "Ukraine" had also appeared.<sup>166</sup>

On the 24th of January, ITAR-TASS reported that federal troops and interior forces were preparing to form "commandant zones." They also formed a garrison procurator's office. Militant actions now were only occurring at night, and appeared to lack interaction. However, some Chechen units were bribing people to provoke aggressive actions from rally participants, and some representatives of the Chechen clergy were reported to still be calling on local residents for terrorist acts against servicemen.<sup>167</sup> Russian forces continued their artillery bombardment on the outlying districts of Grozny. But Grachev felt these latter actions to be insignificant, and noted that there were no population centers in Chechnya where bandit formations could mount serious resistance to federal forces.<sup>168</sup> This assessment would be proven tragically wrong.

Dudayev, on the same day, lashed out at Russian forces. He said Yeltsin's declarations meant nothing because they were not implemented. He accused federal forces of attacking bazaars, hospitals, schools, and markets, and of not allowing humanitarian aid to pass. He said the West should recognize the Chechen republic, and warned the world that the conflict would spread. He ended by stating that people should block investments, credits, and technology from Russia, and they should draft a document on the decolonization of the peoples of Russia. If this does not happen, he warned, then Russia will destroy all of its ethnic groups.<sup>169</sup>

Russian forces obviously felt the tide had shifted in their favor, however. Justice Minister Valentin Kovalev verified once more the solid legal ground of Russia's actions in Chechnya. In accordance with the Basic Law, he noted, "the president is the guarantor of the unity, territorial integrity, and stability of the state...All of this and a great deal else takes place in the Chechen Republic. Therefore there are no legally based doubts as to the use of the Armed Forces to resolve the Chechen conundrum..."<sup>170</sup> Counterintelligence head Sergei Stepashin a day earlier gave an interview in which he tried to indicate that Dudayev one day could live as a normal citizen within Russia. He compared Dudayev with the legendary 19th century Chechen leader Shamil in the following manner:

...for even Shamil, finding himself completely surrounded in the village of Gunib, surrendered, was taken to St. Petersburg, was received and even treated with affection by the emperor, spent the rest of his life peacefully in Kaluga, and just before his death, in 1870, set out for Mecca, where he found eternal rest. ...toward the end of his life Shamil was reconciled with the Russians and no longer saw them as enemies either of his own people or of his own faith.<sup>171</sup>

The normally anti-government radio station Ekho Moskvyy noted that federal forces had basically completed their tasks, and that the MVD would have the city under its total control by the end of January. Then only MVD and troops from the North Caucasus Military District would be left in Chechnya.<sup>172</sup> On 26 January Radio Rossii reported that Security Council Secretary Oleg Lobov disclosed that until a general election was held, an interim administrative body would be set up to rule Chechnya.<sup>173</sup> Also on the 26th, a final situation report was offered by ITAR-TASS. Clearly the essence of the report was that the interior troops now were in charge. While federal troops continued to combat militants on the Sunzha River left bank, interior troops

...blocked the main routes of movement of Chechen militants, sealed off the areas of dislocation of illegal armed formations, and blocked the administrative border of the Chechen republic in order to prevent an inflow of bands, mercenaries, weapons, and military hardware, as well as protected communications, roads and bridges, and inspected transport vehicles.<sup>174</sup>

Defense Minister Grachev, satisfied that the first stage of the military operation in Chechnya was over, switched to sharp criticism of those individuals who, in his opinion, hindered his combat plans. Perhaps it was the flush of pride from the 25 January Security Council meeting at which he received the council's congratulations on the end of military operations in Grozny that motivated him to go on the offensive. His victims included both peace mongers and high ranking military men. Grachev called Human Rights Commissioner Sergey Kovalev, who reported live from Grozny on the unjustness of the war was unjust, the "scum of the earth". Grachev blamed Kovalev for Russia's inability to take the Chechen Presidential Palace earlier. Kovalev's presence inside the Palace prevented the armed forces from attacking and this prolonged the operations main task: disarming the bandit formations.<sup>175</sup> Grachev termed Duma Defense Committee head Sergey Yushenkov a "vile little toad" for the latter's criticism of Grachev's competency. Both of these men, Grachev noted, vilify the deaths of the 18 year olds who have been dying for Russia "with a smile on their faces."<sup>176</sup> Even some army officers who are cool toward Grachev supported the defense minister's words. They were still extremely bitter at the deputies' declarations that Dudayev's fighters were heroes while terming Russian army actions as criminal.<sup>177</sup>

And these were not all of Grachev's victims. They also came from among both active duty and retired officers. One officer, Colonel-General Georgiy Kondratev, who was fired by Grachev during the campaign for criticizing some military decisions, noted that Grachev had resorted to nepotism in that all decisions were being made by generals Lapshev and Ivanov as well as female assistant Yelena Aleksandrovna Agapova instead of a collegium of generals as was past practice.<sup>178</sup> In defense of his assault plan and to counterattack against those high ranking men such as Kondratev that he had removed from office, Grachev struck out at their comments on the "thoughtlessness, poor planning, preparation, and leadership of the troops' actions in this operation." He said their criticism was not only unfounded but showed signs of cowardice.<sup>179</sup>

Grachev's decisions and conduct, however, could not be forgotten by the majority of professional military men. His post, defense minister, was the most hotly contested item of all. There were many proposals from both politicians and armed forces officers in January to subordinate the General Staff directly to the President to enhance the state's decision-making mechanism. Two of

the most interesting at the end of January came from former chief of the General Staff Vladimir Lobov and from Duma Defense Committee member Alexi Arbatov.<sup>180</sup> Both called for a civilian defense minister to handle political items and for a General Staff to handle military affairs.

By April the journal *Armeyskiy Sbornik* had written about lessons learned in fighting in built up areas in Chechnya. The article, called "Sweeping Built Up Areas", did more than hint at some of the problems encountered by Russian commanders. The article noted the importance of unexpectedly, quickly, and completely sealing off areas to the enemy; the requirement to establish two rings of encirclement, the first 2-3 km from the main objective and the second on the outskirts of the city; the mission of tanks, BMPs, and other vehicles to cover the advance of ground troops; and the requirement to make "amateur" improvements to fighting vehicles and firing positions (such as putting screens made from fine mesh metal netting, cartridges and shell boxes filled with crushed rock, broken brick or gravel on armor to reduce the effect of rounds fired against the vehicle).<sup>181</sup> The article also revealed that there were many occasions when one Russian unit fired on another due to Chechen chicanery. For example, during the assault on Grozny:

Mortars mounted on Kamaz trucks fire one salvo and immediately move to another area. They have learned to skillfully disorient fire spotters [forward observers], often creating a friendly fire situation. Thus, on the eve of the taking of the palace, a Russian Grad multiple rocket launcher fired on its own reconnaissance company in the airport region, which is ringed by mountains and forests.<sup>182</sup>

Some felt that tracer rounds could help avoid this problem in the future:

Let us say that our people fire only "tracers", which can be a surprise to the enemy. It will take time for his special groups to replace ammunition, if they replace it at all. The fact is, Dudayev's personnel succeeded in a ruse more than once, and as a result servicemen who erroneously took neighbors for the local defense force poured lead into them from all weapons. *An army column of BMPs and a block post of Internal Troops subjected each other to a half-hour of fire on approaches to Grozny, while motorized riflemen tested the strength of airborne personnel while moving up to a train station.*<sup>183</sup>

The Chechens now adapted to the fact that they were no longer fighting in cities and resorted to guerrilla tactics. But not before leaving the Russian armed forces with more problems. They mined doorways of buildings, mined the corpses of Russian soldiers, and locked pets in mined buildings to attract attention to them.<sup>184</sup> In a warning designed to stop the spread of the war, Stepashin noted that the Balkanization of the North Caucasus must end. He noted that Russia's plan was to have a corps or army permanently stationed in Chechnya, with its headquarters in Vladikavkaz. This military subunit would do combat training and help restore the Chechen economy.<sup>185</sup>

In short, most Russian analysts eventually viewed the Grozny operation as a success but one that fell far short of a victory. Many pointed directly to the High Command as guilty of sending

troops into battle before they were prepared, and for implementing a less than complete plan. One analyst called the top brass the "children of August -1991", whose dramatic upward climb came after they disobeyed their superiors, the first case in the army's history.<sup>186</sup> Most unfortunate of all, the battle for Chechnya was far from over. The situation around the town of Gudermes had worsened, with anti-aircraft and anti-tank weapons and Dudayev militants in the area. This scenario would be repeated in countless other towns well into 1996, a scenario predicted by Lebed on 19 January:

A guerrilla war in Chechnya has become inevitable now. It is no longer Dudayev's supporters but the whole people, the common Chechens, that are fighting now. Many of them have lost their children, wives and mothers, and they are prepared to fight for the rest of their life.<sup>187</sup>

Another battle that had shaped up but was out of the public eye was the fight between the Russian army and what some termed "criminal Russia." While one of the official reasons for the invasion was the necessity to rid Russia of its criminal sore, this reason had lost popularity and seldom appeared in the press anymore. Yet in reality, this was more the case than ever before. Criminal elements gave Dudayev support in the form of money, mercenaries and equipment. Salambek Khadzhiyev, chairman of the opposition Chechen Government of National Rebirth, noted the following:

This whole war is going on between, I would say, the Russian Army and criminal Russia. Whether you like it or not, this fact remains: a basic part of criminal Russia is giving powerful support to Dudayev via all possible and impossible channels and a war is going on against the Russian Army.<sup>188</sup>

### ***Russian Lessons Learned***

The battle for Grozny that raged for the early part of January 1995 offered many sobering thoughts for analysts writing after action reports and lessons learned. What follows are three very different analyses of the fighting. First, there is the report of a military correspondent who wrote often on the battle for Grozny. Second, there is an unnamed military specialist who tried to cover some of the basic generalities of the entry into Chechnya in December and the fight for Grozny in January. Third, there are two professional analyses by the leaders of the operation, Minister of Defense Grachev and leader of the main assault and later head of the North Caucasus Military District, General Kvashin.

(1) Analyst Igor Korotchenko, a civilian who had studied the ongoing fighting in Chechnya closely over the previous two months, offered Russian generals the following advice in late February for future operations:

- dramatically increase the use of special troops and especially electronic warfare units. Create a total information vacuum by putting remotely controlled portable jammers near guerilla bases, and by suppressing satellite communications channels used by Dudayev.
- train, equip and air drop special forces of the GRU (Main Intelligence Directorate) in the rear of Chechen formations to conduct raids and to provide reconnaissance information.



- utilize aircraft to the maximum extent possible to conduct strikes against the guerillas.
- force tactics on the Chechens that put them at a disadvantage, such as night operations.
- begin to recruit contract servicemen who had service in Afghanistan.
- finally, don't send composite units to Chechnya that have servicemen selected from several units and thrown together for a particular mission. Such a selection process results in losses 2-3 times higher than usual.<sup>189</sup>

(2) Another critique of the operation, supposedly written by a high-placed military officer, noted shortcomings in the areas of preparation of the leadership, staffs, and troops; and in the types of combat support, to include reconnaissance, camouflage and concealment, and engineer, technical and rear support. The words in bold print were highlighted by the author to draw the reader's attention to areas of special interest to non-Russian audiences:<sup>190</sup>

*Leadership preparation shortcomings* were characterized by the inability of command and control bodies to switch to wartime operating conditions; the absence of briefings held with the command, and lack of specific combat missions; the inability of the district commander to prepare to organize and plan combat activities, and **to form a fire and nuclear planning group**; an inability to effect coordination; and weather and time of year were not accounted for in organizing, planning and conducting combat activities.<sup>191</sup>

*Staff preparation shortcomings* were characterized by a lack of a single command and staff exercise; an inability to initially work under combat conditions; superficial planning and preparation for operations; possible enemy activities were not analyzed, nor were the condition and support of friendly troops; the command did not take staff recommendations into account as a result; accounting for personnel, armament, and combat and other equipment was superficial; and staffs worked under tense conditions made more stressful by Colonel General Mityukhin, the commander of the North Caucasus Military District at the start of the conflict.<sup>192</sup>

*Troop preparation shortcomings* were characterized by the poor morale and physical preparations; lack of training for a march or offensive combat; weak knowledge of materiel and armaments; weak fighting and weapon skills; poorly trained drivers; lack of confidence in using armaments and **lack of knowledge in the rules of fire against targets of opportunity and moving targets**; lack of knowledge of first aid and **administering antishock drugs**; poor use of smoke screens; sniper groups were not created to neutralize enemy gun crews; lack of skill in designating targets or forward edges with smoke; lack of knowledge in establishing ambushes and means of movement; and assault groups were not prepared to destroy enemy fire positions, pillboxes, and emplacements, and were **weak in the use of flamethrowers and grenade launchers. In addition, personnel did not carry identification tags**, making their identification in case of death difficult.<sup>193</sup>

*Reconnaissance preparation shortcomings* included improper monitoring of routes of advance; **failure to capture a single prisoner**; and reliance on other directorates for information (MVD, FSK, etc.) instead of their own assets.<sup>194</sup>

*Camouflage preparation shortcomings* included inadequate attention and training to the means of camouflage, concealment and deception; failure to employ resources; and personnel were **not supplied with white coveralls**.<sup>195</sup>

*Engineer preparation shortcomings* included servicemen **not trained in digging foxholes**, the use of sandbags, laying and removing mines, erecting bridges and creating passages; and not all personnel had entrenchment tools and many lacked training in engineer reconnaissance of terrain.<sup>196</sup>

*Technical preparation shortcomings* included combat equipment arriving unprepared for combat; a lack of spare parts for some types of armament; **lack of batteries and fuel or lubricants**; poor organization of evacuation equipment; and a lack of repair facilities.<sup>197</sup>

*Rear support preparation shortcomings* included poor organization; **lack of thermal underwear, foot cloths and felt boot liners, which led to many cases of frostbite**; poorly organized mess facilities (some personnel had **no food for periods of 6-8 days**); a lack of bath and laundry services which led to *lice infestation*; bulletproof vests were issued to soldiers lacking some protective plates; and personnel lacked helmet liners, insulated mittens and water bottles or canteens.<sup>198</sup>

(3) Russian commanders Grachev and Kvashin, in interviews on 1 and 2 March 1995, also presented their analysis of lessons learned during the days of December and January. Their comments indicated they understood clearly the problems encountered by their forces. Now they have to implement solutions. To Grachev, the main reasons for the initial failures to fulfill tasks were the lack of resolve of some commanders and the inadequate morale and psychological preparation of the personnel.<sup>199</sup>

Other significant events and lessons learned for Grachev included the following:

- not only bandit formations but a Russian Federation civilian population lay before Russian forces, and so commanders knew that typical military precepts would not work. Different rules, different laws, and a different pace applied (the army was careful where to shoot and at what target). Servicemen hoped to demonstrate to their countrymen that a peaceful settlement was essential. However, troops met with resistance on the territory of Ingushetia.
- lack of cooperation between the armed forces and MVD units played a part in forcing some units to slow down or stop on some routes.
- the 19th Motorized Infantry Division convoy *met open resistance from the Ingush MVD* in Nazran and suffered the first losses in personnel and equipment. The 106th Airborne Division and the 56th Separate Airborne Brigade was subjected to a strike from a multiple rocket launcher on its approach in December and this, in Grachev's opinion, was the commencement of hostilities.
- commanding officers, during the march, made poor use of their permanent and attached reconnaissance resources, leaving this task entirely to army aviation; reconnaissance units seized and held important facilities and escorted individual convoys instead of doing their job;
- officer shortcomings included command and control of deployed units and use of radio communications, especially the use of control signals and code tables;
- rear service support (especially elements concerned with the evacuation of tanks and disabled artillery equipment) was poorly planned and executed, and the airborne troops' evacuation means could not evacuate the heavy arms of the ground forces;
- the combat effectiveness of weaponry and units was lowered since rocket artillery armaments, reconnaissance equipment and facilities, automated control systems, support systems for firing by missile forces and artillery, and the accumulation of operational supplies and echelonment of ammunition for modern models of arms were not up to established norms. Night vision instruments and night sights, and special armaments were also in short supply.<sup>200</sup>
- A lack of experience in fighting in cities and conducting joint operations among armed forces units, the MVD, the FCS, and border troops also was a problem.<sup>201</sup>
- The armed forces needs to improve the psychological and morale factor among servicemen. Blunders also occurred in cadre and educational work, and the armed forces need to eliminate generals who only want to "show off."<sup>202</sup>

- The state failed to pay proper attention to information support of the operation designed to restore constitutional order. Clear arguments in support of the justified actions of Russian troops were missing, and this affected the soldier's morale.
- Some Russian soldiers have deserted.<sup>203</sup> Some servicemen have acted as arms traders and were caught red handed in this bloody business. This is the main task of the Interior Ministry, to prevent the replenishment of Dudayev's arsenals with weapons from any source.<sup>204</sup>
- Serious mistakes were made by Colonel Kandalin, commander of the 19th motorized infantry division (he was later replaced by Colonel V. Prizemlin).<sup>205</sup> One of his regiments moved in to reinforce the western grouping of forces considerably more slowly than the situation demanded although this advance was under the leadership of Lieutenant General S. Todorov, deputy commander of the North Caucasus Military District for combat training. Lack of close collaboration with the motorized infantry and blunders by the command of the western grouping forced the airborne to remain in place at the time.<sup>206</sup>
- On 31 December the internal troops did not manage to fulfill their mission. This forced regular units to engage in establishing blockade posts and holding corridors from the forward edge of the combat zone to the way out of Grozny.
- It was apparent that 50,000-60,000 men were needed to storm Grozny. In 1941 when Kalinin was liberated, a ratio of 4:1 was needed. On 3 January there were only 5,000 Russian soldiers in the city. By that time the element of surprise was lost, and Dudayev was reinforcing his men with replacements from the east.
- Other specific lessons listed by Grachev included:

- the necessity to fully plan provisions for the armed forces, with priority to the purchase of new models of arms and combat equipment and improvements in the troop's combat and operational training. Improvement of the troops level of technical equipment, the purchase of arms and military equipment, and a reorganization of the arms development system is also needed;
- the peacetime groupings of forces must change so that permanent formations are available to resolve tasks. Every military district should have one or two deployed combat divisions and two or three brigades, and the armed forces must not sink below the level of 1.7 million men;
- training should focus on the conduct of combat operations in local wars and armed conflicts, and on operations in large settlements and cities;
- the General Staff must coordinate with other ministries in peacetime and in wartime;
- personnel policy should allow for appointments to the post of regimental commander or above under the control of the commanding officer; and
- reviews of relationships with the mass media and public organizations are required to keep patriotism high during a conflict.<sup>207</sup>

Specific lessons learned from Colonel General Kvashin, commander of the North Caucasus Military District, include:

- This is a real war, one begun by politicians and they must end it. The army is merely a means of waging a large or small war. This war is unlike all others since it is on Russian territory, and in terms of ferocity, saw the use of the most modern weapons and military equipment on both sides. This war was also different in the way it was seen by society.
- Lessons from the actions require that we implement radical changes in the structure of the armed forces and the content of the training of both the organs of management and of the troops

and forces of all Russian Federation ministries and departments.

- There is an acute need for overall coordination and comprehensive, painstaking preparation for the armed conflict by all federal structures, not only the power ministries. The country's public opinion, the executive branch, the Federal Assembly deputies, and the mass media were not prepared for fighting on their own territory. All this adversely affected the morale and psychological state of the soldiers and officers.<sup>208</sup>

(4) There were other lessons learned based on an analysis of the information that seeped into the papers as well. For example, the Defense Ministry Collegium expressed concern at the inadequate staffing of combined units and regular units.<sup>209</sup> Federal counterintelligence security service (FSK) director Sergey Stepashin noted that the enemy's potential was underestimated and Russian strength overestimated. Dudayev's Moscow connections were not identified and his informers with connections in high places continued to operate. Russian officers and servicemen have stolen from the local community and they must face prosecution.<sup>210</sup> Stepashin noted that since Russia's Ministry of Security lost its power subdivisions, including Vympel [counter terrorist unit], the country lost an important rapid response asset. Now we understand, Stepashin added, that special services must have special subdivisions to resolve local questions of the struggle against bandit groups and particularly dangerous criminals who head criminal structures.<sup>211</sup>

General Vorobyev, formerly deputy commander of the ground forces who was relieved by Grachev for the former's unwillingness to take charge of the operation when Grachev offered it to him, faulted the operation's planning, offered his criticism and lessons learned as well. He stated that the command underestimated the morale and psychological state of the Chechen population, the fanaticism of illegal formations, and had a poor knowledge of the area where combat actions were to be conducted. He felt the command miscalculated the necessary force and equipment requirements for the conflict, and was displeased with the hastiness and unsatisfactory level of training of troops sent to the region and the over reliance on aviation which, due to the bad weather, could not be used properly.<sup>212</sup>

A listing of lessons learned from the analysis conducted by the author of this article of the battle for Grozny shows the following:

- not only the military but also the political leadership needs instruction in how and when to use military force. This may require short blocks of instruction being taught in the Kremlin by military personnel to ensure that this is done. A misunderstanding by politicians of how to use force proved to be a key element in the operation's initial failure.
- the military (and MVD) ignored many of the basics in their initial estimation of the conduct of the fight for Chechnya and paid dearly for their omissions. These included the requirement to have public opinion behind the armed forces before the operation started and during its conduct; the necessity of having an exit strategy and political-military end-state identified; and the requirement to get the operation over with quickly. The decision-makers followed the recommendation to act in the national interest. For the past five or so years, Harvard University has been conducting classes for selected members of the Russian leadership. Each class received instruction in the basics of these principles of the use of force. Obviously this guidance was ignored by the planners of the battle for Grozny.

- Thus, criteria must be developed for the use of force by the Russian armed forces, both within and outside the country. This process has started and must be completed. For example, in February of 1995 the Security Council started to study how foreign armies studied the use of the national guard or similar type forces within their borders. In the case of the U.S., Russian decision-makers started to study the experience of the National Guard in Los Angeles.
- regarding the press, it was clear that public opinion and information support of the operation were major weaknesses on the Russian side. It is impossible to gain public support if your opponent in the conflict granted interviews with journalists and your side did not. The result in Chechnya was that only Dudayev's side of the story was getting out and not the Russian military's side.
- instruction in low-intensity conflict and combat-in-cities needs to be emphasized more in the curriculum of the academies, even if at the expense of large scale wars. The former are the conflicts that will occupy the majority of Russia's military effort over the next five years and the armed forces need to be able to conduct such operations.
- the Russian government must understand how low the military has sunk in terms of readiness in the past five years. It is time to begin devoting more attention to military reform instead of simply just giving it lip service. To declare that military reform in 1995 would rectify the problem, and then to do nothing about it is criminal. This issue most directly affects allocations granted to the military budget.
- methods designed to ensure better MVD-Armed Forces interaction or integration need to be developed.
- the power of instantaneous reporting from the battlefield needs to be considered and appropriate measures taken to incorporate its power into decision-making.
- the tactics of assault detachments and shock groups need updating to include modern equipment and techniques.

### ***The Consequences of the Intervention***

"You are all crazy! I mean the whole of Russia! You, Russians, are sick with Russianism. This is even more terrible than fascism...War has its own rules and laws but you have not learned them and you will have to face the consequences of your aggression in Chechnya..." Dmitriy Balburov, interview with Dzhokhar Dudayev, "My Life Belongs to the Most High," Moskovskiye Novosti, No 15, 26 Feb-5 Mar 1995<sup>213</sup>

"Can you consider yourself to be a Russian if you are going all out to tear Russia apart? What for? For that green buck, for that stinking dollar?" Pavel Grachev press conference, Moscow News, No 4, 27 Jan-2 Feb 1995<sup>214</sup>

The first part of this ongoing study of the Russian intervention in Chechnya listed some of the consequences of the fighting for Russia. These potential or predicted consequences continued to appear in the press during the battle for Grozny, that is the month of January 1995. They generally fell into one of six categories: the conflict will cause more splits within the country; the conflict will spread to other regions of the country or to other countries; the conflict will affect the budgetary process; the conflict presents the international community an excuse to act against the interests of Russia; and, most interesting of all, the conflict offers fertile ground for reform ideas in Russia to proliferate.



There are *few doubts that the war has split Russian society* and international opinion. It has also caused splits among the military, democrats, political parties, and different regions of Russia, and even among Chechens (pro Moscow Chechen officials noted that inadvertent strikes or strikes by mistake on peaceful people in Chechnya may result in a nation-wide protest with unpredictable consequences<sup>215</sup>). Radical-nationalist tendencies are growing.<sup>216</sup> One analyst noted that there will be a military victory which will really be a defeat due to the high price paid in civilian and military casualties.<sup>217</sup>

The split among the military quickly became the most evident after the initiation of hostilities. Several high-ranking officers openly confronted the decisions of the Minister of Defense and many officers refused to go to Chechnya. The split among democrats was best symbolized by the split between President Yeltsin and Human Rights delegate Sergey Kovalev.<sup>218</sup> Strange political alliances also arose, with some rejecting and some supporting Russian actions. Among the former were Russia's Choice, the social-democrats, and the communists; and among the latter were Zhirinovskiy's LDPR, Barkashov's Russian National Unity and Limonov's National-Bolshevist Party.<sup>219</sup> Some argued that Moscow had no legal or moral orientation in its nationalities policy. Diplomatic dialogue has been replaced by tanks and bombers.<sup>220</sup>

Splits among different regions in Russia were also evident. The Kaliningrad Oblast adopted a resolution stating that sending troops to Chechnya was a political mistake, and that only volunteers could be sent there from the oblast.<sup>221</sup> A public opinion poll showed that people believed that Russian statehood would not consolidate after Chechnya. They believed that the president's and state's prestige had fallen; law and order would not begin in Chechnya; guerrilla war would break out in the North Caucasus; and people would have to tighten their belts to feed Chechnya.<sup>222</sup> Seven of the twelve rayons in Chechnya recognized the Russian Constitution and regard Chechnya as part of the Federation, and would establish order in their own republic and elect new, legitimate organs of authority for themselves.<sup>223</sup>

Finally, many Russians realized that the Russian constitution and Russian laws do not have a notion of armed revolt, while the U.S. constitution does.<sup>224</sup> This is a problem they hope to resolve in the near future. A conflict between mass media and the state power bodies has also arisen.<sup>225</sup> The failed operation, whose goal was to protect Russia's unity, will in the end result in the estrangement of regions from the central authorities and the end of Yeltsin's career.<sup>226</sup>

One of the initial fears that did not prove itself to be a major problem in January was the *fear that the conflict would spread*. There were threats of the spread of the conflict but no real results. One of the biggest fears was that the conflict would spread to neighboring North Caucasian republics and to other regions of Russia as well.<sup>227</sup> Representatives of the Karelian, Kalmykian, and Sakha (Yakutia) republic governments all noted that through its action in Chechnya, the Russian government had lost their confidence and trust.<sup>228</sup> One analyst noted that tension in the North Caucasus was moving from the east to the west. According to former Russian justice minister Yuriy Kalmykov, federal authorities were not paying enough attention to what was going on in Kabardino-Balkaria, Karachayevo-Cherkessia, and Adygeya. Except in Ingushetia, local authorities were doing as they like.<sup>229</sup> Another fear was that the conflict would spread throughout the Islamic and Muslim communities. The command of the armed forces of the opposition Islamic Revival Party in Tajikistan declared jihad on Russian troops in that country



due to the fighting in Chechnya.<sup>230</sup> Another analyst noted that not only the image of democracy in Russia had suffered but also Russia's relations with the Muslim world.<sup>231</sup> But nothing else of significance happened, although the potential for such trouble remained.

While the CIS countries noted that the war would not affect their relations with Russia,<sup>232</sup> Russian authorities could not have been happy with the participation of Ukrainian nationalists in the fighting on the Chechen side. The conflict will have an effect on relations with the Central Asian states, and other Muslim states.<sup>233</sup>

A third consequence is the *affect on the economy or budgetary process*. The fighting has obviously upset an already tenuous federal budget. Current expenditures are at about \$5 billion or 2.5 per cent of the GNP of Russia, one analyst calculated. This does not include assets needed to restore the republic's economy.<sup>234</sup> The danger for Russia lies in the fact that an increase in budget expenditures potentially could raise the inflation rate and put IMF loans to Russia in danger.<sup>235</sup> If the Chechen hostilities lasted only a month, the damage would have been about 5 trillion rubles.<sup>236</sup> Another economic casualty would be the country's oil reserves in the short run. The Chechen Republic used to produce 6% of the Soviet Union's total oil output.<sup>237</sup> The conflict will affect this production and may cause the cancellation for plans for transporting Caspian Oil via the system of old pipelines stretching through the Northern Caucasus.<sup>238</sup>

Many Russians believe that the conflict also *presents excuses for the international community to either cancel or avoid some of the pledges and agreements it has made with Russia*. For example, the fighting in Chechnya has given the government a new reason for delaying payments to creditors. In the past Russia said it was delayed because it was working on a debt repayment formula or due to difficulties in getting the state budget through parliament.<sup>239</sup> As a result the international community may decide to pull out of this arrangement. The events in Chechnya may be used by advocates of NATO's expansion<sup>240</sup>, who can point to a fictitious inherent tendency of Russia to be aggressive and thereby justify their actions. Most likely, the West will begin to view with growing alarm its investments in the Russian economy, to include a \$6 billion loan from the IMF.<sup>241</sup>

Regarding international organizations, the political commission of the Council of Europe decided to postpone discussion on Russian admission to the Council of Europe.<sup>242</sup> The OSCE decided to send a fact finding mission to Chechnya soon.<sup>243</sup> French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe noted that Russian behavior contradicted the "code of behavior" it had signed at the recent Budapest OSCE summit.<sup>244</sup> The European Union will not allow a speedy ratification of the agreement on cooperation and trade and economic relations will be harmed. And Chechnya is described as an irritant to U.S.-Russian relations.<sup>245</sup> It has also done damage to international morale, and the political authority of the Russian president and the whole of Russia.<sup>246</sup>

Finally, *talk of reform* of many institutions accompanied the fighting in January. For example, during the fight for Grozny, several legal steps were undertaken to help alleviate the suffering and to find out who bore the guilt for the actions undertaken, the Russian government or the Dudayev regime. Yeltsin was advised by the Federation Council to "bring actions of the federal authorities in the Chechen republic in line with the Constitution of the Russian Federation." It was also proposed to institute proceedings on the illegal division of military property and transfer

of arms of the Russian army to the Chechen power bodies; and to develop measures to compensate material damage inflicted on the country's citizens who have suffered from hostilities.<sup>247</sup> The Federation Council also debated whether it should establish the motion in the State Duma to move for the impeachment of President Yeltsin and a no-confidence vote to the government.<sup>248</sup>

Some felt that a consequence of the war would be the start of military reform, but it did not happen.<sup>249</sup> However, many important suggestions were developed for nearly all of the security organizations. Ground force commander Vladimir Semyonov suggested putting all military power in the general staff and made directly accountable to the president.<sup>250</sup> Another reform option being tested was to merge the Federal Counterintelligence Service with the former KGB's ninth department, currently the Russian Federation Main Protection Directorate. It was unclear if this proposed change was Chechen related or merely part of a power struggle.

Sergey Yushenkov, chairman of the Duma Defense Committee, said that changes to the Russian Constitution were needed after Chechnya. Parliament needed greater supervisory powers over the government and the army to prevent it from preparing a scenario to escape the consequences of its criminal actions (that is, attempting to lay the groundwork of a police state to avoid accountability for its actions).<sup>251</sup> Yushenkov even published a short pamphlet entitled "The War in Chechnya and Problems of Russian Statehood and Democracy." Yushenkov was the chairman of the Duma's Defense Committee during the invasion of Chechnya. By training he is a former Soviet political officer, and currently holds the rank of colonel. His pamphlet "discusses the causes and the nature of war, the criteria for the use of force, civil-military relations, and military reform."<sup>252</sup> Yushenkov publicly criticized the military intervention in Chechnya. His pamphlet "provides an analysis of the defensive capability of the country in the absence of a legitimate budgetary process and legislation, of the first steps required for military reform, and of the relation of democrats to war in Russia today. Divided into three parts, the brochure discusses the reasons and essence of war, and its consequences for Russia; the attempts of the author to first prevent and then limit the war in Chechnya; and includes several international documents related to armed conflicts."<sup>253</sup>

Russian First Deputy Prime Minister Oleg Soskovets said he was in favor of creating a special government group of analysts who would forecast developments in Chechnya and the entire North Caucasus. The group must coordinate the interaction between the Chechen local administrations, the Territorial Department of Federal Executive Power in Chechnya, and the Russian Interior and Defense ministries. He identified the Russian Ministry for Nationalities and Regional Policy as the "engine of the analytical group," but FSK and MVD ministries must take part too. He wanted to create a model for settlement of problems similar to those which federal authorities had to face during the Chechen operation.<sup>254</sup>

Without a doubt, Chechnya diagnosed the condition of the Russian military (not combat worthy), Russian president (uncontrollable), and Russian Constitution (no separation of powers and no democracy), according to one analyst.<sup>255</sup> Deputy Prime Minister Nikolay Yegorov indicated that reform of the state and armed forces was necessary, as well as the mass media;<sup>256</sup> and that had troops not been put into Chechnya, then by summer the whole of the southern part of the country would have been in a war. He drew three conclusions: radical reform of the state system is

essential, as is a reform of the armed forces, and the media system needs drastic reform as well.<sup>257</sup>

In the final analysis, Russia presently has an imperfect military-political decision-making mechanism which does not allow for analysis of various scenarios and their consequences or to bring to justice those who trigger or continue a civil war.<sup>258</sup> The fighting in Chechnya motivated discussion on amendments to the constitution and calls for more parliamentary control over the activity of state officials.<sup>259</sup> It also encouraged the development of an old American institution, antiwar groups. They have sprung up all over Russia, and include the arts unions, organizations of the intelligentsia, and women's organizations (especially soldiers' mothers associations).<sup>260</sup> Clearly, the consequences of the fighting in Grozny were numerous and varied. Most significantly, in January Russia was unable to assess their full impact.

*Next: Part Four, The Battle for the Plains and Mountains [forthcoming in 1997]*

#### TABLE ONE: Time Line Items for the Battle of Grozny

- **1 Jan**- intense fighting; Russian troops routed when attacking Grozny<sup>261</sup>
- **3 Jan**- Russian army "troop control" restored as well as coordination with aviation and heavy artillery in the rear area; Chechens are not getting supplies and the southern exit is being left open for them to leave the city.<sup>262</sup>
- **4 Jan**- Sultan Geliskhanov, chief of Chechen security service, told FSK that he was ready to confront Dudayev and use two battalions under his command for that purpose.<sup>263</sup> In another report later that day he denied ever having said it.<sup>264</sup> Supervision commission set up by Yeltsin starts its work; main task is to establish an objective picture of the situation in Chechnya and to defend the rights of the civilian population and servicemen in Chechnya.<sup>265</sup> Grigoriy Yavlinskiy, the leader of the Yabloko political group, called for Yeltsin to resign.<sup>266</sup>
- **5 January**- Yeltsin orders bombing halt in Grozny, but attacks continue on targets outside the city.<sup>267</sup> Later the same day, a Radio Mayak reporter calls and says the bombing of the city is continuing.<sup>268</sup> Moscow Radiostantsiya reports that over 130,000 refugees have left Chechnya since the start of military actions.<sup>269</sup> Russian losses are set at 246 killed, 480 wounded, and more than 300 pieces of equipment destroyed.<sup>270</sup>
- **6 Jan**- the Security Council notes that the gradual replacement of regular army units with interior troopers is the main task of the next stage in restoring constitutional order in Chechnya.<sup>271</sup> Ruslan Aushev, president of Ingushetia, noted that Russian military aircraft launched a missile and bomb strike against the Ingush settlement of Arshty.<sup>272</sup> Moscow Ostankino Tv noted that to date (as of 6 January) 256 Russian servicemen died in Chechnya (116 from ground forces, 100 from the airborne, and 40 from the internal troops).<sup>273</sup>
- **7 Jan**- rally is held in Moscow urging Yeltsin to stop the bloodshed, and to dismiss Grachev, Stepashin, and Yegorov.<sup>274</sup> A Russian general dies in the fighting, the chief of the operational control group of the Interior Ministry, Major General Vorobyov.<sup>275</sup> Federal Counter Intelligence Service has been created in Chechnya and started operation.
- **7-8 Jan**- intense fighting
- **9 Jan**- Russian government declares a cease fire for 48 hours from 0800 on 10 January to 12 January.<sup>276</sup>
- **10 Jan**- two hours after the start of the cease fire, fighting resumes; head of the Security

Council Oleg Lobov notes that there are now 500,000 refugees in and outside Chechnya;<sup>277</sup> Oleg Poptsov, head of the Russian State TV and Radio Company, is dismissed.<sup>278</sup>

- **11 Jan**- Deputy Chairman of the Russian Federation Council notes that the mass media have created an "image of the army as a collective monster."<sup>279</sup>
- **12 Jan**- as of 11 Jan, interior troop losses have totaled 41 dead and 101 wounded.<sup>280</sup> An emergency session of the Congress of Caucasian Peoples proposed to Yeltsin that Russian troops be withdrawn and talks begun on the highest level to settle the conflict.<sup>281</sup>
- **13-14 Jan**- intense fighting around the presidential palace.
- **15 Jan**- city totally surrounded by Russian forces for the first time. Akhmed Azizov, Chechen Chairman of the Council of Elders, reported that Dudayev's son died of wounds incurred while fighting in Grozny.<sup>282</sup> Dudayev allegedly tells militants not to take POWs but to kill and behead Russian soldiers on the spot.<sup>283</sup>
- **16 Jan**- Prime Minister Chernomyrdin offers proposal on start of negotiations;<sup>284</sup> federal army says it has lost up to 500 men killed and twice as many wounded, with 200 servicemen missing;<sup>285</sup> one day later INTERFAX reports that 1160 soldiers had been killed, and they were sent from Mozdok aboard a "black tulip", a term coined in Afghanistan for aircraft carrying those killed in action. Doctors note many of the bodies are sliced in half and have been beheaded. Bullet wounds indicated the Chechen rebels finished off those who are injured.<sup>286</sup> The refugee count from Chechnya from 8 December to 16 January stands at 111, 203 people, which contradicts Lobov's figures.<sup>287</sup>
- **17 Jan**- Chernomyrdin and two Chechen cabinet ministers agree on a new cease-fire.<sup>288</sup>
- **19 Jan**- Dudayev's presidential palace is taken and the Chechens retreat across the Sunja River to take up new defensive positions in the city.<sup>289</sup>
- **20 Jan**- Grachev says that at 1500 the first part of the military operation is over; graves found of 4,000 reportedly executed by the Dudayev regime;<sup>290</sup> photo montage of Russian flag on Presidential Palace printed;<sup>291</sup> soldiers mothers appeal to end the war;<sup>292</sup> radical reform of power ministries advocated.<sup>293</sup>
- **21 Jan**- radio reports about Chechen atrocities
- **23 Jan**- reform debate of armed forces gets more heated as fighting eases
- **24 Jan**- commandant zones formed in Chechnya for better control
- **25 Jan**- Grachev fights back at his critics
- **26 Jan**- handover from Russian federal forces of Grachev to the Interior forces of Colonel-General Anatoliy Kulikov

## TABLE TWO: Russian and Chechen Force Structure

### Russian

- When the operation started, 23,800 men were gathered, with 19,000 from the armed forces, 4,700 from the MVD internal troops, 80 tanks, 208 infantry fighting vehicles and armored personnel carriers, and 182 guns and mortars.<sup>294</sup>
- As of **21 December** units were present from the Leningrad, Volga, Ruals, and Siberian Military Districts, and the *503rd motorized infantry regiment* was brought to fighting strength and a composite battalion was formed from one of the North Caucasus Military District/s motorized infantry brigades.<sup>295</sup>
- on **22 December** the *104th airborne division* carried out a diversionary operation along with other units.<sup>296</sup>

- From **23-27 December** the *131st separate motorized infantry brigade* moved on the northern salient and carried out diversionary maneuvers.<sup>[297](#)</sup>
- By late December the number of personnel and equipment involved in the operation amounted to 38,000 men, 230 tanks, 454 armored combat vehicles, and 388 guns and mortars.<sup>[298](#)</sup>
- On **31 December** the *81st motorized infantry regiment* reached the railroad station in Grozny, the second battalion of that regiment and a composite detachment of the *20th motorized infantry* blockaded the Presidential Palace, and the *131st brigade* advanced along Mayakovskiy Street and also reached the region of the railroad station.<sup>[299](#)</sup>
- on **1 January** the *106th* and *76th airborne divisions* were set the task of breaking through to the railroad station and lifting the blockade on subunits of the *131st brigade* and *81st regiment*.<sup>[300](#)</sup>
- on **1 January** more ground forces were called to Grozny and a helicopter-borne assault force as well.<sup>[301](#)</sup>
- on **4 January** Russia airlifted from the northern Kola peninsula a ground force unit; 200 border guards from the Murmansk area and a marine battalion of the *Northern Fleet* would follow.<sup>[302](#)</sup>
- on **4 January** there were also rumors of a special defense ministry task force being sent to Chechnya armed with laser aiming and homing devices to increase accuracy of air strikes. It would consist of the Chief intelligence Department task force home based near Moscow and individual task force units from Central Russia. Officers from the elite *27th motorized infantry brigade* would also be used.<sup>[303](#)</sup>
- on **5 January** the *129th motorized rifle regiment* carried out a flanking maneuver and reached the northern edge of Grozny.
- in the first days of the fighting the *165th Marine Regiment* from the *Pacific Fleet* and an infantry battalion from the *Baltic Fleet* were sent in to Grozny. Special purpose brigades and assault detachments were also used.<sup>[304](#)</sup>
- on **9 January** the *129th Motor Rifle Regiment* arrived in Grozny and went into battle.<sup>[305](#)</sup>
- on **10 January** it was reported that over 500 marines, part of a special brigade of the *North Fleet*, were sent to Mozdok.<sup>[306](#)</sup>
- on **10 January** the *Pacific Fleet* marines were sent to Mozdok.<sup>[307](#)</sup>
- on **12 January** it was reported that the Kaliningrad Internal Affairs Administration was getting ready to go to Chechnya, and to protect state interests in the North Caucasus, *Baltic Fleet* marines were sent to work with the Russian troop command.<sup>[308](#)</sup>
- on **12 January** the Siberian Military District Press Office noted that the district's subunits were in military operations in Chechnya.<sup>[309](#)</sup>
- on **13 January** a report noted that elite units of the *Dzerzhinskiy division*, and two detachments of OMON from Altay were transferred to Chechnya.<sup>[310](#)</sup>
- on **19 January** the *376th Motorized Infantry Regiment* of the Ural Military District and the *876th Separate Airborne Brigade* of the Northern Fleet took the Presidential Palace.<sup>[311](#)</sup>
- on **20 January** the MVD noted that the first training regiment, *No 6653*, was to be flown from the Far East to the North Caucasus.<sup>[312](#)</sup>
- on **25 January** the *506th Motorized Infantry Regiment* of the *27th Motorized Infantry Division* (Russian peace operations division) was sent to Chechnya.<sup>[313](#)</sup>

## Chechen

- Dudayev reportedly recruited up to 6,000 mercenaries from the Baltic states, Tadjikistan, Azerbaijan, Ukraine, Afghanistan, Turkey, and other foreign states. The MVD estimates that 1200 criminals were working for Dudayev, and some Russians tempted by Dudayev's money



also fought on his side.<sup>[314](#)</sup>

- at the commencement of hostilities, Dudayev had 15,000 combatants in Grozny, 60 guns and mortars, 30 Grad multiple rocket launchers, 50 tanks, some 100 infantry combat vehicles, 150 antiaircraft systems, and many grenade launchers.<sup>[315](#)</sup>

- in Grozny Dudayev sent in his best troops- the Abkhazian and Muslim battalions and a special brigade- to restore the situation. These guerillas, fanatical and stultified by drugs and alcohol according to Russian reporting, attacked the *131st brigade* and *81st regiment*.<sup>[316](#)</sup>

- Grachev believed that Dudayev had 30,000 men when the conflict started plus about 6,000 mercenaries.<sup>[317](#)</sup> Up to 40 Mujahideen and 20 women snipers supplemented the force as well.<sup>[318](#)</sup>

- Russian counter-intelligence bodies reported on **3 January** that on **31 December** all criminals who volunteered to fight against Russia were released from Chechen prisons by Dudayev. These prisoners, according to reports, helped execute some Ukrainians who tried to go home.<sup>[319](#)</sup>

- on **5 January** ITAR-TASS reported that a "Black Jackals" detachment numbering 50 men (with experience in Nagorno-Karabakh and Abkhazia and distinguished by their particular cruelty) were in Grozny, and that special sub-units had been instructed to destroy them.<sup>[320](#)</sup>

- on **6 January** reports indicate that 60 Chechen Jordanians were headed for Chechnya.<sup>[321](#)</sup>

- on **9 January** ITAR-TASS reported that up to 200 Azerbaijani "Gray Wolves" were operating in Grozny as well as 1660 criminals who were released from the Naurskiy penal colony.<sup>[322](#)</sup>

- on **10 January** competition marksmen from the Baltics were confirmed to be in Chechnya.<sup>[323](#)</sup>

- on **14 January** a report noted a female unit from the Baltics, the so-called white tights, is in Chechnya. They get \$1000 per day plus \$1500 for each Russian officer they kill.<sup>[324](#)</sup>

- on **19 January** Interior Forces officer Nikolay Kleptsov noted that Dudayev had around 200-400 mujahedin fighting on his side.<sup>[325](#)</sup>

- on **19 January** the Russian press service reported that 200 "Gray Wolves", an Azerbaijani terrorist organization, had its men fighting for Dudayev, a report denied by the group.<sup>[326](#)</sup>

## ENDNOTES

1. "Chechnya," Moscow News, December 16-22, 1994, No. 50, p 1, 2.[BACK](#)

2. Valeriy Vyzhutovich, "Chechnya Will Spurn Kremlin's Representatives," Izvestiya, 20 December 1994, p 2, as reported in FBIS-SOV-94-244, p 19.[BACK](#)

3. "Chechnya," Moscow News, December 16-22, 1994, No. 50, p 1, 2.[BACK](#)

4. The first part of this study on the Russian use of armed force in Chechnya was published in Vol. 8, No. 2 of The Journal of Slavic Military Studies, June 1995, pp 233-290, and was divided into two sections. The present article is based on two sources: information from the Russian press that was translated by the Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS) from 1 January to 26 January; and information received about the Battle for Grozny from Russian sources outside of the 1-26 January time constraint. The latter refers to articles in the Russian military press about the battle for Grozny, and personal interviews conducted by the author with servicemen who fought in Grozny (and in one case an American broadcaster who, while not a fighter, was present during the battle for Grozny).[BACK](#)

5. Yuliya Kalinina, "Operation 'New Year': Grozny was Bombed by Diesel Engine Mechanics in Training to be pontoon Bridge Builders," Moskovskiy Komsomolets, 6 January 1995, p 1, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-005, 9 January 1995, p 34.[BACK](#)

6. On 30 November 1994, in accordance with article 88 of the Russian Federation Constitution, Presidential edict No 2137ss was published "on measures to restore constitutional legality and law and order on the territory of the Chechen Republic." It created a group to lead actions for the disarmament and abolition of the armed formations and for the introduction and maintenance of a state of emergency on the territory of the Chechen Republic. The group included: Grachev (leader), N.D. Yegorov, V.F. Yerin, A.S. Kruglov, A.S. Kulikov, A.I. Nikolayev, V.N. Panichev (chief military prosecutor), B.I. Pastukhov, A.V. Starovoytov, S.V. Stepashin, P.P. Shirshov, and S.N. Yushenkov, the latter two by agreement with the chairman of the Federal Assembly chambers. Grachev was given relevant rights and powers. Tasks of this group included the following: - stabilize the situation in Chechnya - disarm the illegal armed formations - restore the legality and law and order in accordance with the Russian Federation legislative actions.[BACK](#)

7. Mayak Radio, 1 January 1995, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95- 001, 3 January 1995, p 24.[BACK](#)

8. Viktor Litovkin, "Shooting the 131 st Maykop Brigade," Izvestiya, 11 January 1995, p 4, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-008, 12 January 1995, p 37. Litovkin included in his report actual interviews with participants from the battle. In another report, a high-ranking Russian officer said losses were not as great as this. He said 210 of the 450 men originally listed as missing were discovered in hospitals or other units. Only 26 were registered as killed. See INTERFAX, 17 January 1995, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-011, 18 January 1995, p 27. A report appeared in Red Star on the 11th that said the losses sustained by the 81 st Guards MRR in Grozny on 1 January were greatly exaggerated. To date only 16 servicemen and 6 officers died in combat, according to the article. However, the report also noted that no data was available on 126 servicemen and 337 regimental servicemen were listed as missing!! The report indicated many servicemen were scattered all over Grozny and were slowly returning to the unit. How many may have been in the pile of bodies near the Presidential Palace was not mentioned. See Aleksandr Bugay and Oleg Bedula, "About the 81st MRR: Reliable Information with No Sensations," Krasnaya Zvezda, 11 January 1995, p 1, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-007, 11 January 1995, p 31.[BACK](#)

9. Ibid., Litovkin.[BACK](#)

10. Dr. Pavel Felgenhauer, "The Chechen Campaign," p. 14 from a talk given at a conference in Monterey California on 7 November 1995.[BACK](#)

11. Natalia Gevorkyan, Moskovskoiyi Novostii, No 86, 17-24 December 1995, p 6, as printed in The Current Digest, Vol. XLVII, No. 50 (1995), p 17, 18.[BACK](#)

12. ITAR-TASS, 19 January 1995, as reported in FBIS-SOV- 95-013. 20 January 1995, p 22[BACK](#)

13. ITAR-TASS, 19 January 1995, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95- 013. 20 January 1995, p 22.[BACK](#)

14. INTERFAX, 19 January 1995, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95- 013. 20 January 1995, p 23.[BACK](#)

15. Igor Korotchenko, "The Operation in Chechnya: Success or Defeat of the Russian Army," Nezavisimoye Voennoye Obozreniye, supplement to Nezavisimaya Gazeta, No 1 February 1995, pp 1-2, as reported in JPRS-UMA-95-008, 28 February 1995, pp 1, 2.[BACK](#)

16. Igor Chernyak, interview with LTG Ivashov, "The Disgrace is That the Army was Embroiled in this Adventure," Komsomolskaya Pravda, 5 January 1995, p 2, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-003, 5 January 1995, p 11.[BACK](#)

17. Felgenhauer, p 14. The combined grouping of troops consisted of the "North" under Major General K. Pulikovskiy, the "Northeast" under Lieutenant General L. Rokhlin, "West" under Major General V. Petruk (later Petruk was replaced by Major General I. Babichev), and "East" under Major General N. Staskov. Later the eastern group was renamed the "Southeast Group" and was headed by Lieutenant General V. Popov, deputy commander of the Volga Military District. In the North the two groupings were united into one- the "North" grouping under Lieutenant General L. Rokhlin. On 3 March Babichev was promoted to the post of an army corps commander, and he handed the banner of the Pskov Division to his successor Colonel Aleksandr Popov. For another version of the initial attack on Grozny, one that notes that the Western advance was stopped by fire on Grozny's outskirts and the Eastern advance by the fact that "Leningraders" did not sport high morale after having fought earlier for the city airport, see Kalinina, p 34.[BACK](#)

18. Konstantin Merezhko, "Caucasian Prisoners, or Pawns are in the Hands of Amateurs," Sluzhba, 20 December 1994, p 1, as reported in JPRS-UMA-95-003, 31 January 1995, p 11.[BACK](#)

19. Grachev, in a long interview with Krasnaya Zvezda on 2 March, offered an extended interview on his operational plan, stating that the following represented his concept of the operation:

...formations and units of the Russian Federation Defense Ministry in collaboration with the internal troops of the MVD and Russian FCS were instructed to conduct a special operation.

During the first stage, from 29 November to 6 December three salients (Mozdok, Vladikavkaz, and Kizlyar) were created for operations of MOD and the MVD. Troops were to occupy assembly areas by 5 December, and frontal aviation and combat helicopters rebased by 1 December. MOD also was to block air space above Chechnya, and electronic warfare facilities prepared to jam armed formations control systems.

During the second stage, from 7-9 December, the three troop groupings were to advance along five routes toward Grozny to blockade it under the cover of frontal and army aviation. Two

blockade circles were planned, an outer one along the republic's administrative border, and an inner one around Grozny. That is, the main missions of the force were to blockade Grozny and disarm illegal armed formations. The plan included an option to divert some of the force to blockade population centers outside Grozny with illegal formations as well. MVD missions included guarding communications and routes, preventing actions by illegal armed formations that would impede the march of MOD troops, and in conjunction with armed forces units they were to enter Grozny. The Russian FCS (counterintelligence units) with MVD special subunits planned to uncover and isolate Chechnya's state officials and opposition parties leaders who could lead armed resistance and acts of subversion.

During the third stage, from 10-13 December, troop units advancing from the north and south (and divided by the Sunzha River) were to seize the "presidential palace" and other important establishments together with Russian MVD and FCS special subunits. They were also to continue disarming illegal formations.

During the fourth stage, over the course of five to ten days troops would stabilize the situation and hand over sectors of responsibility to the MVD's internal troops. (This indicates that Grachev expected to finish the operation before Christmas)

Grachev stated that this concept served as the basis for the planning of the General Staff and collaborating ministries. Since this was the first time such an operation was planned there were several special features: - four branches of the armed forces, plus the border and internal troops, and FCS forces implemented the plan - forces and means (distinguished by the specific nature of the solution of the missions assigned to them) lacked experience in preparing and mounting these operations, since they had no precedent for their use on Russian territory. - the fact that the operation was conducted on Russian territory demanded unusual and nonstandard solutions and approaches in planning the action. This was not an operation under conditions of a local or other type of war, but rather a special operation.

The commander of the North Caucasus Military District, Colonel-General Alexey Mityukin, had direct leadership over the planning, preparation and conduct of operations. Aid was rendered by a task force from the General Staff headed by Lieutenant General L.P. Shevtsov, deputy chief of the General Staff Main Operational Directorate, which began its operations in Mozdok on 30 November. A General Staff directive demanded that Mityukin plan and prepare the operation under the following guidance: - pay special attention to questions of synchronization of effort and also ensuring the continuity of the troops' control at all stages of the operation; - conduct meticulous planning and full support of forthcoming operations; - organize high-quality training of personnel and preparation of arms and equipment. During the operation prevent rash steps causing losses of personnel. Pay special attention to organizing cooperation and mutual recognition between aircraft and the ground troops; - organize continuous rear services for the troops involved in the operation, both during its preparation and its implementation; - organize and implement medical backup for the troops' movement forward and combat operations, paying special attention to the prompt pinpointing of wounded, the rendering of all types of medical aid to them, evacuation to medical units and institutions, and maintenance of the epidemiological safety of the Coops brought in.

While planning continued, units were moved forward and the military districts began forming additional reserves. The brunt of the burden was on the ground forces and the airborne troops. However, during the course of the build up, the officers of the General Staff and MOD who helped commanders prepare for the forthcoming operations noted a number of deficiencies in the maintenance of equipment and weapons. These officers, Grachev noted, helped improve the standard of training and preparedness of the units (in all 10 days were assigned to additional training of units in the assembly area, with the most important work done on 8-9 December). Concurrently, the military district chief of staff conducted a walk through of the operation on a mockup of the terrain to check coordination measures among the participating ministries.

At the same time Grachev was meeting with Dudayev to try and find a way out of any confrontation. He linked the transition to each subsequent stage of the operation to Dudayev's willingness to disarm illegal armed formations. By 9 December it was clear that Dudayev was trying to deadlock the negotiation process to gain time, and so Presidential edict No. 2166 "on measures to halt the activity of illegal armed formations on the territory of the Chechen Republic and in the zone of the Ossetian-Ingush conflict" was issued. The same day, decree no 1360 was adopted which authorized disarming illegal armed formations on the territory of the Chechen Republic by forcible methods. Troops were to move forward on 11 December at 0700.

The stage of advancing and blockading the city took 16 days (11 through 26 December). While the blockade was developing, Grachev decided it was necessary to develop an operation to take the city, mainly due to the resistance the Russians were receiving from Dudayev's supporters. On 26 December the Russian Federation Security Council was adopted to do this. At the same time, additional reserves were formed and prepared for combat in other military districts, and dispatched to the conflict region. This was necessary because the under manning of the armed forces did not allow for forming full formations and combined units. Financial shortcomings also were reflected in shortages of spare parts, instruments, and repair facilities.

A strike from the north predetermined success by gaining the initiative. Officers and soldiers faced trained professionals (mercenaries from hot spots around the globe) and did quite well. However, it became apparent in early January that more men were needed. Combat experience in 1941 in Kalinin demonstrated an advantage of 4:1 was needed to win, and only 5,000 Russian soldiers were in Grozny. A grouping in the vicinity of 50,000- 60,000 was needed. As the operation developed to liberate Grozny, officers began to show more initiative and improved their ability to control units and subunits. By 6 February the organized resistance of Dudayev's guerillas was broken in the central regions of Grozny.[BACK](#)

20. For the best personal version of the battle for Grozny highlighting deficiencies in the attack (to include a shortage of adequate maps) published in January 1995, see Aleksandr Frolov, "Soldiers on the Front Line and Commanders in Mozdok," *Izvestia*, 11 January 1995, p 4, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-014-S, 23 January 1995, p 39-42. Frolov entered Grozny with the troops and returned to Moscow the first week of January to write this report. If one reads Frolov after the Thomas article, Frolov's contentions will stand out in relief much clearer than if the reverse order is followed.[BACK](#)

21. Ibid., Kvashin, p 23-24.[BACK](#)



22. "Paver Grachev: Russian Unity Defended," Rossivskaya Gazeta, 2 March 1995 p 2 as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-042, 3 March 1995, p 21.[BACK](#)
23. Ibid., Kvashin, p 23.[BACK](#)
24. Igor Sibirtsev, on press conference of Lieutenant General Mayorov, "On the Northern Front of Grozny," Vecherniy Novosibirsk, 30 January 1995 p 4, as reported in JPRS-UMA-95-005, 7 February 1995, p 6.[BACK](#)
25. Boris Vinogradov, "Moscow Has Stated: Military Phase is Over, Fighting in Grozny Continues," Izvestiya, 21 January 1995, p 1, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-014, 23 January 1995, pp 22.[BACK](#)
26. Sibirtsev, Ibid.[BACK](#)
27. Felgengauer, p 14.[BACK](#)
28. From the authors discussions with Russian officers who fought in Grozny.[BACK](#)
29. From a conversation with an MVD officer, Moscow, June 1995.[BACK](#)
30. Colonel Oleg Namsarayev, "Sweeping Built Up Areas," Armevskiy Sbornik, April 1995, No 4, pp 35-37, as reported in FBIS-UMA-95-139s, 20 July 1995, pp 22.[BACK](#)
31. ITAR-TASS, 19 January 1995, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-013. 20 January 1995, p 22.[BACK](#)
32. Konstantin Sorokin, "If a Soldier Falls in the Mountains...", Kommersant-Daily, 26 January 1995, p 3, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-018, 27 January 1995, p 46.[BACK](#)
33. Olga Gerasimenko and Vasily Ustyuzhanin, "On the 41 st Day of the War First Wedding Is Celebrated in Grozny," Komsomolskaya Pravda, 24 January 1995, p 1, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-015, 24 January 1995, p 29.[BACK](#)
34. Ibid., Vyzhutovich interview with Stepashin, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-043, 6 March 1995 p 36.[BACK](#)
35. P. Grachev, "We Must Proceed from the Fact that this was a Special Operation," Krasnaya Zvezda, 2 March 1995, p 2, as translated in FBIS-SOV- 95-042, 3 March 1995, pp 14-20.[BACK](#)
36. Feliks Babitskiy, "Have Kudayev's Fighters Outplayed the Professional Special Services?" Rossiyskiye Vesti 10 January 1995, p 2 as reported in JPRS-UMA-95-003, 31 January 1995, p 16.[BACK](#)
37. T. Abdulova and A. Aliyeva, "If Grozny Falls, It Will Be Flooded," Baku Zerkalo, 14 January 1995, p 5, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-014, 23 January 1995, p 36, 37.[BACK](#)

38. Moscow Ostankino TV, 10 January 1995, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-007, 11 January 1995, p 20.[BACK](#)
39. ITAR-TASS, 15 January 1995, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-010, 17 January 1995, p 32.[BACK](#)
40. ITAR-TASS, 15 January 1995, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-010, 17 January 1995, p 32.[BACK](#)
41. Aleksandr Khokhlov, "Will Dzhokhar Dudayev Bomb Moscow?" Komsomolskaya Pravda, 17 January 1995, p 1, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-011, 18 January 1995, p 21.[BACK](#)
42. Boris Prokhorov, "When the Terrible Smoke Clears Away, What Lessons Will Russia Learn from the Bitter Pages of the Chechnya Tragedy?" Rabochaya Tribuna, 18 January 1995, pp 1,2, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-011, 18 January 1995, p 29.[BACK](#)
43. ITAR-TASS, 9 January 1995, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-006, 10 January 1995, p 18.[BACK](#)
44. ITAR-TASS, 18 January 1995, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-011, 18 January 1995, p 24.[BACK](#)
45. Vladimir Georgiyev, "The Chechen People Are for a Peaceful Life," Rossiyskiye Vesti, 24 January 1995, pp 1-2, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-015, 24 January 1995, p 22.[BACK](#)
46. INTERFAX, 31 December 1994, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-001, 3 January 1995, p 20.[BACK](#)
47. ITAR-TASS, 30 December 1994, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-001, 3 January 1995, p 19.[BACK](#)
48. Ibid., "Pavel Grachev: Russian Unity Defended," p 21.[BACK](#)
49. ITAR-TASS, 18 January 1995, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-011, 18 January 1995, p 28.[BACK](#)
50. INTERFAX 6 March 1995 as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-043, 6 March 1995 p 32.[BACK](#)
51. Grachev, Krasnaya Zvezda, 2 March 1995, p 2.[BACK](#)
52. Ibid., Kvashin p 25.[BACK](#)
53. Felgenhauer, p 18.[BACK](#)
54. Felix Alekseyev, "'Goofing' Was Needed in This War...," Bratislava Pravda, 23 January 1995, p 14, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-017, 26 January 1995, p 43, 44.[BACK](#)

55. Ibid.[BACK](#)
56. ITAR-TASS, 27 January 1995, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-018, 27 January 1995, p 41.[BACK](#)
57. ITAR-TASS 5 March 1995, as reported in FBIS- SOV-95-043, 6 March 1995 p 31.[BACK](#)
58. ITAR-TASS, 4 January 1995, as reported in FBIS- SOV-95-003, 5 January 1995, p 26.[BACK](#)
59. ITAR-TASS, 6 January 1995, as reported in FBIS- SOV-95-005, 9 January 1995, p 23.[BACK](#)
60. ITAR-TASS, 25 January 1995, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-016, 25 January 1995, p 27.[BACK](#)
61. ITAR-TASS, 30 December 1994, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-001, 3 January 1995, p 19.[BACK](#)
62. ITAR-TASS, 2 January 1995, as reported in FBIS- SOV-95-001, 3 January 1995, p 26.[BACK](#)
63. Ibid., Kvashin p 25.[BACK](#)
64. Moscow RIA, 9 January 1995, as reported in FBIS- SOV-95-008-A, 12 January 1995, p 8.[BACK](#)
65. Moscow RIA, 29 December 1994, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-004-A, 6 January 1995, p 42.[BACK](#)
66. ITAR-TASS, 14 January 1995, as reported in FBIS- SOV-95-010, 17 January 1995, p 33.[BACK](#)
67. Oleg Falichev, "FCS Will Certainly Publish Information on Who helped Dudayev and How, Krasnaya Zvezda, 21 January 1995, p 2, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-014, 23 January 1995, p 25, 26.[BACK](#)
68. Georgiev, p 24.[BACK](#)
69. Moscow RIA, 6 January 1995, as reported in FBIS- SOV-95-008-A, 12 January 1995, p 3.[BACK](#)
70. Ibid., Kvashin p 27.[BACK](#)
71. ITAR-TASS, 3 January 1995, as reported in FBIS- SOV-95-001, 3 January 1995, p 13.[BACK](#)
72. ITAR-TASS, 11 January 1995, as reported in FBIS- SOV-95-007, 11 January 1995, p 25.[BACK](#)

73. ITAR-TASS, 19 January 1995, as reported in FBIS- SOV-95-013. 20 January 1995, p 20.[BACK](#)
74. INTERFAX, 19 January 1995, as reported in FBIS- SOV-95-013. 20 January 1995, p 24.[BACK](#)
75. Moscow RIA, 18 January 1995, as reported in FBIS- SOV-95-015-S, 24 January 1995, p 11.[BACK](#)
76. ITAR-TASS, 20 January 1995, as reported in FBIS- SOV-95-013, 20 January 1995, p 11.[BACK](#)
77. Nikolay Tsymbal, "A Demoralized Army Cannot Be Combat Capable," Rossiyskiye Vesti, 10 January 1995, p 2, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-006, 10 January p 6.[BACK](#)
78. ITAR-TASS, 1 January 1995, as reported in FBIS- SOV-95-001, 3 January 1995, p 12.[BACK](#)
79. Moscow RIA, 13 January 1995, as reported in FBIS- SOV-95-015-A, 24 January 1995, p 17.[BACK](#)
80. INTERFAX, 4 January 1995, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-003, 5 January 1995, p 13.[BACK](#)
81. Moscow Russian TV, 4 January 1995, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-003, 5 January 1995, p 12.[BACK](#)
82. Moscow Mayak, 4 January 1995, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-004, 6 January 1995, p 15.[BACK](#)
83. ITAR-TASS, 5 January 1995, as reported in FBIS- SOV-95-004, 6 January 1995, p 8.[BACK](#)
84. ITAR-TASS, 4 January 1995, as reported in FBIS- SOV-95-002, 4 January 1995, p 24.[BACK](#)
85. Moscow Mayak Radio, 5 January 1995, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-004, 6 January 1995, p 17.[BACK](#)
86. Moscow Radio, 6 January 1995, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-005, 9 January 1995, p 12.[BACK](#)
87. Reflexive control is an act to get inside an opponents decision-making process. One of the ways of suggested use by the Russian military is to commit a horrendous act, one that wouldn't possibly be associated with a humane action (such as the bombing of a Red Cross ship). In the case of Chechnya, the reflexive control (to control the appearance of who had done the bombing) would be that the Chechens would commit an act against its own people, an act the international community would find impossible to swallow and would blame the action on the Russians out of hand.[BACK](#)

88. A case can be made for Grachev as well. See ITAR- TASS, 11 January 1995, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-008, 12 January 1995, p 14, for example, where the head of the air force, Petr Deynekin, supports the claim. There were also repeated attempts to prove that the only bombing of the city was through the use of artillery and not air strikes. One report went so far as to use the phrase "according to Chechen soldiers" to prove this point. At the same time there were countercharges designed to demonstrate the use of air strikes and violations of the Geneva Conventions on the part of the Russian High Command. On one occasion a Russian State Duma parliamentarian showed a needle he said belonged to a cluster bomb, causing the Air Force to immediately deny the use of cluster bombs in Chechnya.[BACK](#)

89. INTERFAX, 6 January 1995, as reported in FBIS- SOV-95-005, 9 January 1995, p 23.[BACK](#)

90. INTERFAX, 6 January 1995, as reported in FBIS- SOV-95-005, 9 January 1995, p 23,24.[BACK](#)

91. Ostankino TV, 7 January 1995, as reported in FBIS- SOV-95-005, 9 January 1995, p 27.[BACK](#)

92. ITAR-TASS, 9 January 1995, as reported in FBIS- SOV-95-006, 10 January p 4.[BACK](#)

93. Ilya Bulavinov, "If Reality Does not Square with Military Science, so much the Worse for Reality," Kommersant-Daily, 10 January 1995, p 3, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-006, 10 January p 11.[BACK](#)

94. ITAR-TASS, 7 January 1995, as reported in FBIS- SOV-95-005, 9 January 1995, p 25.[BACK](#)

95. Moscow TV, 7 January 1995, as reported in FBIS- SOV-95-005, 9 January 1995, p 24.[BACK](#)

96. Moscow Radiostantsiya Ekho Moskvyy, 6 January 1995, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-005, 9 January 1995, p 28.[BACK](#)

97. Nikolay Tsymbal, "A Demoralized Army Cannot Be Combat Capable," Rossivskiye Vesti, 10 January 1995, p 2, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-006, 10 January p 6.[BACK](#)

98. Nikita Vaynonen, "Television Camera Does Not Shoot, But It is Unmerciful," Rossiyskiye Vesti, 10 January 1995, p 1, as reported in FBIS-SOV- 95-006, 10 January p 8. For other reports on the "victimization" of journalists by the military, see Oleg Panfilov, "The Next TargetJournalists," Izvestiya, 6 January 1995, p 3, as reported in FBIS- SOV-95-005, 9 January 1995, p 35 and INTERFAX, 10 January 1995, as reported in FBIS-SOV- 95-007, 11 January 1995, p 24.[BACK](#)

99. Georgiyev, p 23.[BACK](#)

100. Baku TURAN, 7 and 9 January 1995, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-006, 10 January p 17. ITAR-TASS reported on 6 January that the Dagestan interior ministry had warned that any provocative action aimed at destabilizing the bordering area with Chechnya would be dealt with



decisively. See ITAR-TASS, 6 January, as reported in FBIS- SOV-95-005, 9 January 1995, p 22.[BACK](#)

101. ITAR-TASS, 7 January 1995, as reported in FBIS- SOV-95-005, 9 January 1995, p 25.[BACK](#)

102. Lev Aleynik, "Journalists and Representatives of Power Structures Have had a Talk...", Segodnya, 26 January 1995, p 3, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95- 018, 27 January 1995, p 48.[BACK](#)

103. Moscow TV, 8 January 1995, as reported in FBIS- SOV-95-005, 9 January 1995, p 11.[BACK](#)

104. ITAR-TASS, 8 January 1995, as reported in FBIS- SOV-95-005, 9 January 1995, p 29.[BACK](#)

105. Ibid.[BACK](#)

106. Ibid.[BACK](#)

107. INTERFAX, 8 January 1995, as reported in FBIS- SOV-95-005, 9 January 1995, p 30.[BACK](#)

108. Moscow Mayak, 8 January 1995, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-005, 9 January 1995, p 31.[BACK](#)

109. ITAR-TASS, 10 January 1995, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-007, 11 January 1995, p 35.[BACK](#)

110. Paris AFP, 10 January 1995, as reported in FBIS- SOV-95-006, 10 January p 14.[BACK](#)

111. Moscow RIA, 9 January 1995, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-008-A, 12 January 1995, p 11.[BACK](#)

112. Moscow Radiostantsiya Ekho Moskvyy, 8 January 1995, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-005, 9 January 1995, p 28.[BACK](#)

113. INTERFAX, 10 January 1995, as reported in FBIS- SOV-95-007, 11 January 1995, p 34.[BACK](#)

114. Radiostantsiya Ekho Moskvyy, 10 January 1995, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-007, 11 January 1995, p 35.[BACK](#)

115. Moscow RIA, 10 January 1995, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-008-A, 12 January 1995, p 5.[BACK](#)

116. ITAR-TASS, 11 January 1995, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-007, 11 January 1995, p 25.[BACK](#)
117. ITAR-TASS, 14 January 1995, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-010, 17 January 1995, p 7.[BACK](#)
118. ITAR-TASS, 14 January 1995, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-010, 17 January 1995, p 19.[BACK](#)
119. Petr Zhuravlev, "The Idea of Placing General Staff Under the President is Being Worked On," Segodnya, 13 January 1995, p 2, as reported in FBIS- SOV-95-010, 17 January 1995, p 25.[BACK](#)
120. ITAR-TASS, 11 January 1995, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-007, 11 January 1995, p 30.[BACK](#)
121. Moscow Ostankino TV, 11 January 1995, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-009, 13 January 1995, p 32.[BACK](#)
122. ITAR-TASS, 11 January 1995, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-007, 11 January 1995, p 33.[BACK](#)
123. Moscow RIA 10 January 1995, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-008-A, 12 January 1995, p 11.[BACK](#)
124. ITAR-TASS, 19 January 1995, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-012, 19 January 1995, p 24.[BACK](#)
125. Yevgeniy Krasnikov, "General Prosecutor's Office Comes to Grips with Military's Case," Nezavisimaya Gazeta, 17 January 1995, p 1, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-010, 17 January 1995, p27.[BACK](#)
126. Yuriy Golotyuk, "Russia Prepares Troops 'for further operations' in Chechnya," Segodnya, 13 January 1995, p 1, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-009, 13 January 1995, p 39.[BACK](#)
127. "Discharging 13 Pacific Fleet Officers," Izvestiya, 21 January 1995, p 1, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-014, 23 January 1995, p 23.[BACK](#)
128. "Dudayev Protected by Criminals," Rossiyskiye Vesti, 17 January 1995, p 1, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-011, 18 January 1995, p 11.[BACK](#)
129. Moscow 2x2 TV, 30 December 1994, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-001, 3 January 1995, p 22.[BACK](#)
130. Radiostantsiya Ekho Moskvyy, 12 January 1995, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-009, 13 January 1995, p 38.[BACK](#)

131. "Little Confidence in Government's Words," Izvestiya, 17 January 1995, p 1, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-011, 18 January 1995, p 21.[BACK](#)
132. Fiammetta Cucurnia, telephone interview with Alexandr Lebed, Rome La Repubblica, 12 January 1995, p 10, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-009, 13 January 1995, p 35.[BACK](#)
133. ITAR-TASS, 12 January 1995, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-009, 13 January 1995, p 39.[BACK](#)
134. ITAR-TASS, 12 January 1995, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-008, 12 January 1995, p 17.[BACK](#)
135. Paola Messana and Catherine Triomphe, Paris AFP, 13 January 1995, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-009, 13 January 1995, p 14.[BACK](#)
136. Moscow 2x2, 14 January 1995, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-010, 17 January 1995, p 31.[BACK](#)
137. ITAR-TASS, 16 January 1995, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-010, 17 January 1995, p 37.[BACK](#)
138. Moscow Radiostantsiya Ekho Moskvyy, 15 January 1995, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-010, 17 January 1995, p 31.[BACK](#)
139. ITAR-TASS, 14 January 1995, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-010, 17 January 1995, p 33.[BACK](#)
140. INTERFAX, 16 January 1995, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-010, 17 January 1995, p 32. For a more complete account of shock units and assault detachments see Mr. Les Grau, "Russian Urban Tactics: Lessons from the Battle for Grozny," National Defense University Strategic Forum, number 38, July 1995.[BACK](#)
141. INTERFAX, 17 January 1995, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-010, 17 January 1995, p 43.[BACK](#)
142. Felgenhauer, p 17.[BACK](#)
143. INTERFAX, 19 1995, as reported in FBIS-SOV- 95-013, 20 1995, pp 23.[BACK](#)
144. ITAR-TASS, 19 1995, as reported in FBIS-SOV- 95-013, 20 1995, pp 11.[BACK](#)
145. ITAR-TASS, 19 1995, as reported in FBIS-SOV- 95-013, 20 1995, pp 19.[BACK](#)
146. INTERFAX, 19 January 1995, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-013, 20 January 1995, p 19.[BACK](#)

147. Mayak Radio, 19 January 1995, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-013, 20 January 1995, p 19. Apparently, contracts were also being concluded with those who wanted to continue combat actions as members of this district.[BACK](#)
148. ITAR-TASS 19 January 1995, as reported in FBIS- SOV-95-013, 20 January 1995, p 12.[BACK](#)
149. Lieutenant General Stanislav Kavan, "This 'Hot Spot' is Hottest of All," Krasnaya Zvezda, 25 January 1995 p 1, as reported in JPRS-UMA-95-003, 31 January 1995, p 13.[BACK](#)
150. Mayak Radio, 19 January 1995, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-013, 20 January 1995, p 18.[BACK](#)
151. INTERFAX, 28 February 1995, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-040, 1 March 1995 p 31.[BACK](#)
152. INTERFAX, 19 January 1995, as reported in FBIS- SOV-95-013, 20 January 1995, p 23.[BACK](#)
153. Ilya Bulavinov, Dmitriy Kamyshev, "Ministers Do Get Changed in Midstream," Kommersant-Daily, 26 January 1995, p 3, as reported in FBIS-SOV- 95-018, 27 January 1995, p 42.[BACK](#)
154. ITAR-TASS, 20 January 1995, as reported in FBIS- SOV-95-013, 20 January 1995, p 24.[BACK](#)
155. INTERFAX, 22 January 1995, as reported in FBIS- SOV-95-014, 23 January 1995, p 28.[BACK](#)
156. ITAR-TASS, 21 January 1995, as reported in FBIS- SOV-95-014, 23 January 1995, p 24.[BACK](#)
157. Moscow Ostankino TV, 21 January 1995, as reported in FBIS-SOV-95-014, 23 January 1995, p 26.[BACK](#)
158. ITAR-TASS, 21 January 1995, as reported in FBIS- SOV-95-014, 23 January 1995, p 27.[BACK](#)
159. INTERFAX, 21 January 1995, as reported in FBIS- SOV-95-014, 23 January 1995, p 27.[BACK](#)
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