Russia's War in Chechnya:
Testing Democracy in the Crucible of War

by

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my newborn son, Matthew James Turner, in the hope that one day he will understand that academic achievement and success in life only come from inspiration, determination and hard work.

Chapter 1:

Introduction

"In the eyes of foreign politicians and the international community, Chechnya is a test for the new Russia, a test of the ability of both its territory and its democracy to resist rupture."

-- Stanislav Kondrashov, Izvestia, 17 Dec 94

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union on Christmas Day, 1991, many of us in the western democracies have anticipated a new set of democratic states to form. We hoped it would happen rapidly and that such wonderful components of democracy as constitutions, legislatures and elections would create an environment of mutual understanding, commerce and, most of all, peace. What we have seen, however, is that the transition from the socialist autocracy to our vision of a liberal democratic state has been slow at best. Economic pressures, constitutional crises, an attempted coup, an unsure legal system and a dilapidated military institution have all created drag in the Russian Federation's flight towards democracy and absolutely peaceful relations with the other democracies of the world and within itself.

According to the Democratic Peace Theory[1], there are internal structural/institutional and cultural/societal constraints placed upon democratic states which prevent them from going to war with one another. It also suggests that the very same constraints which prevent war with a democratic foe may act to create popular support for war with non-democratic states. These constraints act as a 'braking'

[1] The Democratic Peace Theory is in reality still a *proposition* in that it has not yet been proven and accepted without question or debate.

mechanism to the use of violence as a means of resolving conflict, but do not prevent violence altogether. As newly democratic states transition or develop from non-democratic or authoritarian states, these constraints must take their respective places within the political structure of the state and within society in order to function effectively on state policy and the executive. Any weaknesses in the democratic structure or underdeveloped democratic norms may provide an opening for a democratic leader, improperly constrained, to act undemocratically. If this state in transition is also embroiled in a conflict, such as a civil war, they may engage in warfare out of their inexperience, immaturity or unstable democratic processes and norms.[2]

This thesis will argue the war in Chechnya occurred due to democratic structural weaknesses and that the cessation of hostilities in Chechnya[3] is the result of maturing democratic norms. These democratic attributes, if repaired and if allowed to grow, may prevent a continuation of this war in the future. Bruce Russett's Structural and Normative Models, explaining why democracies do not go to war with each other, are used as a basis for examining the state of democracy in the Russian Federation and Chechnya and *how* the emerging democratic structures and norms placed constraints on the prosecution of the war in Chechnya. Although the situation in Chechnya is far from over, the hostilities have stopped and there is an uneasy peace in the region. It must be demonstrated that the Russian Federation is slowly maturing into a democratic state and that Chechnya is just beginning the process. Therefore, by Democratic Peace Theory, the

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[2] Russett, Bruce, Grasping the Democratic Peace: Principles for a Post-Cold War World, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 2nd edition, 1995, p. 37.

[3] For the purposes of clarity, I will use throughout this thesis "Chechnya" to denote the area of conflict in the Northern Caucasus which was set up politically by the Soviet Union in 1957. The Chechens refer to

likelihood of a re-escalation into war will be greatly reduced, if not eliminated. If this proposition is correct then this thesis would add a potential corollary to the Democratic Peace Theory which is that transitional democracies may still fight each other but will eventually seek a peaceful settlement due to emerging internal constraints.

Organization

A clear thesis organization will aid in following the argument. This chapter will outline this thesis and explain the theories used to arrive at final conclusions. In addition, it will summarize the reasoning and tenets of the Democratic Peace Theory as well as the counter-arguments against it and rebuttals. Also, it is crucial to demonstrate that the conflict with Chechnya is now one for the international rather than the domestic sphere. Chapter 2 presents a synopsis of the events leading up to, during and after the current conflict so that the reader will have some factual references regarding Chechnya. Chapter 3 will examine the state of democracy in the Russian Federation and Chechnya using both the Structural and Normative Models of the Democratic Peace Theory. Chapter 4 will conclude with a synopsis of this argument, a summary of findings and some recommended courses of action. These findings, will hopefully demonstrate that the Democratic Peace Theory applies to states in transition to democracy and give us a sense of Russia's progress towards mature democracy.

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their country as The Islamic Republic of Ichkeria. For more information on the culture, current events, history and government of "Chechnya", see the Official Chechen Home Page at http://www.chechnya.org/

Democratic Peace Theory

This section presents the Democratic Peace Theory argument. It describes its origins and development and where the Democratic Peace Theory is applied today. It also presents some alternative arguments as to why the Democratic Peace Theory is not yet proven or totally false as well as John M. Owen's interesting rebuttal variation on the democratic peace theme.

In 1983, Michael W. Doyle wrote "Kant, Liberal Legacies and Foreign Policy"[4] and followed it up with another essay in 1986 entitled, "Liberalism and World Politics".[5] In these essays, Doyle brought together two centuries of thought on war and the peaceful coexistence between nations with a theory now commonly called the Democratic Peace Theory. He noted, "Even though liberal states have become involved in numerous wars with non-liberal states, constitutionally secure liberal states have yet to engage in war with one another."[6] He continued to state that, "...there exists a significant predisposition against warfare between liberal states,"[7] and that these liberal states exist in a, "...liberal zone of peace, a pacific union, [which] has been maintained and has expanded despite numerous particular conflicts of economic and strategic interest."[8] Doyle examined every known war fought in the world between 1817 and 1980 and determined that at no time has there been a "constitutionally secure" democracy engaged in war with another

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[4] Doyle's essay spanned two volumes of this journal. Here are citations for both parts. In these footnotes, Part I or Part II will be annotated along with Doyle's name and page number.
Doyle, Michael W., "Kant, Liberal Legacies and Foreign Policies" (Part I), in Philosophy and Public Affairs, vol. 12, no. 3, Summer, 1983, pp. 205-235.
Doyle, Michael W., "Kant, Liberal Legacies and Foreign Policies" (Part II), in Philosophy and Public Affairs, vol. 12, no. 4, Fall, 1983, pp. 323-353.

[5] Doyle, Michael W., "Liberalism and World Politics", in American Political Science Review, vol. 80, no. 4, December, 1986, pp. 1151-1169.

[6] Doyle, (Part I), p. 213.

democracy. There were times when war was *close* but never came to a head, such as Great Britain and the Union states during the American Civil War and the Fashoda Crisis between France and Great Britain in 1898.

Doyle traced the genealogy of the Democratic Peace Theory back to Immanuel Kant's 1795 work, Perpetual Peace. Essentially, Kant argued that three Definitive Articles of Peace must be accepted by all the nations of the world in a metaphorical treaty. Only then can there be a Perpetual Peace.[9] The First Definitive Article asserts that each state should have a republican civil constitution which not only guarantees private property rights and a free market economy but also equal justice under the law, representative government and a separation of powers. The Second holds that these republics should join an ever expanding "pacific union" where peace among those in the union is guaranteed. Finally, the Third Definitive Article of Cosmopolitan Law where individuals have the right to freely travel and engage in commerce with any state in the pacific union. Kant explains that these Definitive Articles can be summarized in three forms of law: constitutional, international and cosmopolitan. Only where these three exist together, can there be peace. Therefore, Doyle reasons, there is a separate peace among liberal democratic states today, as Kant predicted.[10]

Several other scholars have built upon this hypothesis. Most notably, Bruce Russett has taken Doyle's argument and refined it to include the Structural and Normative Models in an attempt to answer the question about *why* it works out that democratic states

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[7] Ibid.
[8] Ibid., pp. 213, 215.
[9] Ibid., p. 225.
[10] Ibid., pp. 225-232.

tend to be more peaceful and have yet to go to war with one another yet do engage in wars with non-democracies.

The Structural and Normative Models

Bruce Russett's Structural and Normative Models for explaining why democracies do not go to war with each other are used as a basis for examining the state of democracy in the Russian Federation and Chechnya. They will examine how these emerging democratic structures and norms placed or did not place constraints on the prosecution of the war in Chechnya. An examination of these constraints demonstrates how their absence can be detrimental to democracy and how their progression from positions of no influence to power positions with influence over policy improve the chances of democratic survival..

Russett's Structural Model asserts that there are structural or institutional constraints within democracies that reduce the speed at which the decision to go to war is reached and executed. Russett argues that these constraints include the checks and balances indicative of democracies, the separation of powers in democracies and the need for debate among the population of a democratic state to enlist widespread support for any violent actions. The leaders of democracies will expect that these same constraints are placed on the leaders of other democratic countries and therefore expect the time to work out any conflict before it reaches the final stage of war. In addition, these leaders do

not fear a surprise attack for the same perceptions of internal constraints on the other leaders.[11]

In confrontation with known non-democratic states, the same expectations of constraints do not exist. The leader of a non-democratic state is expected to have little or no constraints on his ability to pursue threats and violence as a means to an end. The leaders of democratic states perceive this and therefore may preemptively use violent means in order to prevent surprise attack. The leaders of the non-democratic states may also make excessive demands on the democratic states knowing that the democratic leader is so constrained. Therefore, the leaders of democracies may pursue violent action instead of conceding to the excessive demands.[12]

Russett's Normative Model similarly attempts to explain why it is that democracies do not go to war with each other. Instead of examining structures and institutions, it examines the general attitudes of the people and culture of a democratic state. Under the Normative or Cultural Model, the attitudes on conflict resolution held by the democratic culture at large will most likely be reflected in the policies and actions of the leadership of the state. These attitudes are embodied in the norms of a democratic society. The leaders of democratic states expect that the leaders of other democratic states will also act according to their cultural norms. In democracies, the leadership *expects* that conflict will be resolved by nonviolence and compromise all the while, "...respecting the rights and continued existence of their opponents."[13] Taking that a step further, the leaders or "relevant decision-makers" expect that the leaders of all

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[11] Russett, p. 40.
[12] Ibid.

democracies will pursue only peaceful means of conflict resolution. Russett explains that stability is a factor in the behavior of the democracy. "The more stable the democracy, the more will democratic norms govern its behavior with other democracies, and the more will other democracies expect democratic norms to govern its international behavior." If violence does occur between democracies, it is only because one of the democracies to some degree is unstable, such as a democracy in transition.[14]

As with the Structural Model, the Normative Model states that conflict with non-democratic states will occur more frequently. In non-democratic states, the people and leaders may be accustomed to violence in its many forms as a matter of resolving domestic conflict and view it as an appropriate method of resolving international conflict. Democratic leaders perceive this and may be willing to use force to preempt the use of violence by non-democratic states. In addition, democratic norms are presumed to be more exploitable by non-democratic leaders for gaining concessions. As above, democratic leaders may introduce non-democratic norms in order to preemptively strike at the non-democratic state so as to avoid exploitation.[15]

Russett also has tried to *empirically* account for the lasting democratic peace. In his article with Zeev Maoz of Haifa University, "Normative and Structural Causes of Democratic Peace, 1946-1986", the two set out to use statistical mathematics in order to empirically prove the Democratic Peace Theory. They concluded:

1) Democracy, in and of itself, has a consistent and robust negative effect on the likelihood of conflict or escalation in a dyad,

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[13] Russett, p. 35.
[14] Ibid.
[15] Ibid.

2) both the normative and structural models are supported by the data, and
3) support for the normative model is more robust and consistent.[16]

Russett gives a great description for what exactly constitutes a democracy. He wrote that a democracy, "...is usually identified with a voting franchise for a substantial fraction of the citizens, a government brought to power in contested elections, and an executive either popularly elected or responsible to an elected legislature, often also with requirements for civil liberties such as free speech."[17] In addition, some measure of stability is necessary to permit the growth of democratic institutions and norms. This is line with Kant's First Definitive Article about the need for a republican form of government.

In addition, the longer these normative or structural traditions exist in a democracy, the more stable it will become. For example, the transitioning younger democracies may contain certain characteristics such as a franchised voting public with a powerful executive and a legislature that can't hold him accountable. There may also, in young democracies, be instances where some people may not vote due to cultural or ethnic heritage or where the new constitution may not guarantee certain rights. Such is the case in the young democracies of the Russian Federation and Chechnya which will be discussed in Chapter 3.

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[16] Maoz, Zeev and Russett, Bruce, "Normative and Structural Causes of Democratic Peace, 1946-1986", in American Political Science Review, vol. 87, no. 3, p. 624. A "dyad" is any random pairing of two items, in this case, states.
[17] Russett, p. 14.

Realist Theory

Not all scholars agree that the Democratic Peace exists. They ascribe to the Theory of Realism which essentially posits that all states act according to their own self-interests in an anarchical international society with no governing body or rules. Kenneth Waltz wrote Man, the State and War in 1959 and espoused the quintessential Realist approach. He wrote, "Each state pursues its own best interests, however defined, in ways it judges best. Force is a means of achieving the external ends of states because there exists no consistent, reliable process of reconciling the conflicts of interest that inevitably arise among similar units in a condition of anarchy. A foreign policy based on this image of international relations is neither moral nor immoral, but embodies merely a reasoned response to the world around us."[18]

The origins of this school of thought lie with the 17th Century scholar Thomas Hobbes. Realists are governed by three important rules and a conclusion. The first rule is that no one state can implicitly trust another in any mutual dealings due to the absence of any governing authority. Second, Realists feel that being caught off guard militarily is far worse than spending money and resources for armaments. Thirdly, well armed states deter war by credibility and a 'record of successes'. Finally, Realists conclude that wars erupt from preemptive strikes by a fearful state, by states seeking prestige and success or by escalating conflicts of interest.[19] Preemptive strikes and prestige seeking clearly agree with the Democratic Peace Theory in regards to the responses of democracies and non-

[18] Waltz, Kenneth N., Man, the State and War: A Theoretical Analysis, Columbia University Press, New York, 1959, p. 238.
[19] Doyle, Part I, pp. 218-219.

democracies, respectively, to escalating conflict. However, an explanation of *why* democracies do not fight one another is absent.

Realists also disagree with proponents of the Democratic Peace in that they do not feel that the international environment is effected in any way by internal domestic politics because of an alleged desire for power within all states in the international sphere. "As Rousseau argued, international peace therefore depends on the abolition of international relations either by the achievement of a world state or by a radical isolationism (Corsica). Realists judge neither to be possible"[20]

Since the latest revival of the Democratic Peace vs. Realism argument began in the mid-1980's among theoreticians, many scholars have joined the spirited debate and tried to prove the non-existence of the Democratic Peace. Christopher Layne asked "whether democratic peace theory or realism is a better predictor of international outcomes."[21] Through the examination of the events surrounding four "near misses" of war between democratic states, he concludes that there is no causal link between democratic structures or cultural norms on external peace. Layne reasoned that since the deductive logic of the Democratic Peace Theory lacks explanatory power, scholars should look at empirical evidence. He goes on to discredit Maoz and Russett with an argument used by another scholar, David Spiro.

To Spiro, there have not been enough incidents (wars) and even fewer potential participants (democracies) over the past two hundred years or so to say that "zero" is

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[20] Ibid., p. 219.
[21] Layne, Christopher, "Kant or Cant: The Myth of the Democratic Peace", in International Security, vol. 19, no. 2, Fall, 1994, p. 6.

statistically significant.[22] He directly challenges Maoz and Russett's methodology saying that their use of a pooled time series to evaluate the empirical evidence unfairly enlarged the sample size.[23] However, Spiro added an interesting twist to the debate when he suggests that we shouldn't be asking why democracies don't go to war with each other, but rather why they tend to *ally* together. He feels that this may lead to a conclusion that would directly conflict with Kenneth Waltz's Realism.[24]

Finally, one scholar has taken a unique approach to this problem while rebutting the Realist arguments. John M. Owen has concluded that there *is* a causal mechanism for the Democratic Peace Theory. He believes that, "...liberal ideas cause liberal democracies to tend away from war with one another, and that the same ideas prod these states into war with illiberal states."[25] He goes on to argue that, "...liberal ideology and institutions work in tandem to bring about democratic peace."[26] With this argument, he combines Russett's Structural and Normative Models to support the Democratic Peace Theory. He claims that liberal ideas are the underpinnings of the liberal structures found in democratic countries. Out of liberal thought we use freedoms and toleration as a reason to promote self preservation and material well-being. This commitment to individual

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[22] Spiro, David, "The Insignificance of the Liberal Peace", in International Security, vol.19, no. 2, Fall, 1994, pp. 50-51.
[23] A pooled time series is basically a mathematical equation that adds up all the possible combinations of characters over a given time sequence. In this case, the scholars added up every combination of democratic state pairings for a each year. They kept a running total of pairings in order to get their total.
[24] Spiro, pp. 80-81.
[25] Owen, John M., "How Liberalism Produces Democratic Peace", in International Security, vol. 19, no. 2, Fall, 1994, p. 88.
[26] Ibid., p. 89.

freedoms supports a foreign policy ideology and government institutions that work for democratic peace.[27]

In sum, the proponents of the Democratic Peace admit its potentially damaging effects while Realists zealously attack perceived shortcomings. One of these adverse effects is the potential for failing to meet the expectations of the populations of newly democratic states. This danger is the most heinous for states in transition to democracy such as those in Eastern Europe and in the Former Soviet Union. We have seen a resurgence of Communist Party power in Poland and the Russian Federation. Perhaps, those places where the expectation was too high is where the democracy is weakest. Secondly, within liberalist thought, there is a need to proselytize the ideology. The danger here lies in its potential destructiveness on local traditions, ways of life and sources of meaning. Indeed, the fundamentalist Islamic countries of the world have a deep resentment towards the west and its liberal thoughts on individualism and view this as a clear threat. The lesson for Democratic Peace proponents here is that those seeking to spread the democratic peace must be cognizant of local norms so as to not create a backlash against transition. Perhaps, as in the case of Chechnya, we ought to let a democratic transition happen on its own. Western-style liberal democracy had thus far received a lukewarm reception overall in the Russian Federation for this very reason.

Assumptions

A quick argument regarding the status of Chechnya is essential to this thesis. It would be false to assume that Chechnya was and is a part of Russia despite Russian

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[27] Ibid., pp. 123-124.

claims and international claims. Chechnya was conquered by the Russian empire and made a colony in 1859. Currently, Chechnya is independent in every way except economically and has been since November 1991.

According to many scholars on the laws of sovereignty and self-determination, *de facto* and *de jure* independence are requirements, either separately or simultaneously, for a recognition of sovereignty from other states. Michael Ross Fowler and Julie Marie Bunck have made a thorough and compelling argument for the combination of de facto and de jure independence. The focus of their work was, "...upon sovereignty as a particular status and will take de facto and de jure independence to be its constituent parts."[28] They point out how difficult it is to achieve sovereign status and to maintain that status in today's international arena.[29] This is truly the state of affairs in Chechnya.

Chechnya has achieved both de facto and de jure independence as a result of exquisite timing and war. Yet, Chechnya currently stands alone in the world arena without recognition of its independence. It is a pariah at the hands of the Russian Federation which has threatened to sever all ties with any country that recognizes this independence. The Russian Federation continues to claim that Chechnya is still a constituent member of itself. Yet, there are no and have not been, any Russian federal agencies in *permanent* control of Chechen soil including the Interior Ministry and the Army, the two main power ministries, since 1991. Even during the military intervention, Russian forces were never clearly in control of Chechnya if one considers Russian

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[28] Fowler, Michael Ross and Bunck, Julie Marie, Law, Power, and the Sovereign State: The Evolution and Application of the Concept of Sovereignty, The Pennsylvania State University Press, University Park, Pennsylvania, 1995, pp. 7-8.
[29] Ibid., p. 32.

military ineptness and tactics, and Chechen popular support and guerrilla-warfare adroitness. The Chechen people have demonstrated that they can put aside their internal differences and fight for independence against a larger opponent which displays external independence.[30] The Russian Federation voluntarily pulled all of its military forces out of Chechnya in 1991-1992 while leaving behind tons of materiel and equipment.[31] The Russian Federation, by virtue of its five year peace accord, cannot now exert its own sovereignty on Chechen territory. Chechnya, and no one else, has control over its own resources, however, conducting external trade is limited by Russian Federation border and military policies. This is de facto independence.

The Russian Federation's laws and constitution are not enforced in Chechnya. The Chechen government has established its own constitution and court system. Both secular and Shariat courts will function in Chechnya. Chechnya seceded legally from the Soviet Union, not from the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic nor the Russian Federation. Jerry Hough wrote, "Since Autonomous Republics could not conceivably be deprived of all power when pro-Yeltsin forces were insisting on sovereignty against "the Center", they were given the same status as the Union Republics in April, 1990."[32] The two main documents which hold the Russian Federation together are the Federation Treaty of 1992 and the Constitution of 1993. They describe Chechnya as a part of the

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[30] Tregubova, Yelena, "Ramazan Abdulatipov: Dudayev Has Won the War", in Sevodnya, 11 January 1995, p. 1, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 47, no. 2, p. 10. The introduction of Russian troops provided a common enemy.

[31] Leontyeva, Lyudmila, "Cynics", in Literaturnaya Gazeta, nos. 1-2, 11 January 1995, p. 11, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 47, no. 2, p. 8.

[32] Hough, Jerry, "Russian Elections of 1993: Public Attitudes", in Post-Soviet Affairs, vol. 10, no. 1, January-March, 1994, p. 33.

Federation, but no Chechen official ever signed the Federation Treaty nor ratified the Constitution. This is de jure independence.

Currently, most people in Russia do not care whether Chechnya becomes independent or not.[33] On 6 March 1997, popular Moscow mayor Yuri Luzhkov stated that it was time to let Chechnya go once and for all.[34] It would seem that the Chechens have won their independence outright after over 200 years of struggle against the Russian 'infidel'.

Fowler and Bunck write, "Indeed, the fighting in Chechnya during its attempt to break away from Russia, ...underscores how important it may be for a prospective sovereign state to be able to defend itself against reintegration by a nearby covetous power."[35] Hopefully, this thesis will demonstrate that the amount of covetousness in the Russian Federation has diminished as a result of the growth of democratic norms despite the weaknesses in its institutions.

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[33] OMRI Daily Digest, "Moscow Welcomes Election Results", 29 January 1997.
[34] Lukashina, Regina, "Moscow Mayor Yuri Luzhkov Advocates the Acknowledgment of Chechnya as a Sovereign Country", RIA Novosti, 6 March 1997.
[35] Fowler and Bunck, p. 50.

Chapter 2

The Current Crisis: 1988 - Present

"A slave that does not seek to free himself from his chains deserves his slavehood."
-- Dzokhar Dudayev

In 1987, Mikhail Gorbachev introduced a program called *perestroika*, or 'restructuring' as a means of reforming the Soviet socialist operating system. Although it is debatable as to how far Gorbachev was willing to go, the end result was tantamount to the opening of Pandora's Box or a shaken pop bottle. All the internal centrifugal pressures within the Soviet Union were set loose. One aspect of *perestroika*, called *glasnost* or 'openness', in particular, played an important role as the key to Pandora's Box. Under *glasnost*, much of the repressed political dissent of the previous 70 years was allowed to surface publicly within certain limits. Gorbachev's miscalculation lay in the fact that he thought people would use Glasnost to give constructive criticism for the improvement of and innovation in socialism. He did not think that they would demand, in some cases violently, its abolition.

One of the most significant examples of taking a mile when given an inch was the development of the Popular Fronts. Under *perestroika*, the Popular Fronts were legal associations of people whose original purpose was to conduct apolitical activities or provide the constructive criticism Gorbachev hoped for. However, the Popular Fronts soon became collections of groups with politically charged agendas. This is where we begin the latest and most successful Chechen drive for independence.

Beginnings: Popular Fronts and Timing

In 1988, the Chechen-Ingush Popular Front was formed in order to actively and energetically oppose the building of a biochemical plant in Gudermes, a small city east of Grozny.[1] Similarly, in Estonia, a Popular Front was established to oppose a shale-oil mining operation. As time passed, in both cases, the tone and content of the protest began to turn towards political opposition to the Soviet Government. Also, in Estonia, Major General Dzokhar Dudayev, commander of the local air force base, which housed a strategic bomber group, began to take an interest in what was happening. Dudayev was a Chechen.

In 1989, for the first time, a Chechen, Doku Zavgaev, was selected as First Secretary of the Communist Party of the Chechen-Ingush ASSR.[2] This was significant because it satisfied many of the feelings of non-representation in the political system in Chechnya. Meanwhile, in Tartu, General Dudayev allowed the raising of the Estonian flag at a Tartu Air Force Base ceremony.[3] This betrayed his sympathies for the Estonian revolutionaries and demonstrated his feelings regarding the right to self-determination for Soviet minorities.[4]

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[1] Vachnadze, George N., Russia's Hotbeds of Tension, Nova Science Publishers, Commack, New York, 1994, p. 145.
[2] Kline, Edward, "The Conflict in Chechnya", found at http://www.wdn.com/asf/chechbp.html
[3] Shah-Kazemi, Reza, Crisis in Chechnia: Russian Imperialism, Chechen Nationalism, Militant Sufism, Islamic World Report, London, 1995, p. 28. Dr. Shah-Kazemi also notes here that Dudayev was loved by the Estonian people because of the flag incident and the fact that he publicly refused to fire on demonstrators.
[4] Goldenberg, Suzanne, Pride of Small Nations: The Caucasus and Post-Soviet Disorder, Zed Books Ltd., London, 1994, p. 184.

In the Caspian coastal town of Makhachkala, Dagestan, in June 1989, an All-Union history conference reinterpreted several events in Chechen history away from the 'official' Soviet version of events. Among these were the denial of the Soviet view that the annexation of the North Caucasus by the Tsars was 'progressive', the condemnation of the official views on the 1877-8 Uprising, the purges of the 1920s and 1930s and the Deportations.[5] The Chechen intelligentsia soon thereafter began to actively define Chechen national heroes as those who resisted the Russians and the Soviets.[6] [7]

In March 1990, reform-minded Communists in the RSFSR fought for and repealed the "leading role" provision (Article 6) in the Soviet Constitution. This and "Democratization" opened the door for political pluralism. On 23-25 November 1990, the Chechen National Congress, also known as the All-National Congress of the Chechen People, convened in Grozny. This organization was an outgrowth of the Chechen-Ingush Popular Front and a direct result of the new rules regarding pluralism in Soviet political society. While co-existing with the Chechen-Ingush Supreme Soviet, it called for the unification of all the political opposition groups in Chechnya and for political sovereignty.[8] At this same congress, the delegates selected Dzokhar Dudayev as

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[5] Bryan, Fanny E.B., "Internationalism, Nationalism and Islam before 1990", in Broxup, Marie Bennigsen, ed., The North Caucasus Barrier: The Russian Advance Towards the Muslim World, Hurst & Co. Ltd. Publishers, London, 1992, p. 209.

[6] Ibid.

[7] The actions of the intelligentsia as the first elements within the society to have or espouse these types of attitudes are in keeping with many theories on nationalism and independence movements. Many times, the reinterpretation of history plays a key role in the foundations of nationalist movements. Regarding Soviet revisionism, Bryan notes that, "These revisions were started after the Second World War in order to promote the myth that enmities had never existed among the Soviet nation, as proof of their voluntary entry into Russia." She also notes that by 1970, M.M. Bliev, a Soviet historiographer, asserted that all the peoples of the North Caucasus had voluntarily joined Russia by the end of the *18th* Century. p. 208.

[8] Broxup, Marie Bennigsen, "The 'Internal' Muslim Factor in the Politics of Russia: Tatarstan and the North Caucasus", in Mohiaddin, Mesbahi, ed., Central Asia and the Caucasus after the Soviet Union:

Chairman after he gave an inspirational and spirited speech, although he did not specifically call for outright Chechen independence.[9] Bear in mind that the Supreme Soviet of the Chechen-Ingush ASSR was still the recognized and legitimate ruling body in the republic and Doku Zavgaev was its First Secretary. Recognizing popular support for the Chechen National Congress, the Supreme Soviet bowed to pressure on 27 November 1990 and proclaimed sovereignty equal to that of the Union Republics.[10]

In actuality, this call for sovereignty was not anything unusual at the time.[11] Shah-Kazemi points out that other Autonomous Republics had done the same at Boris Yeltsin's own invitation. Yeltsin had insisted that the ASSRs, "Grab as much sovereignty as they can!" while adding that power should flow up from the bottom to the top.[12] Fortuitously for the Chechens, under the Soviet Constitution, this gave them the right to secede. However, according to Marie Broxup in her article, "The 'Internal' Muslim Factor in the Politics of Russia", the intent at *this* time was simply an elevation of status for the Chechen-Ingush ASSR from an Autonomous Republic within the RSFSR to Federal Republic within the USSR.[13] Boris Yeltsin's comment was made during a one-month tour-de-force of the RSFSR. However, he evidently caught his mistake when a journalist asked him at a news conference about Tatarstan's claim to sovereignty. He

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Domestic and International Dynamics, published by University Press of Florida, Gainesville, Florida, 1994, pp. 85-86.

[9] Timothy Thomas notes that Dudayev was invited to the Congress and nominated for president by the Amalgamated Congress of the Chechen People from Estonia, where a group of Chechens lived in exile, p. 4.

[10] Kline, "The Conflict in Chechnya".

[11] Tatarstan claimed sovereignty on 30 August 1990 and Komi on 31 August 1990, for example.

[12] Shah-Kazemi, p. 28. He also insists that Yeltsin definitely meant the Union Republics *and* the Autonomous Republics.

[13] Broxup, "The 'Internal' Muslim Factor in the Politics of Russia: Tatarstan and the North Caucasus", p. 86.

asserted that Tatarstan remained an integral part of Russia, which is a mantra he would continue until this day.[14] But it was too late.

The Chechen-Ingush Supreme Soviet, fearing a loss of local power to a rival legislative group, began to apply pressure on the new Chechen National Congress. They rejected publicly all of the Congress' assertions and allegations of corruption and misrepresentation. They then proceeded to crackdown through the banning of congressional newspapers and leaflets. Various members of Congress were subjected to harassment.[15]

On 26 April 1991, the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR passed the "Law on the Rehabilitation of the Repressed Peoples". Among other things, it promised, "...the restoration of the frontiers of their national territories existing before the frontiers were changed by anti-Constitutional force," and a transition period.[16] This created, in the minds of the Chechens and Ingush, an opportunity to rightfully reclaim Chechen lands near Mozdok where Cossacks now resided and lands belonging to the Ingush in the Prigorodnyi region near Vladikavkaz where North Ossetians now lived.[17]

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[14] _____, "B.N. Yeltsin's Press Conference: Practical Steps Are Needed", in Sovietskaya Rossia, 2 September 1990, p. 2, in Current Digest of the Soviet Press, vol. 42, no. 35, p. 10.

[15] Goldenberg, p. 184.

[16] Kline, , "The Conflict in Chechnya".

[17] Ingush lands were turned over to the North Ossetian ASSR after the deportations in 1944. After the return of the Ingush and their official rehabilitation in 1957, all Ingush lands were returned except those in question. Kline notes that at the June 1991 meeting of the Chechen National Congress, the Ingush Deputies voted to hold a referendum on whether to stay with the Chechens or remain in Russia. The referendum took place on 30 November-1 December and the proposition was approved. Dudayev and the CNC accepted the results without hesitation. In 1992, Russian forces went to this region in order to serve as peacekeepers when violence erupted between Ingush and Ossetians. The Chechens saw this as a provocative act.

Seven months after his election in November 1990 to the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR, a professor named Ruslan Khasbulatov[18] from Chechnya rose to the Chairmanship of the Supreme Soviet.[19] He played an important role in the defense of Boris Yeltsin and the Russian Federation during the tense days to follow. He would initially support Dudayev's effort, but would change his opinions over time.

On 8 June 1991, the Chechen National Congress reconvened for their second Congress. Galvanized by the pressure placed on them by the Republic authorities, the Congress once again called for sovereignty and the disbanding of the Supreme Soviet of the republic. It was at this time that Dzokhar Dudayev first called for a complete separation from Russia and the Soviet Union. He adamantly rejected any compromise agreement in which Chechnya would remain a part of the RSFSR or the Soviet Union for the sake of maintaining economic stability. He proclaimed, "...the price of genuine sovereignty is so great that to expect to achieve it cheaply is as absurd as to presume that the Chechens will ever be reconciled with their present miserly colonial freedom ... There is only one question to raise today: Do you want to be free or shall we willingly sell our future into serfdom? The time has come to make a choice."[20] His rage was evident as he blamed the Russians and Soviets for robbing the Chechen people of their "...religion, language, education, science, culture, natural resources, ideology, mass media, leadership

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[18] Ruslan Imramovich Khasbulatov was born in Grozny in November, 1944 and subsequently deported to northern Kazakhstan. He graduated from Moscow State University in 1965. He was a department head in the Moscow Institute of the National Economy at the time of his election and was known as a specialist on national-territorial structures in the Federation. See _____, "Ruslan Khasbulatov" in Izvestia, 29 October 1991, p. 1, in Current Digest of the Soviet Press, vol. 43, no. 43, p. 7.

[19] Kline, "The Conflict in Chechnya".

[20] Broxup, "The 'Internal' Muslim Factor in the Politics of Russia: Tatarstan and the North Caucasus", p. 86.

cadres and rights to freedom and life."[21] Dudayev asserted that Islam was the only force capable of uniting all the Caucasus against foreign influences, specifically the Russians, although he insisted that Chechnya would be a secular state.[22] In line with the growing trends towards democracy throughout the Soviet Union, the Congress also called for free elections, a presidency and a referendum on staying a part of Russia.

However, Dudayev and the Chechen National Congress placed a caveat on their demands. They asserted that no agreements or treaties of any kind could be negotiated or signed until a Peace Treaty was negotiated and signed first. In their view, the Chechen people had been in a constant state of war since 1785 when Mansur led the first Sufi revolt against Catherine the Great. Moscow had to agree to unconditionally recognize the Chechen right to sovereign independence, try and punish those guilty of genocide and other crimes against the Chechen nation, compensate the Chechen nation for those past crimes, return the national patrimony (the land of their fathers, i.e. a veiled demand for the Mozdok district of North Ossetia) and ensure that *proper government structures based on democratic principles* [my italics] remain in place in Chechnya.[23]

As the summer passed, tensions rose. Events in the Soviet Union came to a head on 19 August 1991 when an attempted coup occurred against Mikhail Gorbachev. Hard-line communists opposing the Union Treaty, Gorbachev's reforms and fearing the imminent collapse of the USSR tried to place Secretary Gorbachev under arrest, take

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[21]Ibid.

[22] The vast majority of ethnic groups in the North Caucasus region are Islamic. The Ossetians are notable exceptions. See Krag, Helen and Funch, Lars, The North Caucasus: Minorities at a Crossroads, Minority Rights Group International, London, 1994, p. 23.

[23] Broxup, "The 'Internal' Muslim Factor in the Politics of Russia: Tatarstan and the North Caucasus", p. 86. Dudayev was insistent on this last point because he most likely knew that the Russians would try to subvert his regime in the future using non-democratic means.

control of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, reverse Gorbachev's reform policies and, in their opinions, save the Soviet Union. President Boris Yeltsin of the RSFSR, who called for more and faster reforms from the Union Republic level, ended up defending the Russian White House and the reform-minded Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR against military forces marshaled by the coup plotters. A Chechen general named Aslanbek Aslankhanov commanded troops loyal to Yeltsin in defense of Yeltsin and the White House.[24] Ruslan Khasbulatov, as Chairman of the Supreme Soviet, backed Yeltsin during the coup attempt. Meanwhile, the Chairman of the Chechen-Ingush Supreme Soviet, Doku Zavgaev, was in Moscow for the signing of the Union Treaty but hid out without comment in order to see who would win. His failure to take a definitive stand labeled him as someone who could not be trusted.

Back in Grozny, the local communist leadership either vocally supported the coup plotters or did as Zavgaev did.[25] The acting Chairman of the Chechen-Ingush Supreme Soviet, a man named Petrenko went into hiding while radio and television stations went silent. Some government officials remained at their posts, trying to determine exactly what was happening in Moscow.[26]

Dudayev, the Chechen National Congress and their allies, the Vainakh Democratic Party[27], acted resolutely and permanently claimed the spotlight and political momentum.[28] Their timing could not have been better. They assembled the executive

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[24] Broxup, Marie Bennigsen, "After the Putsch, 1991", in The North Caucasus Barrier: The Russian Advance Towards the Muslim World, Hurst & Co. Ltd. Publishers, London, 1992, p. 221.
[25] Kline, "The Conflict in Chechnya".
[26] Broxup, "After the Putsch, 1991", pp. 221-222.
[27] The Vainakh Democratic Party was headed by Zelimkhan Yandarbiev, who would later become Vice President and President of Chechnya.
[28] Goldenberg, p. 184.

committee of the Congress in one of the government buildings, set up communications with Khasbulatov and Aslankhanov in Moscow, made contact with sympathetic groups in other North Caucasian territories, called for civil disobedience against the coup plotters and sent out messengers to the various districts of Chechnya and Ingushetia.[29] Spontaneous demonstrations soon began in the main square of Grozny and continued around the clock. Yeltsin, Khasbulatov and others tacitly supported the developments in Grozny. They personally considered Doku Zavgaev to be a tool of the Communist establishment and felt that he had supported the coup plotters.[30] Dudayev also called for an indefinitely long general strike.[31] Those in Moscow were too preoccupied with what was going on there to really notice that Dudayev and the CNC had taken a firm hold on Chechnya and that their aim was complete independence.[32] Alternatively, they may have noticed but decided to keep it low key in order to avoid inspiring any other separatist movements. But, this tacit approval also amounted to tacit recognition of Dudayev and the Chechen National Congress as the legitimate authorities in Chechnya.[33]

Kline gives the following description of the events of the next several weeks: "Large demonstrations in Grozny's main square supported Dudayev and the CNC. Zavgaev, who returned from Moscow on August 21, and the official establishment in Chechnya never regained control of the situation in Chechnya; on August 22 Dudayev's

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[29] It is important to remember that Dzokhar Dudayev was a Soviet Air Force general officer in a strategic bomber group. In order to climb the ranks, he had to be politically educated and astute enough to anticipate typical party tactics and courses of action. This may in part explain how it is that he always stayed ahead of Boris Yeltsin and never lost the momentum.

[30] Panico, Christopher, Conflicts in the Caucasus: Russia's War in Chechnya, The Research Institute for the Study of Conflict and Terrorism, London, 1995, p. 5.

[31] Goldenberg, p. 184.

[32] Henze, Paul, Islam in the North Caucasus: The Example of Chechnya, published by RAND, Santa Monica, CA, 1995, p. 29.

followers seized the Grozny television station; on August 24 they pulled down Lenin's statue in the town center; by the end of August a national guard was formed; on September 1-2 the third session of the CNC passed a resolution transferring power in Chechnya to its Executive Committee; and on September 6 the National Guard stormed a meeting of the Chechen-Ingush Supreme Soviet, forced Zavgaev to sign an 'act of abdication' and manhandled and dispersed the deputies. In the melee, Vitaly Kutsenko, the First Secretary of the Communist Party City Committee, jumped from a third-floor window and died as a result of his injuries."[34] Dzokhar Dudayev proclaimed independence on 6 September.[35] Broxup notes that the demonstrations, which began on 19 August continued for three months.[36] It is this forcible dispersal of the Chechen-Ingush Supreme Soviet that the Russian Federation later on brought out in order to underscore the illegitimacy of the Dudayev regime.

Meanwhile, the Russian Federation attempted in vain to regain control of the rapidly moving situation in Chechnya. They sent several emissaries, several of whom were Chechens, to urge restraint and non-violence. On 7 September 1991, Khasbulatov, the Chairman of the Supreme Soviet, went on the national television program *Vesti* and stated that he and the Russian leadership were glad that Zavgaev was gone from power because of his treacherous support of the coup.[37] On 14 September, Khasbulatov came to Grozny in order to persuade the Supreme Soviet, in a special session, to *officially* sack

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[33] Shah-Kazemi, pp. 23-24.
[34] Kline, "The Conflict in Chechnya".
[35] 6 September is one of several holidays celebrated by the Chechens regarding independence. 2 November is the Official Independence Day.
[36] Broxup, "The 'Internal' Muslim Factor in the Politics of Russia: Tatarstan and the North Caucasus", p. 87.

Zavgaev and to disband themselves in favor of a Provisional Council until elections on 17 November. The Supreme Soviet agreed, and a 32-member "Provisional Council" was established. To Dudayev and the CNC, this body was representative of only political factions who were agreeable to the Russians and known by the Russians. Its existence lay purposely contrary and opposed to the existence of the Chechen National Congress. The 17 November elections were to be held in accordance with "existing law" which, to the CNC, was tantamount to allowing the old-guard apparatchiks back in power. Dudayev called this an act of war.[38]

The month of October 1991 was a tense period of time in which Dudayev fell completely out of favor with Moscow. Even though Dudayev had allied himself with Yeltsin and the proponents of democracy, he wanted more than those whom he had supported were willing to give. The Provisional Council failed to come together with any concrete solutions independently of Moscow without tumultuous infighting. However, they did agree to back Moscow's intent to hold Republic-wide elections in late November.

Dudayev, with the backing of large demonstrations continuously gathering in the main square of Grozny and asserting his power and influence, unilaterally declared that elections for President would be held on 27 October.[39] Calling the elections one-month ahead of the Russian timetable, in his view, precluded the Russians from effectively

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[37] Panico, p. 5. Either Khasbulatov was not in the information loop regarding Dudayev or this was a display of utter ignorance on the part of the Russian leadership regarding Dudayev's intentions.
[38] Shah-Kazemi, p. 24.
[39] Kline, "The Conflict in Chechnya".

interfering in the elections.[40] Yet he insisted that the elections be held in a truly democratic manner.

The Vice President of the RSFSR, Aleksandr Rutskoi, along with the heads of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD) and the KGB, came to Grozny to meet with Dudayev on 6-7 October. When Dudayev would not adhere to their demands for compliance with Russian authorities, Rutskoi began the war of words in the press by describing Dudayev and the CNC as a "gang terrorizing the population", members of "illegal armed formations" and "criminals".[41] Rutskoi was clearly playing on the stereotypes held by many Russians at large of Caucasians and the Chechens in particular.[42] The Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation declared in a resolution on 8 October that they were 'concerned' with the situation in the Chechen-Ingush ASSR, recognized the Provisional Council as the only legitimate ruling body of the area and that these 'illegal armed formations' should turn in their weapons immediately.

This resolution had a galvanizing effect in Chechnya.[43] The Chechens only rallied to Dudayev even more after these demands were made. Dudayev claimed that this action by the Supreme Soviet was tantamount to a declaration of war. He then called for a general mobilization of all Chechen males to stand guard against the Russians. 62,000 are claimed to have answered the call as well as volunteers from across the North

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[40] Goldenberg, p. 184.
[41] Kline, "The Conflict in Chechnya". The words, "illegal armed formations" were intentionally used because under the current laws, armed force could be used against any groups which fell into this category of adversary.
[42] There are still racist attitudes held by Russians regarding the "blacks" from the Caucasus region.
[43] It is customary for Chechen men to carry ceremonial daggers in public as an ethnic expression. Many Chechens feared that the daggers would be confiscated as well which to them was a cultural affront.

Caucasus.[44] Rutskoi then upped the ante. He 'reminded' the Russian people back home that close to 300,000 Russians lived in Chechnya and that 'appropriate measures' should be taken to ensure that they were not at risk.[45] On 18 October, Dzokhar Dudayev told the people of Chechnya to prepare for war while warning the leadership in Moscow against meddling in the internal affairs of the sovereign Chechen Republic.[46] On 19 October, Yeltsin delivered an ultimatum that the Chechens meet the requirements of the 8 October Resolution within three days.[47] He should not have made such a demand unless he was willing to immediately back it up. As it turns out, the Chechens called his bluff and he wasn't prepared.

On 27 October, elections were held in which 72% of those eligible voted and of those, Dudayev garnered 90%.[48] On 1 November 1991, Dudayev proclaimed independence in Chechnya and the Chechen National Congress ratified "The Act of Sovereignty of the Chechen Republic". Now, considering itself to be a Union Republic, the Chechen Government proclaimed that it had officially seceded from the Soviet Union

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[44] Goldenberg, p. 185.

[45] Broxup, "After the Putsch, 1991", p. 231. The 27 November 1991 issue of Izvestia claimed that 19,000 ethnic Russians had left Chechnya that year. The 1989 census said there were 308, 985 ethnic Russians in the republic.

[46] Ibid., pp. 230-231.

[47] Ibid., p. 234.

[48] Kline, "The Conflict in Chechnya". However, Goldenberg and Henze say that he only received 85% of the vote. The remaining 10% broke down among other political candidates representing the Green Movement, the Islamic Path, Daimokh (Fatherland) and Vainakh Parties. In either case, he won handily. The Russians heatedly contested the results of this election saying that it was fraudulently rigged. They may be right, but Dudayev rightfully suspected them of planning to attempt the same thing. Dudayev had been a Soviet Air Force General. One had to be fairly cagey and politically savvy in order to attain that high rank in nuclear capable forces. It would not be surprising if he anticipated a typical Soviet tactic.

under the Soviet Constitution, just as the Baltic States had previously done.[49] Dudayev's inauguration was scheduled for 9 November.

These elections were denounced as illegal by the Russian Federation and Boris Yeltsin, who claimed that they were not sanctioned by the proper Federation government bodies as well as against the timetable established by the Provisional Council. On 8 November, the day prior to Dudayev's inauguration, Boris Yeltsin proclaimed a "state of emergency" in Chechnya, ordered the introduction of troops to restore order, closed the borders, banned all demonstrations and meetings, and ordered the confiscation of all firearms.[50] Between 650 and 1,000 troops landed at Khankala military airport just outside Grozny. Some sources say they were Interior Ministry troops, while others say they were Spetsnaz, or Special Forces.[51] In either case, the Chechens were prepared for their arrival. The mayor of Grozny and the head of the Islamic Path Party, Beslan Gantemirov, assembled several hundred militia members who blockaded the city and surrounded the airport where they captured the troops as they arrived at the airfield. Some planes were diverted to Vladikavkaz in North Ossetia when authorities found out what had happened to the flights ahead of them. The men who arrived were disarmed after some brief exchange of gunfire. They were then unceremoniously bussed back to the Russian border. Goldenberg asserts that Khasbulatov had convinced Yeltsin to undertake the military effort. After its dismal and embarrassing failure, Yeltsin and

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[49] Roazen, Diane, Professor University of Massachusetts - Boston, "The Unofficial Abbreviated [1990-1996] Timeline Leading to the Russian-Chechen Truce Agreement" found at http://www.chechnya.org/history/time.html

[50] Henze, p. 30.

[51] Henze claims that the troops flown in to Grozny were Spetsnaz while Christopher Panico claims (p. 4) they were in fact Interior Ministry troops.

Khasbulatov had a permanent falling out.[52] Rossiiskaya Gazeta blamed Russian Vice President Aleksandr Rutskoi.[53]

Dudayev called for 'holy war' later this day. The call for 'holy war' holds a special significance to the Islamic peoples in the North Caucasus. The other nations of the North Caucasus began to *unofficially* send volunteers to Chechnya.[54] On 9 November, as scheduled, Dudayev was sworn in as President of Chechnya. He wore a military uniform and swore his oath on the Koran. Christopher Panico states that there were two results from the first use of military might and the defiant stand taken by Dudayev: "First, it allowed Dudayev to mobilize nationalist feeling in Chechnya against a Russian threat; second, it weakened the anti-Dudayev opposition within the country, which would now be seen as traitorous should it continue its activities in the face of a Russian crackdown."[55] At this point, the perceived Russian hegemony became real.

On 11 November, the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation dealt Yeltsin a political blow that he would not soon recover from. They voted 177 to 4 to oppose Yeltsin's state of emergency in Chechnya, thereby condemning his use of troops, stating that it was illegal for him to use force in this manner. The Supreme Soviet of the Russian Republic asserted its prerogatives. Supreme Soviet member Sergei Sirotkin, stated, "...unlike the former Union Law on a State of Emergency, the Russian Republic law provides for a mandatory procedure whereby a decision to introduce a state of emergency

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[52] Goldenberg, p. 186.
[53] Muravyova, Inna and Minasov, Robert, "A Step Dictated by the Logic of Events", in Rossiiskaya Gazeta, 12 November 1991, p. 1, as printed in Current Digest of the Post Soviet Press, vol. 43, no. 45, p. 14.
[54] Vachnadze, p. 146.
[55] Panico, p. 7.

must be confirmed by a session of the Supreme Soviet."[56] They no doubt feared the implications of introducing military force into a domestic conflict where Russians lived and urged that the situation should best be solved by political rather than military means.[57] They also no doubt recalled the events of August as troops were used to try and unseat the Supreme Soviet itself. They would surely be viewed as hypocrites should they condemn force against themselves while support using it against others.[58] This political chastising of Yeltsin is speculated to be part of his motivation for returning 3 years later.[59]

By the end of 1991, the Russian Federation imposed a porous blockade around the embattled republic. Flights were canceled, banks stopped sending money, foodstuffs were cut way back, to name a few of the efforts. However, the Chechens were able to skirt these obstacles in many cases using various networks of allies and even criminals. Sympathetic groups in Dagestan, Ingushetia and Georgia provided the goods in a series of networks formed during Soviet times and designed to avoid any authority. However, despite their efforts to run the blockade, the Chechens began to immediately feel the pressure economically, especially in terms of retirement pensions. All cash flows to banks were stopped in the blockade as well. For the Russians, this blockade was a kind of self-fulfilling prophecy in that it forced the Chechens into illegal activities for survival,

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[56] Muravyova and Minasov, "A Step Dictated by the Logic of Events", p. 14.
[57] Henze, p. 31.
[58] Kline, "The Conflict in Chechnya".
[59] Ibid.

which in turn enabled the Russian leaders to label the Chechens as criminals and legitimize the invasion.[60]

Stalemate: 1992-1993

Immediately following the 1991 Russian political and military debacle in Chechnya, Dudayev began the process of consolidating his power. The hallmark of Dudayev's rule was his ability to effectively blame the Russian Federation for all the ills of his country. Dudayev maintained the anti-Russian rhetoric and in so doing rallied the people's support at crucial times. Panico quotes a report by International Alert, a human rights watchdog group, saying, "Dudayev's response to any form of opposition criticism has been to stir up fears of Russian intervention, which frustrates efforts to initiate a rational negotiation process with Russia."[61]

Coupled with his rhetoric, Dudayev gathered a cadre of zealously loyal 'bodyguards' as a form of a personal militia, which he used to intimidate his opponents. Goldenberg notes that these militiamen were initially let out of prison during the attempted Russian military intervention in November 1991 in order to form the nucleus of a defense unit which later became Dudayev's personal and loyal guard.[62]

As time passed, the blockade, the zealous militiamen and Dudayev's growing insularity began to upset the local people. His popularity began to wane. Opposition groups began to form in the new Chechen Parliament, which was elected just after Dudayev, in 1991. These opposition groups favored some form of dialogue with Russia

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[60] Shah-Kazemi, p. 27.
[61] Panico, p. 8.

whereby relations would be normalized economically while Chechnya retained sovereignty. Not only did they desire talks with Russia, but they also complained that when Dudayev and the Chechen National Congress took over, all the skilled government officials in Chechnya were let go and that, "Individuals from the 'shadow economy' filled these posts with the expressed goal of enriching themselves at the expense of the state."[63] Dudayev opposed any form of talks with Russia unless they first signed a peace treaty and then recognized Chechen sovereignty and independence. But pressure kept mounting against Dudayev as banks ran out of money since the Russian Central Bank no longer supplied Chechen banks with any cash.[64] Industries began to shut down from lack of capital, and people did not get paid. Retirees, many of whom were ethnic Russians, stopped receiving their pension checks.

However, the dilemma faced by the opposition groups was immense. On the one hand, they wanted to advance their agenda and start a dialogue with Moscow. Each time they tried, Dudayev accused them of working for Moscow and successfully demonized them in the face of the highly nationalistic Chechens. They would have to back down. One bold group within the opposition, however, attempted to overthrow Dudayev in conjunction with anti-Dudayev protests. On 31 March 1992, an attempted coup was initiated, but Dudayev masterfully turned the tables when he convinced the crowds that the coup plotters were agents of the Moscow regime and pointed out that they violated

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[62] Goldenberg, pp. 186-187.
[63] Panico, p. 8.
[64] Ibid.

Islamic Law by taking such actions in the month of Ramadan.[65] Goldenberg notes that the coup attempt came in conjunction with the seizures of Russian arms at the Chechen border.[66] She also notes that Dudayev successfully claimed that Khasbulatov and Zavgaev, both of who were effectively discredited at this point, arranged to have these weapons smuggled into Chechnya in order to start a civil war. Goldenberg concluded that once they were in power, their aim was to sign Chechnya onto the Federation Treaty.[67] At this time, the Chechen parliament granted Dudayev "unlimited emergency powers".[68]

Dudayev, in his own way, tried to establish a foreign policy during this time frame as well. The Georgian leader, Zviad Gamsakhurdia, and Dudayev issued a joint communiqué calling for the "Union of the Caucasian States", thus reviving romantic notions of the times when all the North Caucasian ethnicities allegedly lived in relative peace prior to the arrival of the Russians.[69] According to Diane Roazen, President Zviad Gamsakhurdia of the Georgian Republic officially recognized the independence of Chechnya on 13 March 1992.[70] Since then, some additional diplomatic overtures have been made to countries such as Finland, Estonia, Poland, Jordan and Turkey. The Chechen national flag was hoisted in front of the headquarters of the Organization of

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[65] Khazikhanov, Ali, "Opposition Tries to Seize Power", in Izvestia, 1 April 1992, pp. 1-2, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 44, no. 13, p. 22.
[66] Goldenberg, pp. 189-190.
[67] Ibid.
[68] Khazikhanov, "Opposition Tries to Seize Power", p. 22.
[69] Khazikhanov, Ali, "Gamsakhurdia and Dudayev Adopt Joint Communiqué", in Izvestia, 20 February 1992, p. 2, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 44, no. 7, p. 22.
[70] Gamsakhurdia was eventually toppled in favor of Eduard Shevardnadze, the former Soviet Foreign Minister, who repealed that recognition. Gamsakhurdia fled to Chechnya where he was given asylum. He was later assassinated.

Unrepresented People's in The Hague.[71] However, one journalist noted that the type of diplomacy used by the Chechens did more harm than good, "...with ill-conceived foreign policy steps that are far removed from reality, [and] violated generally accepted norms of international law and diplomatic canons."[72]

In Moscow, anti-Chechen sentiment began to rise publicly. Virulent anti-Chechen letters began to appear in newspapers. Pravda published an article in which the Chechen community in Moscow was accused of raping women as a hobby and for engaging in the slave trade.[73]

By this time, Boris Yeltsin had successfully led the effort to dismantle the Soviet Union. Now the task before him was to reassemble a new state. The first step in this process would be to establish the Russian Federation with a Federation Treaty. After making deals with the various republics and granting differing degrees of sovereignty, all the members of the former RSFSR signed the Federation Treaty except for Tatarstan and Chechnya. Tatarstan eventually did sign the Treaty in April 1994 but only after coaxing many economic concessions and maximum sovereignty short of independence out of the Federation leadership. Mary Martha Matthews concluded that it was electoral politics, which provided the impetus for the methods of coercion used. Boris Yeltsin wanted to please two distinct groups at the time of each conflict.[74]

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[71] Pachegina, Natalya, "Chechnya is Free in its Own Way: The Republic Through the Eyes of a Well-Wisher", in Nezavisimaya Gazeta, 13 January 1993, p. 3, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 45, no. 2, p. 24.

[72] Yelagin, Vyachslav, "Free-Lance Diplomacy by Members of Russian Federation Could Harm World Community's Interests", in Nezavisimaya Gazeta, 18 November 1992, p. 4, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 44, no. 46, p. 22.

[73] Kislinskaya, Larisa, "The Mafia's Brutal Hobby", in Pravda, 19 May 1992, p. 4.

[74] Matthews, Mary Martha, The Impact of Electoral Politics on Russian Secessionist Movements: Chechnya and Tatarstan Compared, MA Thesis, University of Georgia, 1995, p. 82.

After the political rebuff from the Supreme Soviet, Yeltsin seemed to develop and implement a policy whereby official Russian Federation authorities would not acknowledge the leadership of Chechnya and would only claim that Chechnya was an integral part of the Russian Federation and that the current regime was not the legitimate ruling body in Chechnya. Evidently, he hoped that the economic blockade would take its toll and an internal opposition would develop and unseat Dudayev. It became clear later on that Yeltsin's regime actively supported the opposition through covert means.

Other ethnic conflicts began to arise at this time as well. The Ingush-North Ossetian conflict began in the summer of 1992. The conflicts in Abkhazia, Moldova, Tajikistan and Nagorno-Karabakh continued to boil over. Of them all, the Ingush-North Ossetian conflict concerned the Chechens the most of all. Nezavisimaya Gazeta reported in November 1992 that the Chechens began to erect barricades along the border with Ingushetia while the Russian forces conducted, "daily 'demonstrations'...using all the noise and light effects they have at their disposal in order to make the atmosphere resemble front-line conditions as closely as possible."[75] The border remains non-demarcated to this day. The Russians also began to deploy Interior Ministry forces to Dagestan's western provinces, Khasavyurt in particular, in order to "maintain law and order" on Chechnya's border.[76] These troops would meet with local resistance and pressure during their entire stay.

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[75] Pachegina, Natalya, "The North Caucasus: Ingushetia: Blockade, Hostages, The Border – More Russian Talks", in Nezavisimaya Gazeta, 18 November 1992, p. 1, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 44, no. 46, p. 28.

[76] Batryrshin, Radik, "Moscow Sends Troops into Dagestan", in Nezavisimaya Gazeta, 9 September 1992, p. 3, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 44, no. 36, p. 27.

Newly appointed Deputy Prime Minister and new chairman of the State Committee on Nationalities Policy Sergei Shakhrai said that Russia, "...is prepared to use force to defend their 'priority interests' in the Caucasus," plus the activity of the Russian forces, created great angst in Chechnya. Dzokhar Dudayev extended his own state of emergency and demanded that the president be granted broader powers to deal with the potential crisis with Russia. However, these demands precipitated a crisis within the Chechen government itself. Many in the new Parliament had grown at odds with Dudayev's decrees and bodyguards as well as his ministerial appointments that were supposedly connected with criminal elements. The economy worsened due to the blockade and many were beginning to go hungry. Opposition forces began to develop at this time in the various regions of Chechnya and within the Parliament.[77]

The Russian leadership tried to isolate and bypass Dudayev by sending Shakhrai (who was not particularly welcome) and Ramazan Abdulatipov, Chairman of the Russian Supreme Soviet Council of Nationalities, to Grozny to hold talks with the Parliamentary leaders. These talks seemed to hold some promise of progress. Dudayev tried to intimidate the Russians and the Parliament by delaying the emissaries' flight and rolling armored vehicles around the Parliament building during the talks. The meeting participants agreed on a protocol for future talks on "normalization". Husein Akhmadov, the Parliamentary Speaker, stated that he viewed this agreement as tacit recognition of the Chechen republic while the Russian side still insisted that the end result would be that

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[77] Muzayev, Timur, "Grozny Expects Invasion by Russian Troops – Crisis Brewing for Chechnya's Leadership", in Nezavisimaya Gazeta, 15 January 1993, p. 3, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 45, no. 2, pp. 23-24.

Chechnya would remain within the Federation.[78] Within these negotiations, Russia was taking a different approach than in the past. They were no longer "Big Brother", but "Equal Partner".[79]

At this point, Boris Yeltsin practically ruined any chance of working out an agreement when he signed a decree on reorganization of the North Caucasian Military District (NCMD) and arming the Cossacks. Under the decree, units from Transcaucasia would be brought up to the NCMD, while the longtime enemies of the Chechens, the Cossacks, would receive state support and armaments. Dudayev successfully demonized this announcement and began to turn the tide against the opposition. Abdulatipov was furious and blasted Yeltsin in the press saying, "The President's decree...literally nullifies all of Sergei Shakhrai's and my efforts to normalize the situation and returns us to the era of the war against Shamil."[80] As the people rallied to Dudayev, the split between the opposition and Dudayev grew into a chasm.

The opposition, while mainly demanding a referendum on the President, continued to try and rally support while Dudayev continued to accuse the Russians of manipulating the Parliament and interfering in internal Chechen matters. According to Christopher Panico, Dudayev installed a curfew and dissolved Parliament on 17 April 1993 as well as dissolving the city government under Beslan Gantemirov.[81] In response,

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[78] Chigaev, Sergei, "Talks in Grozny Provide Hope for an End to the Confrontation in the Northern Caucasus", in Izvestia, 18 January 1993, pp. 1-2, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 45, no. 3, p.25. Dudayev also sent a telegram to Shakhrai in which he said the Minister's safety could not be guaranteed.

[79] Ibid.

[80] Abdulatipov, Ramazan, "The Decree Offends Everyone", in Moskovskiye Novosti, 11 April 1993, p. A2, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 45, no. 14, p. 16.

[81] Gantemirov was the leader of the forces that stopped Yeltsin's introduction of troops at the airport in November 1991. Henze, p. 30, notes that he was head of the Islamic Path Party.

the Parliament attempted to impeach Dudayev and the Chechen Constitutional Court ruled against Dudayev's actions. Therefore, the Parliament continued to operate.

On 11 May 1993, Yaragi Mamodayev, who had been Dudayev's Vice Premier, formed the opposition group known as the "Popular Trust Cabinet" and once again tried to negotiate with Moscow, independent of the President. The Parliament unilaterally set the referendum vote for 5 June 1993. Ironically, Dudayev wanted it set for a later date.[82] On 3 June, Dudayev disbanded the Constitutional Court and on 4 June, pro-Dudayev forces forcefully broke up the opposition demonstrations. Up to 50 people is believed to have died.[83] At the time, Mamodayev and his delegation were in Moscow for negotiations. Dudayev stripped them and Ruslan Khasbulatov of their citizenship.[84] Dudayev claimed, once again, that Moscow was behind the demonstrators' activities and that they intended to sell out the Chechen people. Panico also speculates as to whether or not the reason for the splits between the opposition and Dudayev weren't motivated by oil profit sharing and black marketing.[85] The opposition, facing a hostile President and local Dudayev supporters, broke down into various armed camps throughout Chechnya and would become the elements of local support, which the Russians attempted to utilize later on.

On 23 July 1993, the Chechens and Ingush signed a treaty on the final demarcation of their common state border. However, their official statement read,

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[82] Recall that in Fall, 1991, Dudayev wanted Presidential elections held early while the opposition wanted them later. Here the tables have been turned. This indicates that groups with political momentum would rather have things settled quickly as possible in order to avoid any changes.
[83] Panico, p. 9.
[84] Pachegina, Natalya, "Khasbulatov Deprived of His Homeland", in Nezavisimaya Gazeta, 4 June 1993, pp. 1,3, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 45, no. 22, p. 7.
[85] Panico, p. 10.

"Affirming their mutual interest in maintaining peace in the Northern Caucasus, the signatories pledge, first of all, *not* [my italics] to establish a state border between Chechnya and Ingushetia, and second, not to allow any third party to participate or mediate in talks on territorial demarcation." Delegations from the United States, France, Belgium, Lebanon and Turkey were present.[86] Indeed, this presented a conundrum for the Russian Federation in that a signatory of the Federation Treaty was conducting 'domestic' business in an international setting. There was nothing that the Russian Federation could do about it.

Throughout the Spring-Fall, 1993, the refugee problem started to increase in magnitude. Economic problems were seen as the most pressing problems for Russia as a whole, but they were particularly acute in the Northern Caucasus where refugees poured out of Chechnya and the Ingush-North Ossetian conflict zone.[87] Economic issues and democratic reforms occupied the most important concerns of the people in 1992-1993.[88]

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[86] Pachegina, Natalya, "What Do You We Need With That Sinking Ship, Russia?", in Nezavisimaya Gazeta, 24 July 1993, p. 3, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 45, no. 30, p. 29.

[87] Gross national income was down by 67.8% from 1991 figures while industrial and agricultural concerns were about to collapse completely. See Muzayev, Timur, "Dudayev Goes for Broke – Political Crisis in Chechen Republic Turns Into Armed Civil Conflict", in Nezavisimaya Gazeta, 8 June 1993, p. 3, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 45, no. 23, pp. 23-24.

[88] One economic concern for the Russian Federation Government was the continual robbing of trains passing through Chechen territory from Azerbaijan. Previously, Chechnya and Azerbaijan maintained good relations whereby Chechen mercenaries would fight on the side of the Azerbaijanis in their conflict with the Armenians. In return, Chechen goods would be shipped under the Azerbaijani flag and unofficial contacts would be made diplomatically with other countries. When Geidar Aliyev became President of Azerbaijan, he did not honor these 'agreements'. The train robberies were undertaken as a matter of revenge for Aliyev's pro-Moscow stances, not to mention badly needed supplies. See Gafarly, Mekhman, "Revenge For Betrayal – Azerbaijani Trains Are Robbed on Chechen Territory", in Sevodnya, 7 December 1993, p. 5, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 45, no. 49, p. 15. See also Henze, p. 33.

Chechnya did not register in the top ten either year, which indicates either a lack of public awareness or popular satisfaction with the attempts at negotiation.[89]

However, the most important event for 1993 occurred in October when Boris Yeltsin dissolved the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet and Constitutional Court. Yeltsin then called for general elections on 12 December 1993 as well as a referendum on a new Constitution.[90] A few days before the elections, President Yeltsin traveled to Nazran, in Ingushetia, where he once again declared that Chechnya was a part of the Russian Federation.[91] On Election Day, Chechnya did not participate and did not send a representative to either the Federation Council or the Duma.[92]

On 16-17 December 1993, armed men entered the Grozny television and radio station while armed formations surrounded the presidential palace. They demanded that the President steps down and that Republic-wide Parliamentary elections be held. Both sides decided to hold negotiations and agreed that, "interference in the republic's internal affairs by a third party, meaning Russia, is impermissible."[93]

1994: Civil War and Intervention

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[89] Levada, Yury, "Lessons of a Difficult Year", in Moskovskiye Novosti, No. 1, 2-9 January 1994, p. A6, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 46, no. 1, p.12.

[90] Violence erupted in the streets of Moscow as supporters of the parliamentarians and armed forces clashed. Eventually, Khasbulatov and Rutskoi were sent to prison as ringleaders of an attempted coup. They were eventually amnestied. At this time, as well, the Russian Federation sought to change its obligations under the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty in order to retain more armed force in the NCMD, perhaps anticipating armed conflict. See Thomas, p. 7.

[91] Dzhanashia, Vakhung, "From the Mountains of the Caucasus to the Fields of Belgium", in Sevodnya, 8 December 1993, p. 1, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 45, no. 49, p. 13.

[92] Gorodetskaya, Natalya, "Chechnya's Authorities Oppose Participation in Russian Elections", in Sevodnya, 6 November 1993, p. 2, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 45, no. 45, p. 23.

[93] Mikhailovna, Natalia, "This Time There Was No Shooting", in Nezavisimaya Gazeta, 18 December 1993, p. 3, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 45, no. 51, pp. 17-18.

The New Year saw the new name of the Chechen Republic. Dudayev decreed that their country should henceforth be known as the Chechen Republic-Ichkeria. "The second name has been introduced for the purpose of preserving the historical name of the territory."[94] Ichkeria is a forested region in the more mountainous area of Chechnya from whence particularly strong resistance against the Tsars came. These forested mountain areas were traditional areas of refuge from the Tsar's armies and largely impregnable.

By April, however, life had become much more difficult for the remaining residents of Chechnya. Armed gangs were rampant and food was scarce, especially for the ethnic Russians who had nowhere to turn for help. Many Chechens could leave the cities for the countryside where relatives lived.[95] The Russians mostly had to leave the country or hole up in their own homes. This eroded the popular base of the opposition. Dudayev was intelligent enough to know that he had to talk to the Russians and called for negotiations as an equal member of the CIS.[96]

Christopher Panico notes a quandary, which developed for both sides at around this time. For the Russians, they had successfully painted Dudayev and the Chechens as a band of criminals who illegitimately ruled the republic. Therefore, they could not enter into negotiations or compromise on their demands lest the Chechens be recognized and they look like hypocrites. Dudayev had cultivated the image of the Russians and the

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[94] _____, "Chechnya Changes Its Name", in Izvestia, 19 January 1994, p. 1, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 46, no. 3, p. 17.
[95] Roget, Olivier, "Grozny Under Siege", in Sevodnya, 24 December 1994, p. 3, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 46, no. 51, p. 8.
[96] Panico, p. 11.

opposition forces as pure evil and could not negotiate nor compromise for the same reasons.[97]

It is at this time that a civil war developed in Chechnya. It was one in which the Russian Federation disclaimed involvement until it was caught red-handed and supremely humiliated.

The Parliamentary opposition which had previously adjourned to their countryside home districts faded away in favor of armed groups run by warlords. Meanwhile, Dzokhar Dudayev consolidated his power in Grozny and the mountain regions. These warlords commanded various amounts of troops and were well armed. However, their support was only regionally based. They also distrusted each other and therefore, could not muster any kind of coordinated effort against Dudayev. These "field commanders", as they became known later on, opposed Dudayev for various reasons. Umar Avtorkhanov favored inclusion of Chechnya within the Russian Federation and previously headed the Marsho faction in the Parliament. His forces numbered roughly 1,000 and enjoyed the support of Russia. Beslan Gantemirov, based in Urus-Martan, despised Dudayev for the death of his relatives in the 4 June attack on the demonstrators and for the oil-profits dealings. Ruslan Labazanov, a convicted murderer and former head of the Presidential Guard, commanded roughly 200 fighters in Argun and blamed Dudayev for the death of his brother in the 4 June massacre. Both Gantemirov and Labazanov swore blood feuds with Dudayev. Finally, Ruslan Khasbulatov set himself up as a "peacekeeper" in Tolstoi-Yurt and offered cooperation with the various groups.[98] An

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[97] Ibid.
[98] Ibid., pp. 11-13.

attempt on Dudayev's life, evidently the fifth one, began to create a myth of invincibility around Dudayev; plus it enabled him to demonstrate to his fellow Chechens that the Russians were intimately involved in the assassination attempt. He showed that the ordnance used to detonate the bomb near his motorcade was from the Russian Federation arsenal.[99]

By August 1994, it became readily apparent that the Russian Federation was monetarily backing the Provisional Council of Umar Avtorkhanov and also urging that they and Khasbulatov and the other warlords unite against Dudayev.[100] Dudayev was evidently smart enough to divine that war was coming so he began preparations. He shut down all flights in and out of Chechnya and blacked out Russian Television, promised that more than 600,000 men were to be called up for service and staged rallies in Grozny.[101] Meanwhile, Boris Yeltsin pledged, "Forcible intervention in Chechnya is impermissible,...we in Russia have succeeded in avoiding interethnic clashes only because we have refrained from forcible pressure. If we violate this principle with regard to Chechnya, the Caucasus will rise up. There will be so much turmoil and blood that afterwards, no one will forgive us."[102] Most of all, the Chechens.

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[99] Leontyeva, Lyudmila, "Khasbulatov and Dudayev Want To Meet Yeltsin", in Moskovskiye Novosti, 29 May-5 June, 1994, no. 22, p. A9, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 46, no. 22, p. 13. Also, see Appendix 1: One of the legends of Shamil is how he was left for dead by the Russian soldiers, but miraculously cheated death and was subsequently considered by many to be invincible. Dudayev rapidly began to get that label as well.

[100] Shermatova, Sanobar, et al, "Three Vendees and One Moscow", in Moskovskiye Novosti, 7-14 August 1994, no. 32, p. 4, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 46, no. 31, p. 2. The Russian Federation was disbursing rubles to the Provisional Council ostensibly to pay back wages and pensions; however, the real purpose was for the purchase of weaponry.

[101] Gorodetskaya, Natalya, "Grozny Cancels Airline Flights and Blacks Out Russian Television", in Sevodnya, 13 August 1994, p. 2, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 46, no. 32, p. 11.

[102] _____, "Yeltsin Opposes Intervention By Force", in Nezavisimaya Gazeta, 12 August 1991, p. 1, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 46, no. 32, p. 12.

Battles erupted all over Chechnya at the end of August between opposition groups and Dudayev's government forces. However, the opposition forces were nearly annihilated due to their lack of coordination and the superior training and equipment of the Chechen militia. Avtorkhanov had fallen out of favor with the people prior to the battles due to his obvious connection with the Russians. Moscow cast its lot with Khasbulatov, who used his name recognition to try and rally support for the opposition.[103] However, he was as much a pariah throughout Chechnya as Boris Yeltsin. Included in the fighting were helicopter attacks, aerial bombardments, rockets and tanks manned by Russian crews. Some of these soldiers were captured, including a Federal Counterintelligence Service Lieutenant Colonel. Russian Defense Ministry spokesmen denied these reports.[104] Cholera was also claimed to have broken out in Chechnya.[105]

Throughout the fall, battles continued to rage between Dudayev's forces and opposition groups. However, these opposition groups once again could not coordinate their attacks and fell into petty bickering. Dudayev managed to hold out in Grozny despite overt Federation aid to the opposition in the form of helicopter gunships and armor. All the while, Defense ministry personnel, including the Minister of Defense himself, Pavel Grachev, continued to deny that Russian forces were involved in any way. On 26 November 1994, the opposition main attack came in the form of an all out combined arms assault on Grozny. But, the forces that entered the city were repelled.

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[103] Balburov, Dmitry, "Khasbulatov is Back in the Saddle", in Moskovskiye Novosti, 28 August-4 September, 1994, p. 10, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 46, no.35. p. 12.
[104] Pachegina, Natalya, "Blood is Spilled in Urus-Martan", in Nezavisimaya Gazeta, 3 September 1994, p. 1, 3, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 46, no. 35, p. 14-15.
[105] Vershillo, Roman, "There Will Be a Quarantine Around Chechnya", in Sevodnya, 1 September 1994, p. 2, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 46, no. 35, p. 22.

Proof of the lies told by the Defense Ministry and Yeltsin's broken pledge became evident when 19 Russian soldiers and officers were captured by Dudayev's forces, displayed on Grozny television and interviewed in a Russian newspaper.[106] Grachev continued to deny Russian involvement and called the captured soldiers mercenaries.[107] Trips to secure the release of the prisoners by Duma members to Grozny soon followed those. No longer could the Russian Government be guaranteed favorable press coverage as their Soviet counterparts once had.

Grachev finally admitted that Russian aircraft were used in the assault on Grozny on 5 December. Grachev met with Dudayev, hat in hand, on 6 December in an effort to win release of the prisoners. Dudayev played one of his first "Russian sympathy" cards when he solemnly announced that he, as a soldier and a general officer, would return these lads because it was only fair to them and their families. Dudayev knew that most of these prisoners were just conscripts. Had he harmed them, then he would have turned Russian public opinion against his cause.

Chechnya was now the main story in the Russian press and would soon be the only thing on the minds of the Russian people. The Russian Security Council convened often in an effort to find a solution to the Chechen crisis. Finally, President Yeltsin, on 9 December, issued a decree in which he directed, "the Russian Federation government, ...to use all means at the state's disposal to ensure state security, legality and citizens'

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[106] Gritchin, Nikolai, "How the Federal Counterintelligence Service Recruited and Then Abandoned Russian Servicemen", in Izvestia, 7 December 1994, p. 2, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 46, no. 49, p. 2. The officers recounted how they were recruited by the FCS, paid large sums of cash, flown secretly to Mozdok, issued unmarked tanks and placed under the command of Chechen opposition field commanders. In hindsight, they were sure that if the operation were completed, the Chechens would have murdered them all.

rights and liberties, safeguard public order, combat crime and disarm all illegal formations," in Chechnya.[108]

The introduction of armed force was initiated by President Yeltsin and backed by his Security Council. It was done without the consent of either the Duma or the Federation Council.[109] Both the Duma and the Federation Council resolved that the government should solve the matter peacefully. This was the extent of their power since the President bypassed the Legislature by *not* issuing a state of emergency which would have required approval of the Federation Council and would have precluded the use of Defense Ministry forces.[110]

The War

On 11 December 1994, forty-thousand Russian Defense Ministry, Interior Ministry and Federal Counter-Intelligence Service troops, under the command of Colonel-General Alexy Mityukin, converged on Chechnya along three axes of advance: "Kizlyar" from the East, "Mozdok" from the North and "Vladikavkaz" from the West. These three groups of forces followed the high-speed avenues of approach, namely the

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[107] Eismont, Maria and Kuznets, Dmitry, "The Chechen Opposition Loses the Battle for Grozny", in Sevodnya, 29 November 1994, p. 1, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 46, no. 48, p.5.
[108] _____, "Decree On Measures to Bring an End to the Activity of Illegal Armed Formations on the Territory of the Chechen Republic and in the Zone of the Ossetian-Ingush Conflict", in Sevodnya, 10 December 1994, p. 1, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 46, no. 49, p. 6.
[109] Zhuravylov, Pyotr and Parkhomenko, Sergei, "The Duma Does Not Answer the President's Questions", in Sevodnya, 14 December 1994, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 46, no. 50, p. 10.
[110] Thomas, p. 10.

North Caucasus highway. However, the attack became bogged down from the very beginning.[111]

Russian planners envisioned this operation having four phases. Phase One (28 November - 6 December) was the Preparation phase in which all necessary resources (troops, equipment, supplies, etc.) were marshaled, command and staff coordination exercises were held and troop train-up was to take place. Phase Two (7-9 December) was the Attack phase where the troops would advance to encircle Grozny and then secure the Chechen border from the inside out. In Phase Three (10-13 December), all forces in the encirclement would close the ring around Grozny, eventually meeting at the Sunzha river demarcation line and eliminating any resistance along the way. Phase Four (5-10 days after Phase III) was intended for mop-up operations and a transition of command to the Interior Ministry. Needless to say, their plan did not survive initial contact with the enemy.[112]

The President's Security Council was the controlling authority for this operation. Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin headed up the effort at first while First Vice Premier Oleg Soskovets created and ran an operations center for monitoring the operation and other Chechnya related events across the country. In Chechnya, Nikolai Yegorov, the new Nationalities Minister and Presidential Representative in Chechnya, controlled all federal agencies associated with this operation.[113] This command and control structure appeared to completely bypass the General Staff in Moscow, which is the operational arm

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[111] Celestan, Gregory J., Major, US Army, "Wounded Bear: The ongoing Russian Military Operation in Chechnya", found at http://leav-www.army.mil/fmso/geo/pubs/chech.html.
[112] Ibid.

for security policy and was one of the key reasons for the failure of this operation.[114] Leonid Smirnyagin, a Presidential Council member, said that if there were any unforeseen complications then commanders in the field and power ministry heads would start setting policy goals and acting autonomously.[115] His prediction would come true.

Dudayev's strategy had two elements. First, he would conduct a three-ringed defense-in-depth with Grozny as the focal point. In the outer ring, he would harass the Russian forces with civilian civil disobedience, roadblocks, cratering and sniper fire. In the second ring, which was 20-30 km outside Grozny, he would employ his maneuver forces and artillery and mortar fires to destroy as much Russian combat strength as possible. These forces, which were vulnerable to Russian air power, would fall back to Grozny shortly thereafter. In Grozny, he planned to fight a siege battle with barricades, obstacles and ambush sites throughout the city. The second part of the strategy was contingent upon the success of the first. If Grozny fell, he would retreat to the mountains and wage a guerrilla war.[116] The longer Dudayev held out, the better. One of his objectives was, "...to damage the morale of the Russian soldier and political leadership and to mobilize Russian public opinion against the intervention."[117] Apparently he succeeded.

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[113] Kononenko, Vasily, "War in Chechnya is War Against Russia", in Izvestia, 9 December 1994, p. 1, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 46, no. 49, p. 5.
[114] Thomas, p. 14.
[115] Kononenko, Vasily, "Civilian Control Over the Operation is Eroding", in Izvestia, 15 December 1994, p. 2, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 46, no. 50, p. 4.
[116] Thomas, p. 38.
[117] Ibid., p. 42.

Defense Minister Pavel Grachev reportedly boasted about how one Airborne Regiment could subdue Grozny in two hours.[118] Later on, he spoke about how the preparations for the operation went smoothly.[119] However, eleven general officers in the Ground Forces sent a letter to the Duma on 9 December that decried the poor condition of the units in the coming conflict. It warned that the disintegration of the Army itself was at risk.[120] Some forces went into the conflict at 50% strength.

Once the attack began, Dudayev's outer ring proved to be highly effective, especially on the "Kizlyar" and "Vladikavkaz" axes. Thomas indicates that there was a near total breakdown of discipline as soldiers began to surrender or disable their own vehicles. Some commanders refused to advance.[121] The first units arrived on the outskirts of Grozny nine days later on 20 December from the "Mozdok" axis.[122]

Unfortunately for the Russian soldiers, the political leadership in Moscow was anxious to get the intervention over with. They ordered the implementation of Phase Three before Phase Two was complete. The Chechen fighting force was estimated at 20-30,000 strong. Assuming that even half of that was defending the city, assaulting Grozny while the perimeter was not complete was sheer folly because it allowed the Chechens to move reinforcements and supplies in and out of the city. Pundits began heaping criticism upon the Administration and the military.[123]

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[118] Moscow RIA, 29 November 1994, in FBIS-SOV-94-235A, 7 December 1994, p. 13.
[119] Celestan.
[120] Thomas, p. 39.
[121] Ibid., p. 37.
[122] Celestan.
[123] Felgengauer, Pavel, "An Operation That No One Likes", in Izvestia, 20 December 1994, p. 1, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 46, no. 51, p. 9.

On New Year's Eve, Russian forces assaulted Grozny in an attempt to strike a decisive blow. However, the prepared Chechens allowed the armored columns to enter the city where they were promptly ambushed and decimated. "In the 131st Motorized Rifle Brigade, ...only 18 out of 120 vehicles escaped destruction in the city fighting and almost all of the Brigade's officers were killed. One of the officers who survived said that his unit received fire from all sides near the train station."[124] These forces were foolishly sent in without dismounted infantry support or air cover.[125]

To make up for their lack of urban warfare skills, the Russian forces began to rely on artillery and air support firepower to attack the Chechens.[126] Civilian casualties were the result of this tactic, which was used indiscriminately. They continued despite President Yeltsin's 27 December broadcast in which he ordered the ceasing of such attacks.

The President was beginning to be criticized harshly. Sergei Kovalyov, a Duma member and the President's own Federation Human Rights Commissioner, went to Grozny on 15 December with a team and began to make reports about civilian casualties from Russian bombs and shells as well as the plight of the city residents. He appealed to the President to stop and negotiate with Dudayev.[127] By this time, the results of initial

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[124] Ibid.
[125] Thomas, p. 33.
[126] Celestan.
[127] Yakov, Valery, "How Many More Children Must Die In Chechnya Before Moscow Hears Kovalyov's Voice?", in Izvestia, 23 December 1994, p. 2, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 46, no. 51, pp. 6-7.

polling data on public attitudes about Chechnya were released and indicated a 59% opposition to the war.[128]

On 9 January 1995, Russian forces finally captured the train station. The Chechens meanwhile maintained strongholds in the city, out of which they conducted raids and ambushes. Meanwhile, in Moscow, efforts were being made in the legislature to stop the conflict, but the proposed measures could not find enough support among the nationalist-dominated Duma.[129] In mid-January, the Russian Federation was forced to discuss an OSCE mission in Chechnya due to their agreement of less than a month prior in Hungary.[130] The Russian tricolor was finally raised over the Presidential Palace on 19 January. President Yeltsin announced that the military phase was now over and that Phase Four would finally begin.[131] But the city remained unsealed, which allowed Chechen re-supply and eventually retreat with a fair amount of combat power. The city was finally sealed off on 22 February.

After the sealing off of the city, Russian forces pushed outward in order to regain control over the Chechen Republic territory. Russian forces attacked Gudermes, Argun and Shali in March in an attempt to pin down large groups of fighters. Gudermes was significant in that it was also the center of the Chechen petroleum industry and a main junction on the Transneft oil pipeline from Azerbaijan into Russia. However, resistance

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[128] Levada, Yury, "The People and the War: The Majority are Opposed", in Izvestia, 23 December 1994, pp. 1-2, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 46, no. 51, pp. 11-12.
[129] Zhuravylov, Pyotr and Parkhomenko, Sergei, "The Results of the Duma's Debates Will Make No Impression on the Kremlin", in Sevodnya, 14 January 1995, p. 1, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 47, no. 2, p. 14.
[130] Abarinov, Vladimir, "The OSCE: A Mountain Gives Birth to a Mouse", in Sevodnya, 14 January 1995, p. 1, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 47, no. 2. p. 23.
[131] _____, "Statement by the President of Russia", in Rossiiskiye Vesti, 20 January 1995, p. 1, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 47, no. 3, p. 20.

came from just about every village and town along the way. Meanwhile, Russian forces began to receive reinforcements from all across the Federation.

As planned by Dudayev, a guerrilla war began in which Chechen fighters took to the mountains and hid in various inaccessible villages and terrain, but fighting for every village along the way.[132] The Russian forces continued to push for military victory but found it illusive as the Chechens could not be pinned down. The Chechen forces, under the command of various 'field commanders', conducted raids and ambushes against Russian units as well as deep raids in the Russian rear areas in order to disrupt supply lines as well as re-supply their own forces. This type of guerrilla warfare in conjunction with inexperienced Russian units and disillusioned troops, who had been in Chechnya a while, led to a predictable tactical pattern. Russian forces would surround a village and announce their intention to attack the village. They would hit the village with an artillery barrage and then assault it with armored vehicles while cutting it off from the outside.[133]

On 8 April, southwest of Grozny, Russian forces committed the worst atrocities of the war when they used this tactic on the village of Samashki. Witnesses report that before the barrage hit, they got into their basements for cover. When the assault came, the dismounted soldiers, wearing black armbands, went through the town setting fire to houses, shooting civilians and throwing hand grenades into the basements. Over 250 Chechens died as a result and the incident was reported in the Russian and international

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[132] Yemelyanenko, Vladimir, "War of Attrition", in Moskovskiye Novosti, 19-26 February 1995, p. 5, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 47, no. 7, p. 7.
[133] Ibid.

press.[134] Human rights Commissioner Sergei Kovalyov went into the area and reported back what he saw. Several Federation Council members also went to Samashki and proclaimed that they wanted these "soldiers" tried for murder.[135] This incident served to damage the cause of the Russian Federation on the home front much as My-Lai did to the American cause in Vietnam and also served to harden Chechen resistance against Russian efforts.[136]

On 20 April, Bamut fell to the Russians. Bamut had been a strategic rocket and missile base for the Soviet Union in southwestern Chechnya. Its facilities were hardened and required extensive firepower to destroy. Dudayev's headquarters had been in the hardened shelters in Bamut. Back in Moscow, the next day, the Russian Federation leadership accepted the permanent placement of an OSCE mission in Chechnya.[137] This, to the leadership, was not a welcome event because it gave the situation in Chechnya an international facet, which it did not have previously. Of course, they had no one else to blame but themselves because the previous summer, they signed an accord in Budapest in which they had lobbied for the very provision which was being used against them in Chechnya. They had no choice but to agree.

The 9th of May was the fiftieth anniversary of the Soviet victory in World War II. The Russians unilaterally called a two-week cease-fire in Chechnya just prior to this event so that no news from Chechnya would overshadow celebrations. However, the

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[134] Bruni, Lev, "Notes from Chechnya: Truths and Untruths About the Restoration of Constitutional Legality", in Sevodnya, 20 April 1995, p. 3, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 47, no. 16, p. 7.
[135] Tregubova, Yelena, "Senators Demand That Criminal Proceedings Be Instituted with Respect to the Murders in Samashki", in Sevodnya, 26 April 1995, p. 2, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 47, no. 17, p. 8.
[136] Celestan.

Chechens took this opportunity to rest up and then attack Grozny with sizable forces. Peace talks, which had been happening since February broke off on 20 May and fighting resumed in the south.[138] On 3 June, Russian forces nearly destroyed the town of Vedeno, which included Dudayev's new headquarters.[139] In the process, Shamil Basayev's family was killed, after which he vowed a blood feud against the Russians.

On 14 June 1995, Basayev led a group of about 100 Chechen fighters 70 km into Russia itself. They easily got past the border guards and assaulted the town of Budyonnovsk. There, they attacked the various offices of the government forces and took nearly 2,000 hostages in the hospital. They demanded that all Russian forces immediately withdraw from Chechnya or they would start killing hostages. Russian Interior Ministry troops tried to storm the building at one point during the 5-day ordeal and ended up killing several dozen hostages and no Chechens. Basayev tortured six airmen to death during the initial raid and executed five hostages in the hospital. Sergei Kovalyov intervened. He convinced Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin, head of the Security Council to negotiate a settlement.[140] Throughout this crisis, Boris Yeltsin was in Nova Scotia for an economic summit. The Chechens ended up being bussed back to Chechnya with a major guerrilla victory under their belt. However, the biggest victory for the Chechens was in the war of public opinion. Although many Russians did not approve of Basayev's actions, almost all the hostages surprisingly described the Chechens in glowing

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[137] Grudinia, Irina, "Russia Agrees to Accept Permanent OSCE Mission in Chechnya", in Sevodnya, 21 April 1995, p. 3, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 47, no. 16, p. 27.
[138] Golotyuk, Yury, "War in Chechnya Flares Up with New Force", in Sevodnya, 20 May 1995, p. 2, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 47, no. 20, pp. 12-13.
[139] Gorodetskaya, Natalya, "Russian Troops Begin Large-Scale Offensive", in Sevodnya, 3 June 1995, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 47, no. 22, p. 19.

terms, despite the executions. They also tended to be very critical of the Russian forces.[141] This attitude seemed to catch on in the public at large as many people saw Chernomyrdin's resolution of the episode to be acceptable. Somehow, Shamil Basayev acquired a "Robin Hood-like" stature.[142]

The events in Budyonnovsk were the background for a partial Russian troop withdrawal throughout the summer and the firings of Yerin, Stepashin, and Yegorov on 30 June. Cease-fires were called on and off during the summer but were constantly broken by both sides in little skirmishes. On 12 July, Yeltsin went to the hospital for heart trouble and stayed several weeks in convalescence. On 31 July, Yeltsin enjoyed a major victory as the Constitutional Court ruled that his decree of 9 December 1994 had been constitutional. The people seemed to feel differently as support for the war continued to be low as well as his Yeltsin's approval ratings. Boris Yeltsin surprised many people when he announced on 30 August that he would consider talks with Chechen rebels, but ruled out any meeting with Dudayev.[143]

In November, Doku Zavgaev, the former First Secretary of the Chechen-Ingush ASSR, was reinstalled as head of a new Moscow-backed government.[144] Despite an attempt on his life, Zavgaev tried to consolidate a base of support and hold elections in the country. On 8 December, Zavgaev signed a treaty with Russian Federation

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[140] Eismont, Maria, "Lifesaving Telephone in the Russian Prime Minister's Office" in Sevodnya, 20 June 1995, p. 3, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 47, no. 25, pp. 1-2.
[141] Shabad, Georgy, "Former Hostages in Budyonnovsk Are Inclined to Make Excuses for Terrorists", in Sevodnya, 23 June 1995, p. 3, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 47, no. 25, p. 9.
[142] _____, "The Tragedy in Budyonnovsk: Learning the Lessons of Life", in Rossiiskiye Vesti, 24 June 1995, p. 3, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 47, no. 25, p. 10.
[143] Bulavinov, Ilya, "Yeltsin is Ready to Begin Talks with Popular Chechen Leaders", in Kommersant Daily, 31 August 1995, p. 3, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 47, no. 35, p. 19.

authorities, which brought Chechnya back into an official relationship with the Federation.[145] Chechen rebels disrupted the elections that were held in conjunction with the 17 December parliamentary elections in the Federation. They attacked and captured Gudermes for several days. The results were proclaimed to be a success in Moscow and in Chechnya, but were considered fraudulent by the OSCE mission because not all regions got to vote. Also, in December, a second battle for Gudermes raged into the New Year.

The New Year brought a change of command for the forces in Chechnya. Despite Yeltsin's announcement earlier in 1995 that they had entered Phase 4, command of the operation still fell to an army general, Vyacheslav Tikhomirov. The new head of the operational theater was met with a challenge right from the start, in which he demonstrated his ruthlessness. On 9 January 1996, a group of Chechen rebels led by Salman Raduev, a 'field commander' with the greatest of devotion to Dudayev, took just over 2,000 hostages in the Dagestani town of Kizlyar.[146] He demanded the same as Basayev: a complete withdrawal of Russian troops from Chechnya. A standoff occurred and a similar agreement to Basayev's was reached. The 200 Chechens and 165 hostages were bussed back to Chechnya; however, at the border-town of Pervomaiskoye, the group was not allowed back in. The Chechens and their hostages holed up in the town on 11-17 January. On 15 January, Russian forces attacked them with a massive artillery and rocket

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[144] Gorodetskaya, Natalya, "Chechen Supreme Soviet Names Doku Zavgaev Head of the Republic", in Sevodnya, 2 November 1995, p. 2, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 47, no. 44, p. 17.
[145] Gorodetskaya, Natalya, "Principles of Relations Between Russia and Chechnya to be Spelled Out Today", in Sevodnya, 8 December 1995, p. 2, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 47, no. 49, p. 18.

barrage, which lasted nearly three days. A final storming of the village revealed 153 dead Chechens and 82 out of 120 hostages freed. Somehow, Raduev and about 70 others escaped with some hostages, but Pervomaiskoye no longer existed.[147]

On 15 February, Russian forces demolished the Presidential Palace in Grozny. Chechen demonstrators held a rally in protest, at which they got into a scuffle with Russian Interior Ministry troops. Witnesses reported that ten protesters were killed. [148] The next day, President Yeltsin hinted to the country that Chechnya had "perhaps" been a mistake and did not rule out the withdrawal of troops.[149]

This admission by Yeltsin did two things. It simultaneously raised the hopes and aggressiveness of the Chechens and dashed the morale of the Russian forces. On 29 February, heavy fighting broke out in Grozny again, which preceded a month-long all- out assault on the capital by Chechen fighters. On 27 March, Yeltsin, now on the campaign trail, promised to try to end the war before the June presidential elections.[150] He was trailing Communist Party leader Gennady Zyuganov at that time in the polls. The next day, a Russian offensive began in the south. On 31 March, Yeltsin submitted his own peace plan which allowed for the withdrawal of Russian forces, but it still allowed for 'special operations' to be conducted. In this nation-wide pronouncement, President Yeltsin announced an end to the fighting and called for democratic elections and a

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[146] Maksakov, Ilya, "Budyonnovsk, Gudermes, Kizlyar", in Nezavisimaya Gazeta, 10 January 1996, p. 1, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 48, no. 2, pp. 1-3. The report also speculates that had married into Dudayev's family.

[147] Balburov, Dmitry, "Victors Are Not Judged", in Moskovskiye Novosti, No. 3, 21-28 January 1996, p. 1, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 48, no. 3, pp. 6-7.

[148] Cable News Network Interactive, http://www.cnn.com/Interactive/Faces/Chronologies/CHEWCRE.html

[149] Shakina, Maria, "Boris Yeltsin Goes on the Offensive", in Nezavisimaya Gazeta, 17 February 1996, pp. 1-2, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 48, no. 7, pp. 3-4.

[150] Cable News Network Interactive, http://www.cnn.com/Interactive/Faces/Chronologies/CHEWCRE.html

determination of Chechnya's status.[151] However, the announcement did not explicitly allow for complete independence and therefore rejected wholesale by the Chechens, who continued to fight.

On the night of 21-22 April, a Russian laser guided bomb hit the staff car of Dzokhar Dudayev and killed him. Originally intended for his satellite dish, the rebel leader was inside the car, which was next to the dish. His death marked the beginning of renewed fighting instead of any peace initiatives from the Chechens. Vice President Zelimkhan Yandarbiev confirmed the death, vowed revenge and became president.[152]

Throughout the rest of April and May, the Russians made numerous attempts to start negotiations. Olive branches were extended from the President, the Prime Minister, the Defense Minister and several other Russian Federation officials including Mintimer Shamiyev, the President of Tatarstan. The King of Morocco also offered to mediate. Meanwhile, Russian troops continued to suffer heavy losses in ambushes and surprise attacks. On 27 May, Yeltsin initialed an agreement with Yandarbiev, which called for a cease-fire on 31 May, a prisoner exchange and other items, but it did not include any agreement as to Chechnya's status. On 28 May, President Yeltsin flew to Grozny and met with Russian troops and told them that the war was over.[153]

Despite violations of the cease-fire agreement of 31 May, fighting still continued as Chechens attacked outposts and ambushed convoys. It is clear that either Yandarbiev did not have control of his field commanders or they continued pressing the attacks

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[151] _____, "The Country Has Been Waiting For This Speech", in Rossiiskaya Gazeta, 2 April 1996, pp. 1, 3, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 48, no. 13, pp. 1-3.
[152] Fuller, Liz, "Yandarbiev Vows Revenge For Dudayev's Death", OMRI Daily Digest, 26 April 1996.
[153] Fuller, Liz, "Yeltsin in Grozny", OMRI Daily Digest, 29 May 1996.

knowing that they had momentum and that Yeltsin was in the process of backing down due to the upcoming elections. On 5 June, peace talks opened up in Nazran, Ingushetia. Yeltsin, using the power of the incumbency, managed to gain some last minute political momentum by making this popular peace initiative. Zyuganov tried to get his own peace plan in the spotlight as well. That day, Alla Dudayev, the dead leader's widow, announced that she would support Yeltsin in his bid for president only because he was the only hope for democracy in Russia and Chechnya.[154] On 10 June, accords were signed in Nazran where the sides agreed to a new parliamentary election schedule, disarmament, a troop pullout, and prisoner exchanges.

Previously, the installed pro-Moscow Chechen government led by Doku Zavgaev had said that elections would be held in conjunction with the presidential elections in the Russian Federation. However, the negotiators had agreed at Nazran that these elections would be postponed. Zavgaev was not at these meetings because the Chechen rebels would not countenance it. Zavgaev announced that the elections would occur regardless because President Yeltsin had told him to conduct them. Boris Yeltsin, while admitting that the war in Chechnya had been a mistake, backed up Zavgaev in violation of the Nazran agreements.[155] When Yeltsin's staff had no comment, the Chechen rebels vowed to disrupt the elections in any way possible. On Election Day, the rebels caused some amount of havoc, but 58% voter turnout was reported.[156] However, the OSCE representative announced that the elections were "neither free nor fair".[157] On 18 June

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[154] Orttung, Robert, "Dudayev's Widow, Pamyat Back Yeltsin", OMRI Daily Digest, 6 June 1996.
[155] CNN, World News Interactive, "Yeltsin Says Chechnya War Was Probably a Mistake", 13 June 1996.
[156] Fuller Liz, "Truce in Chechnya", OMRI Daily Digest, 18 June 1996.
[157] Ibid.

1996, Aleksandr Lebed announced that he would be heading up the Russian delegation in peace talks with the Chechen rebels and that he would be advising President Yeltsin to let Chechnya go.[158] Shortly thereafter, President Yeltsin ordered the withdrawal of all Russian troops, beginning on 28 June.[159]

Throughout June and July, the upcoming peace talks became derailed for various reasons. Vyacheslav Tikhomirov, the Russian commander, kept up the anti-Chechen rhetoric, saying that the Chechens would never give up and would keep violating the Nazran accords and issuing ultimatums despite efforts by his commander-in-chief to settle this affair. Yeltsin replaced him on 7 July, but Tikhomirov refused to go.[160] Doubts over peace talks continued to swirl throughout July and August. In mid-July, however, the Chechen leadership began to link any and all talks with the presence of the OSCE representative in Chechnya. Apparently, the Chechens felt that this would be the only way to ensure a fair negotiation process while getting their plight onto the world stage. On 26 July, over 200 protesters staged an unauthorized rally in Grozny calling for the resignation of Zavgaev and his pro-Moscow government.[161]

On 31 July, Russian forces once again began an offensive in the south against the village of Shatoi.[162] However, on 6 August, in an attempt to gain popular momentum before any peace talks, a coordinated offensive was begun by Chechen rebels on Grozny, Argun and Gudermes. The fighting continued until the Chechens had regained control of

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[158] CNN, World News Interactive, "Lebed To Advise Yeltsin: Let Chechnya Go", 19 June 1996.
[159] Clarke, Doug, "Yeltsin Orders Pullout From Chechnya", OMRI Daily Digest, 26 June 1996.
[160] Clarke, Doug, "Lebed to Take Charge of Peace Talks" and "Tikhomirov: I'm Still in Charge", OMRI Daily Digest, 8-9 July 1996.
[161] Fuller, Liz, "Anti-Government Demonstrations in Grozny", OMRI Daily Digest, 29 July 1996.
[162] Fuller, Liz, "Russian Troops Launch New Chechen Offensive", OMRI Daily Digest, 1 August 1996.

Grozny the next day.[163] Threats came from various Russian officials engaged in the negotiation process. Federal forces counterattacked, but continually failed to regain control of the city, losing hundreds of soldiers and tons of materiel in the process.[164] Doku Zavgaev hid out at the airport with Russian troops protecting him. As Grozny fell to the rebels, the President appointed Aleksandr Lebed, who was the Secretary of the Security Council, as the new presidential representative in Chechnya. He immediately flew to the region to talk with Aslan Maskhadov, who was the Chechen Chief of Staff and chief negotiator in any talks. Lebed reportedly said, "there is no military solution".[165]

On 12 August, Aleksandr Lebed flew back to Moscow to brief the President on the situation. Lebed had declared a cease-fire, ordered the new commander to conduct talks immediately on disengagement of forces and blasted the Russian military for the condition of the troops. A mini-refugee crisis began to grow as fighting continued in Grozny.[166] A cease-fire was evidently reached in Grozny the next day, but rebels continued to reduce federal strongholds throughout the city and suburbs. Back in Moscow, Prime Minister Chernomyrdin and the leadership of the Duma, now run by the Communist faction, called for a state of emergency in Chechnya, but the Federation Council was adjourned until October. Lebed categorically opposed the measure, saying that it would hurt the peace process and that there were no resources to implement it.[167]

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[163] Eismont, Maria, "The Militants Are in Grozny Again", in Sevodnya, 7 August 1996, p. 1, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 48, no. 32, pp. 1-2.
[164] Eismont, Maria, "On a White Horse", in Sevodnya, 9 August 1996, p. 1, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 48, no. 32, p. 4.
[165] Parrish, Scott, "Yeltsin Dispatches Lebed to Chechnya", OMRI Daily Digest, 12 August 1996.
[166] Parrish, Scott, "...And Blasts Predecessors in Chechnya", OMRI Daily Digest, 13 August 1996.
[167] Parrish, Scott, "Debate Over Imposing State of Emergency in Chechnya", OMRI Daily Digest, 14 August 1996.

As the refugee crisis mounted (nearly 30,000 residents) since the latest assault on Grozny, infighting began at the highest levels of government. Anatolii Chubais, the Russian Chief of Staff, and Chernomyrdin sought to limit Lebed's authority, saying that he (Lebed) was merely trying to get in close with Yeltsin and garner great powers.[168] The next day, 14 August, President Boris Yeltsin decreed that Lebed would have extraordinary authority to solve the Chechen crisis and dissolved an existing state commission on the Chechen crisis headed by Chernomyrdin.[169] Igor Rodionov, the new Minister of Defense, asked that this war to reach a negotiated settlement as well.[170]

As talks began and Lebed began to assert his authority in Chechnya, charges about Lebed attempting a coup and starting a presidential campaign began to fly. Lebed and Interior Minister Anatolii Kulikov got into a dispute over intentions and a war of words erupted. In the process, LTG Konstantin Pulikovski, the commander in Chechnya, issued an ultimatum for all Grozny civilians to evacuate within 48 hours. This action, for which he was severely reprimanded, exceeded his authority.

However, on 22 August, Lebed and Maskhadov signed a nine-point agreement in the village of Novye Atagi in Chechnya.[171] For some reason, Yeltsin criticized Lebed for not getting results. The next day Lebed flew back to Moscow and explained what was

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[168]Orttung, Robert, "Chubais, Chernomyrdin Aim to Curtail Lebed's Power", OMRI Daily Digest, 14 August 1996.
[169] Parrish, Scott, "Yeltsin Orders Lebed to Resolve Chechen Crisis", OMRI Daily Digest, 15 August 1996.
[170] Gorodetskaya, Natalya, "Aleksandr Lebed Meets With the Leadership of the Federal Forces and the Leaders of the Militants", in Sevodnya, 16 August 1996, p. 1, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 48, no. 33, pp. 8-9.
[171] Fuller. Liz, "Lebed, Maskhadov Sign New Chechen Cease-fire Agreement", OMRI Daily Digest, 23 August 1996.

happening. It had all been a misunderstanding. Meanwhile, OSCE Representative Tim Guldimann stated that the OSCE would be involved in the negotiations.[172]

On 31 August, after only eight hours of negotiations, a peace agreement was signed in Khasavyurt, Dagestan. The OSCE co-signed as well. According to the agreement, Chechnya's status would not be decided until 31 December 2001 and by a popular referendum. Also, all Russian forces would be withdrawn in accordance with President Yeltsin's 25 June decree and on a timetable, after which, free and democratic elections would be held for president and parliament. In addition, a joint body would be organized to oversee the troop withdrawal and to crack down on illegal terrorist activities, among other minutiae.[173]

Nearly 2,000 Russian soldiers were killed, wounded or missing during the Chechen rebels' August push into Grozny.[174] The Russian Army's inability to recapture the city finally convinced them that there, indeed, was "no military solution" and forced them to the negotiating table.

The Aftermath

After the Khasavyurt Accords, events moved rather quickly. Rebel forces moved into areas controlled by Doku Zavgaev within two days. Russian troops began departing on 9 September.

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[172] Fuller, Liz, "...But Lower Level Talks Continue", OMRI Daily Digest, 26 August 1996.
[173] Fuller, Liz, "Lebed, Maskhadov, Guldimann Sign Agreement Ending War in Chechnya", OMRI Daily Digest, 3 September 1996.
[174] _____, "Official Figures on Losses in Grozny", in Izvestia, 29 August 1996, p. 1, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 48, no. 35, p. 5.

Members of the Duma, the CPRF in particular, began to question the constitutionality of the Khasavyurt accords on the grounds that they were undertaken illegally or constitutionally. The Court eventually ruled that the agreements were political in nature and not normative acts, meaning that they did not fall under the jurisdiction of the Court.

Lebed's political star rose and then waned some during in this timeframe. He and Maskhadov were invited to address the Council of Europe assembly on 23 September. He gained in popularity with the people, but not with the political establishment, who feared that his popularity would put him in the lead for the next presidential elections. Yeltsin fired him on 18 November as Security Council Secretary on the grounds that he usurped too much power and started his presidential campaign.

A new Russian strategy seemed to develop since the peace accords were signed. With their hands tied due to Khasavyurt, negotiations began almost at once regarding the rebuilding of Chechnya and paying of pensions. It appears that the Russian Federation intends on trying to convince the Chechen people that their existence is hopelessly intertwined with the Russian Federation economically, which may be true. However, with this argument, they hope to convince the Chechens to vote to become a willing part of the Federation. They also appear to be trying to use the Cossacks as some sort of proxy to undermine the Chechen government through the decrees on arming the Cossacks so soon after the war.[175]

The desperate people of Chechnya began to return to their homes. Some of them have resorted to a life of crime, specifically, kidnapping. Salman Raduev, who seeks to

continue the war in order to exact revenge for his disfiguring injuries and the death of Dzokhar Dudayev, has kidnapped several Russian police officers. The OSCE provided some funding and 60-70 observers for the election, which upset the Russians because it could be used by the Chechens to say that they are in fact independent.[176]

Russian soldiers left Chechnya quickly, in fact, ahead of schedule. All troops were gone by 5 January. The Memorial Association of Russia estimated that 4,379 Russian soldiers were killed in Chechnya while more than 1,000 were still missing.[177] Civilian casualties have been estimated at around 80,000.[178] On 23 January 1997, Grozny was officially renamed *Dzokhar-Gala* in honor of the late rebel commander.

Aslan Maskhadov won the 27 January 1997 presidential election after a sometimes bitter campaign against Basayev and Yandarbiev. On 12 February 1997, Aslan Maskhadov swore his oath on the Koran in the presence of high Russian Federation Official and world leaders.

Conclusion

There have been many theories as to *why* the Russian forces intervened in Chechnya. President Yeltsin argued that the integrity of the Russian Federation was at stake and that law and order had to be maintained in order to protect Russian Federation citizens from criminal elements. Economists tend to argue that maintaining the flow of

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[175] Morvant, Penny, "Yeltsin Signs Cossack Decrees", OMRI Daily Digest, 14 February 1997.
[176] Rutland, Peter, "OSCE Will Send Observers to Chechnya", OMRI Daily Digest, 17 January 1997.
[177] Rutland, Peter, "Russian Losses In Chechen War", OMRI Daily Digest, 14 January 1997.

oil from Azerbaijan through the Grozny Oil District pipeline juncture was the overriding concern. One administration official stated that Russian Federation forces were on a *peacekeeping* mission to keep warring factions apart. Yet, others argued this was a war pursued in order to get more money and prestige for the Afghanistan-tarnished military. Most cynically of all, perhaps, is that it was done for electoral political reasons. In the end, none of these things matter except, perhaps, for someone trying to piece together some form of matrix designed to help predict future Russian action. The real danger exposed by this debacle is that it could have been done at all.

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[178] Orttung, Robert, "Lebed:80,000 Dead in Chechnya, Current Plan is Similar to Brest-Litovsk", OMRI Daily Digest, 4 September 1996.

Chapter 3:

Russian and Chechen Democracy

"The virtually free expression of opposition to the authorities' actions in an atmosphere of militarized tension is an indisputable sign that some of the elements of a civil society are taking shape. The fact that the forces that unleashed the military operation in Chechnya could not bring themselves or were unable to curb the voices of civil opposition...is evidence in favor of the aforesaid proposition."

--Yury Levada, ARCSPO, Head Pollster[1]

This chapter will assert that the cessation of hostilities came as a result of maturing democratic norms within the Russian Federation. However, in order to use the Democratic Peace Theory, it must first be argued that Russia was a democracy at the time of the Chechen conflict. Only then will it be possible to explain how the Democratic Peace Theory applies to the Russian Federation using the Structural and Normative Models.

According to Bruce Russett, as mentioned in the Chapter 1, a franchised voting public, contested elections, a minimal amount of stability and the presence of some civil liberties are required in order for a state or system to be classified as a democracy. In terms of the *voting franchise*, all adult citizens, within certain limits, should have the right to vote for the powerful decisionmakers of the country. It is in this way that Doyle, using Kant's logic, argues that, "...the morally autonomous individual is by means of representation a self-legislator making laws that apply to all citizens equally, including himself. And tyranny is avoided because the individual is subject to laws he does not

[1] ARCSPO is the All Russia Center for the Study of Public Opinion.

administer."[2] This is why we can say that leaders rule with the consent of the governed in democracies.

Periodic *contested elections* provide an opportunity for the governed to express a desire for change or continuity and are the natural outcome of freely voting citizens. In contested elections, there are usually two or more distinct political parties. Russett states that, "...in practice it has come to require two or more legally recognized parties."[3] Of course, in the Soviet Union, a rare contested election was one in which there were two or more *candidates* only. The end result is an Executive and Legislature that have been put in power by the people. In addition, the people grow accustomed to expressing their opinions through voting while the candidates are compelled to act according to the will of the people in order to win elections. Their power is therefore dependent on a continuation of consent.

Next, the presence of certain *individual rights* is clearly indicative of democracy. Individual rights come with longevity. Over time, they become embedded in society and become norms respected by all. When these rights are guaranteed and are functional within a society, mostly all the members of that society become protective of and insistent upon them, lest they lose their own. Preservation of these rights is critical in the development of a newly democratic state in that they provide an avenue for the expression of opinion and culture.

Finally, *stability* can be a more subjective requirement. Like individual rights, stability comes with longevity and the recurrence of periodic elections which become

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[2] Doyle, Part I, p. 226.
[3] Russett, p. 15.

embedded into the norms of society. A key adjunct of stability is the acceptance by a society of the idea of resolving conflict through non-violent means. Russett writes, "Perceptions of instability may be based on the recency and immaturity of experience with democratic processes and norms."[4] The longer that democratic norms exist and institutions function, the more likely it is that another country, democratic or non-democratic, will recognize certain attributes and expect certain constraints and behavior.[5]

Democracy in the Russian Federation

How does the Russian Federation measure up as a democracy? Was it one? Is it one? In terms of the above-mentioned qualities, it appears to have been an unstable young democracy during the Chechen conflict and remains so today.

Indeed, all the adult voters in the Russian Federation have the right to vote, except for understandable exceptions like minors, criminals and the insane. All ethnic Russians or ethnic minorities who are citizens of the Russian Federation yet live outside the borders also have a right to vote.[6] Limits are also placed on voting by the requirement for voter registration as well. The official turnout for the 12 December 1993 general elections and Constitutional Referendum was 53.2%.[7] The December, 1995 Duma elections brought in 64.4 % of the registered voters.[8] The Presidential Elections of June 1996 brought in a high voter turnout as well. It is plain to see that voter turnout remains

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[4] Ibid., p. 37.
[5] Ibid., p. 16.
[6] Chapter 1, Article 32 of the Russian Federation Constitution.
[7] Bruni, Lev and Zhuravylov, Pyotr, "A New Duma, A New Constitution, But the Old President", in Sevodnya, 14 December 1993, p. 1, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 45, no. 50, p. 3.
[8] Zhuravylov, Pyotr, "The Central Election Commission Recognizes the Duma Elections as Valid", in Sevodnya, 30 December 1995, p. 1, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 47, no. 52, p. 9.

consistently high in comparison with some other democratic countries of the world (the US had only 49% in November 1996) and that the Russian Federation meets this requirement for democracy. This also indicates that the Russian people now *value* their right to vote and that it is becoming a societal norm having been *required* to vote in the Communist era. Voter voluntary participation also highlights the level of support and belief that the democratic system is legitimate and viable. However, some recent polling shows that more and more people are becoming disillusioned with the voting process because they either do not see desired change or they do not like the change they see.[9]

As mentioned above, periodic contested elections are a primary trait of a democracy. When the Communist Party of the Soviet Union abandoned its "leading role" in Article 6 of the USSR Constitution on 14 March 1990, political pluralism became legal and ensured contested elections henceforth.[10] In the 1995 Parliamentary Elections, for example, 47 political parties qualified for the ballot.[11] Obviously, this many parties is unwieldy, so the law requires that a party must receive at least 5% of the popular vote in order to hold a positions in the Duma. The Presidential Elections of June 1996 included multiple candidates from multiple parties as well and required two rounds of voting to complete. Contested elections are now a reality in the Russian Federation. The elected governors of the various republics are given automatic seats on the Federation Council. The people do not lack for choices on the ballot or for ideas with which to align. In 1993, voters seemed to favor Nationalist candidates while in 1995 they sided with Communists.

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[9] Levada, Yury, "Three Perestroika Generations", in Sevodnya, 7 June 1995, p. 3, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 47, no. 26, pp. 12-13.

[10] Sakwa, Richard, Russian Politics and Society, Routledge Publishers, London, 1993, p. 133.

However, the most important point about these contested elections is that everyone seems to accept the results. The real test will come if and when there is an orderly transfer of power after the next Presidential Election.

The guarantee of individual rights is an inherent part of the Russian Constitution. As mentioned above, these also become embedded in a democracy over time. However, Russian Federation authorities, as the war in Chechnya demonstrated, seemed to take a cavalier attitude towards these rights. LTG (R) Vladimir Dudnik, formerly of the General Staff, stated, "The Soviet-Bolshivist attitude towards human beings is being repeated. This must be stopped once and for all, and immediately."[12] One right that has been plainly in evidence is the right to free speech. As a result of the war in Chechnya, the free press, both newspapers and television, has taken its rightful place as a verifier of truth and presenter of information in Russian society. Individuals like Sergei Kovalyov and Yelena Bonner spoke loudly and often without fear of reprisals.[13]

Stability is more problematic with regards to the Russian Federation. The current system, as established and ratified in the December 1993 Constitution, is relatively new. Michael Doyle asserted that it should take *three* years in existence for a democracy to become stable.[14] By this definition, Russia has only recently become stable. However, Russett more convincingly says that only *some amount of time* must have passed in which

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[11] Parties ranged from the popular Democratic, Communist and Nationalist factions to the Beer Lover's Party. Indeed, a true spectrum of ideologies.

[12] Dudnik, Vladimir, "Yesterday's Doctrine", in Rossiiskaya Gazeta, 6 January 1995, p. 2, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol.47, no. 2, p. 2.

[13] Kovalyov was eventually fired by the President. He actually submitted statements on Human Rights abuses in Chechnya before a US Congressional hearing in January, 1995 while Ms. Bonner actually testified. See United States Congress, Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, "Crisis in Chechnya hearings before the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe," 104th Congress, 1st Session, 19 and 27 January 1995.

democratic processes and norms can be established, especially, for "...a society that undergoes fundamental change" as with the Russian Federation.[15] Russett lists several democratic norms that should develop over time in a stable social and political environment. They may include social diversity, perceptions of individual rights, overlapping group memberships, cross-pressures, shifting coalitions, expectations of limited government and toleration of dissent by a presumably loyal opposition.[16] This list is not exhaustive. Hence, one should also include the desire to resolve conflict peacefully on this list. It is indeed beyond the scope of this thesis to empirically examine in detail *each* of the above norms, assign them a quantifiable measurement and then synthesize the data into some form of statement on Russian norms. However, using similar data from polls taken in the Soviet Union and the Russian Federation as well as election results, it is reasonable to indicate a potential trend as to whether or not democratic norms exist.

In February/March 1990, James L. Gibson and Raymond M. Duch conducted a study in the Moscow Oblast, in which they determined positively, the existence and prevalence of democratic norms. But, after deciding that their sample size was too small and possibly not representative of the USSR as a whole, they endeavored to sample the rest of the European USSR. They examined the following factors: political tolerance, valuation of liberty, support for competitive elections, rights consciousness, support for dissent and support for independent media. Overall, they found that elements of the

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[14] Doyle, 1983, p. 212.
[15] Russett, p. 16. See also Chapter 4, p. 81 with Zeev Maoz.
[16] Ibid., p. 31.

USSR to be "conducive to democracy".[17] However, they felt that, "...not everyone was willing to embrace liberty if its cost is social disruption."[18] They concluded that where the Soviets needed the most work was in the area of dissent and political toleration. They seemed to support the idea of democracy in terms of free speech and majority rule, but did not support the idea of protecting speech when they did not agree with it.[19]

Democratic norms were *present* in Soviet society in 1990, but some norms were widely held while others still were not. These are the seeds of a democracy.

In order to assess the growth of these norms, Gibson and Duch would have to conduct this study again, which they have not. However, in looking at other polls and election results, we can possibly determine a trend in the Russian society. Granted there will be differences and errors such as dissatisfaction over the economy, environmental policies and local events. It is possible to work around these.

Russett, with Maoz, writes that an alternative method of measuring the democratic norms of a society exists and, "...is more direct: the level of violent internal social and political conflict"[20] In democracies, these conflicts are expected to be predominantly settled in a non-violent way *and* a democracy rarely needs to use violence to resolve these types of conflicts. This is not the case in non-democracies.

In the Russian Federation, since the fall of the Soviet Union, there have been many peaceful demonstrations and relatively peaceful strikes. The attack of the Russian White House by armed force in October, 1993 was an example of political violence in

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[17] Gibson, James L. and Duch, Raymond M., "Emerging Democratic Values in Soviet Political Culture", in Miller, Arthur H., et al., eds., Public Opinion and Regime Change: The New Politics of Post-Soviet Societies, Westview, Press, Boulder, Colorado, 1993, p. 87.
[18] Ibid., p. 88.

which people *were* killed. However, this conflict was the result of a power struggle among top leaders – the President and the Supreme Soviet – and not political persecution of people because of their beliefs. There have been no political executions in the Russian Federation since 1990, that we know of. This is a good indication of the presence of democratic norms in the society and in the regime structure.

Therefore, the Russian Federation is a democratic state with democratic norms but with some measure of instability. There are a significant number of elements within the society which espouse ideologies contrary to traditional democratic norms or structures, specifically the Communist faction and the LDPR or Nationalist faction.[21] As long as these two elements remain popular enough to gain a significant number of votes and control either legislative bodies, the Russian Federation retains a degree of instability. Structural flaws within the regime which limit the true "check and balance" attributes of the various branches of government can also add to the instability of the regime in that one branch or another may dominate the other two. This will be addressed later on. In Russia, the Executive Branch holds such power. With time, these must be rectified in order for the Russian Federation to be considered a mature democracy. It is, nonetheless, a democracy.

As previously stated, democracies have never gone to war with each other due to shared democratic norms, the basis of which is the nonviolent resolution of conflict. Democracies do, however, engage in warfare with non-democracies because of the

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[19] Ibid.
[20] Russett, p. 81.
[21] A "faction" are those specific parties who usually ally with them into voting blocs. Ironically, this is a democratic process called "shifting coalitions".

expectation of violence by the non-democratic state. When they do go to war, it is at the behest of the decisionmakers who perceive a threat (Structural Model) or to avoid making concessions (Normative Model).

Democracy in Chechnya

Chapter 1 determined that any dealings with Chechnya after 1991 fell in the realm of foreign affairs rather than domestic policy. Therefore, a determination of Chechnya's status as to whether it is a democratic state or not is required. Using the same criteria – a voting franchise, competitive elections, individual rights and stability – it should be clear that throughout the period in question, 1991-1997, Chechnya was not a democracy, but *anomalous* or even *autocratic*. Even though the Chechen people have always had democratic traditions of freedom and equality (See Appendix 1, p. 3) within their culture, these values do not necessarily apply to this time frame because they were based on a clan-oriented, Islamic form of democracy rather than the classic liberal democracy of the West.[22]

The 1992 Chechen Constitution guarantees the right to vote for all adult individuals in the same manner as the Russian Federation Constitution. "The citizens of the Chechen Republic have the right to elect and to be elected in bodies of the state authorities and local self-management. The common direct and equal electorate is guaranteed."[23] The first election in Chechnya on 27 October 1991 was alleged to be rife

[22] See Appendix A.
[23] Section 2, Article 54. See the Official Chechen Homepage.

with voting irregularities but is claimed to have drawn 72% of the electorate with Dudayev receiving 90% of the vote. The Fifth Congress of People's Deputies of the RSFSR declared these elections illegitimate on 2 November 1991.[24] Until 27 January 1997, there had been no elections for national office. This latest election was certified as "legitimate and democratic" by the OSCE representative in Chechnya, Tim Guldimann.[25] Turnout was listed at a very impressive 79.4% of registered voters.[26] However, subsequent second round voting for the simultaneous Parliamentary elections has been lackluster at best. Several second round district results have been thrown out due to very low turnout. This indicates that the democratic ideal for a voting franchise may be momentary or motivated by the single issue of independence. There is not yet enough data to determine whether this norm is embedded in the society, but, with time, it could be.

Periodic contested elections fall into the same category as franchised voting.[27] It is only recently developing, although Dudayev did have some minor opposition in the 1991 affair. Henze notes, "By early 1992, more than 50 associations, movements, organized groups and political parties were in existence," while by late 1992 there were nine groups that, "had characteristics of nascent political parties."[28] Parliamentary

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[24] "Judgment of the Constitutional Court of the Russian Federation of 31 July 1995 on the Constitutionality of the Presidential Decrees and the Resolutions of the Federal Government concerning the Situation in Chechnya", published by the European Commission for Democracy through Law on the Council of Europe, CDL-INF (96) 1, 10 January 1996, p. 3.
[25] Parrish, Scott, "Maskhadov Apparent Winner in Chechnya", OMRI Daily Digest, 29 January 1997.
[26] Parrish, Scott , "Final Chechen Election Results", OMRI Daily Digest, 3 February 1997.
[27] Section 1, Article 2 of the Chechen Constitution.
[28] Henze, p. 37.

elections were attempted in 1996 but were disrupted by the Chechen rebels.[29] The 1997 election had a total of 16 candidates with different agendas.[30] The electorate has had clear choices. Importantly, in the 1997 campaign, all the major candidates stood for complete independence. Aslan Maskhadov emerged victorious after the first round with 59.3%.[31] This democratic norm also requires longevity to become a part of the fabric of the society and has yet to have enough time in order to take effect. As in the Russian Federation, the test will be how consistently fair and democratic elections are held as well as whether or not they can do it on their own, that is, without international observers whose presence seems to ensure impartiality. Just as the 1996 Presidential election in the Russian Federation was hailed for cementing democracy, the next peacefully contested election in Chechnya will be as well. Unlike the Russian Federation, however, there are ominous murmurs from the losing candidates as to their peaceful acceptance of the results.[32]

The Chechen Constitution, inured as of 12 March 1992, guarantees civil rights in accordance with international law and proclaims that, "Human rights in the Chechen Republic are provided pursuant to conventional principles and norms of international rights."[33] However, in the course of the war, many human rights abuses occurred at the hands of Chechens as well as Russians. The 4 June 1994 massacre of demonstrators in Grozny at the hands of Dudayev's militia was indeed an atrocity and a violation of basic human rights. To what extent the perpetrators were punished is unknown. In addition,

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[29] Fuller Liz, "Truce in Chechnya", OMRI Daily Digest, 18 June 1996. The OSCE called these elections "manipulated and a parody of democracy".
[30] Parrish, Scott , "Polls Open in Chechnya", OMRI Daily Digest, 27 January 1997.
[31] Parrish, Scott , "Final Chechen Election Results", OMRI Daily Digest, 3 February 1997.

Yu. Nikolaev's book, The Chechen Tragedy: Who is to Blame?, makes a point of listing all the atrocities at the hands of the Chechen fighters, including politically motivated murder and assault.[34] The guarantees of rights are present, but the upholding of those rights are fleeting. This, too, will require time to establish. Unless the economic situation is improved, crime is fought and stability within the government is achieved, it will be nearly impossible to ensure these rights. In addition, it remains to be seen to what extent Islamic laws will come into conflict with the "international rights" guaranteed in the secular Constitution.

As far as stability is concerned, there really has not been any. Constant infighting between Dudayev and the Parliament throughout 1992-1994, which included a constant State of Emergency and culminated in the dissolution of the Parliament, clearly demonstrates that there were no real divisions of power or series of "checks and balances" in the Chechen Republic. Indeed, immaturity and recency were the key elements in Chechnya's instability. Also, the constant threat of war, an economic blockade, massive casualties in the civilian population and rogue military units created destabilizing influences on the government of Chechnya. However, Dudayev's abiding by Constitutional Court orders which chastised him for trying to dissolve Parliament in 1993, and the overwhelming January 1997 electoral victory by Aslan Maskhadov, a politician who is not prone to violence, gives hope for future stability.[35]

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[32] Fuller, Liz, "Yandarbiev Puts Screws on Maskhadov", OMRI Daily Digest, 18 February 1997.
[33] Section 1, Article 3. See the Official Chechen Homepage.
[34] Nikolaev, Yu. V., The Chechen Tragedy: Who is to Blame?, Nova Science Publishers, Inc., Commack, New York, 1996. This publication pretends to be unbiased but, rather, seems to favor the official government position.
[35] Belin, Laura, "Lebed Welcomes Maskhadov Win, Seeks Return of Journalists", OMRI Daily Digest , 29 January 1997. Aslan Maskhadov, a former Soviet Army colonel, became the primary negotiator for the

In conclusion, Chechnya, during the period of 1991-1997, cannot be classified as a democracy. Rather, it has been more autocratic considering Dudayev's state of emergency decrees, the dissolution of parliament in 1994, criminal violence, the assassination of Dudayev in April 1996 and a state of war. Therefore, an analysis of the Chechen conflict using that part of the Democratic Peace Theory which explains why democracies are more likely to go to war against non-democracies is required. In the case of Chechnya, a young democratic Russian Federation clearly initiated hostilities, first by proxy and then overtly, against non-democratic Chechnya.

The Structural Model and the War in Chechnya

Using the Bruce Russett's Structural Model to analyze Russian involvement in the war should be rather simple now that the Democratic Peace Theory applies and the situation involves a democracy in conflict with a non-democracy. This section asks whether the weak and immature democratic structures of the Russian Federation led, ultimately, to involvement in the war or if it provided the "braking" or "slowing" mechanisms which normally accompany mature democratic state structures.

Russett notes, "In democracies, the constraints of 'checks and balances', division of power and need for public debate to enlist widespread support will slow decisions to use large-scale violence and reduce the likelihood that such decisions will be made."[36] Therefore, if these structures are *not* solidified and an "immaturity with democratic processes" exists, as with the Russian Federation and typical young democracies, then the

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Chechen resistance during the war and earned the respect of his Russian Counterparts. Lebed called him "an honest and responsible man and a model officer."

likelihood of the use of force as a method of resolving conflict will increase. Edward Mansfield and Jack Snyder point out that this is not atypical of democracies in transition. They demonstrate, with an analysis of history, that the likelihood of war in emerging democracies increases due to mass internal politics and the changes incurred as a result of the transition to democracy.[37] In Russia's case, one key weakness in their democratic system allowed for the pursuit of violent conflict resolution in Chechnya: the impotence of "checks and balances" on Presidential authority.

President Yeltsin used his Security Council as an advisory and policy making group. No members of the Security Council were confirmed in the legislature, rather they were appointed by presidential decree. They were not accountable to anyone except the President. President Yeltsin used this group to develop strategy and pursue the war in secret. The press lamented, "What remained secret, as it did 15 years ago, is the decision-making mechanism and the specific names of its 'designers' and 'adjusters'...As we did not know the truth then, so we do not know it now. We can guess, however, that the war in Chechnya is a harsher blow for democratic Russia than the war in Afghanistan was for the totalitarian Soviet Union."[38] Jiri Valenta argued that in the Soviet interventions into Czechoslovakia in 1968 and Afghanistan in 1979, the Bureaucratic Politics Paradigm could be used to describe the decisionmaking process at the Politburo level. Essentially,

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[36] Russett, p. 40.
[37] Mansfield, Edward D. and Snyder, Jack, "Democratization and War", in Foreign Affairs, May-June, 1996, vol. 74, no. 3, p. 79.
[38] Mamaladze, Teimuraz, "On This Date 15 Years Ago", in Izvestia, 24 December 1994, p. 1, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 46, no. 51, p. 5.

all players have their own agendas and go into the process with certain goals or outcomes in mind for their own bureaucratic fiefdoms.[39]

Clearly, the players in and the actions of the Security Council of the Russian Federation appear similar to the Politburo of the Soviet era. As with the Politburo, their decisions were not subject to oversight. Therefore, players like Grachev (MOD), Yerin (MVD) and Stepashin (FCS) could commit their ministerial resources to the conflict without approval of the legislature. Also, it appears that not all members of the Security Council were present at the meeting where the decision was made to intervene. Justice Minister Yury Kalmykov told the President that military action in Chechnya wasn't necessary and was asked to submit his resignation. He stated afterwards that military operations in Chechnya would be illegal.[40] One journalist noted, "for several months now, real power in Russia has been in the hands of a small group – politicians, generals or bureaucrats – whom no one elected and who are under no one's control."[41]

The Russian variation of the War Powers Act requires that the President receive the approval of the Federation Council before sending any forces abroad. For any internal state of emergency, which he may unilaterally decree, the President must receive approval of the Federation Council within 72 hours of the decree and can only use Interior Ministry forces. This is based on the as yet un-repealed law on states of emergency from pre-constitutional times. Yeltsin committed Ministry of Defense forces by decree on 9

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[39] Valenta, Jiri, Soviet Intervention in Czechoslovakia, 1968: Anatomy of a Decision, The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1991.

[40] Gamov, Aleksandr, "The Security Council Votes First, Then Discusses", interview with former Justice Minister Yury K. Kalmykov, in Komsomolskaya Pravda, 20 December 1994, p. 3, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 46, no. 51, p. 12.

[41] Sokolov, Mikhail, "All Power to the Security Council!", in Sevodnya, 12 January 1995, p. 3, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 47, no. 3, p. 20.

December 1994 without the consultation of the legislature. Even if all the members of the legislative bodies were in complete agreement, the President still should have been prescient enough to know to have a special law drafted which would have allowed him to commit these types of forces.

Given the absence of any type of consultation mechanism or oversight, a loophole existed (and still exists) through which President Yeltsin managed to wiggle. Thomas mentions that the legal premise by which the Ministry of Defense forces entered into an area, which was considered by all to be a part of the Russian Federation, changed. Initially, a state of emergency was to be declared based on a natural disaster (an outbreak of cholera) in Chechnya. This way, Ministry of Defense troops could be introduced under the state of emergency which is normally reserved for Interior Ministry troops only and subject to oversight by the Federation Council. However, the state of emergency was *not* imposed due to the potential for its being overridden just as in November 1991. Instead, there was no state of emergency decreed, which left the Federation Council powerless. President Yeltsin called the area an "armed conflict zone."[42] In this way, Ministry of Defense troops could operate with Interior Ministry troops in a 'domestic' conflict. These Defense forces were necessary, due to the presence of heavy weapons in Dudayev's formations, which the Interior Ministry had no assets to engage.[43]

Had there been a mechanism which would have denied the use of Defense Ministry forces for 'internal' armed conflict, then Yeltsin could not have pursued the war option so readily without the support of the people and would have been forced to

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[42] Thomas, p. 10.
[43] Ibid.

negotiate. This is in keeping with the Democratic Peace Theory where wars do occur between democracies and non-democracies, but they require the mobilization of popular support. Yeltsin did not do this and had he done so, he might have convinced the legislature to support him.

Next, the only instrument constitutionally available to the legislature in the Chechen case was budgetary. They could have voted to remove the funding for the operation, which would have left the soldiers in a war with no resources. Some even feared that the army might rebel if it were in the field at war and pulled back or stripped of support.[44] Of course, they had no choice but to fund the operation for fear of the consequences if they did not.[45] This dilemma is reminiscent of the same debate in the US Congress in 1995 when they had to decide whether or not to fund the operation in Bosnia.

The Constitutional Court reviewed several appeals of decrees and Presidential actions sent up by the legislature. This is indeed a "check and balance" mechanism; however, it is not designed to be a quick process. Therefore, the appeals were not decided upon until 31 July 1995, nearly eight months after the start of the war. The Court upheld the series of decrees on the introduction of troops into Chechnya while it found several others to be moot. The Court's strict construction and juridical restraint were evident in its decisions. A bare majority of the Court, 10 of 18, ruled for the President. The remaining eight Justices were adamant in their opposition to the decision and

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[44] Felgengauer, Pavel, "An Operation That No One Likes", in Izvestia, 20 December 1994, p. 1, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 46, no. 51, p. 9.

[45] Zhuravylov, Pyotr and Parkhomenko, Sergei, "The Results of the Duma's Debates Will Make No Impression on the Kremlin", in Sevodnya, 14 January 1995, p. 1, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 47, no. 2, p. 14.

submitted dissenting opinions. The Court, surprisingly, admonished the legislature for *not* having laws that governed the use of the military in such a case.[46]

Earlier, the legislature attempted to amend the Constitution.[47] This is also a method to check the President's actions but also very time consuming and not very practical. The Duma, immediately after the intervention, realized this is where there was a weakness in the Russian Federation's democratic structure. "In a special point of the Duma's resolution, the Committees on Legislation and on Security are instructed to prepare amendments to the Constitution providing for 'the establishment of parliamentary oversight of the executive branch's activity'."[48] Amendments to the Russian Constitution are hard to achieve, especially those that would restrict the power of the Presidency. Not only must an amendment be ratified by a two-thirds vote in the Duma, a three-fourths vote in the Federation Council and two-thirds of the legislative bodies of the several constituent parts of the Federation, but it must also be signed by the President, who is unlikely to restrict his own powers.[49] Therefore, the amendment process cannot be used effectively in a short duration of time, but it at least appears that the Duma knows that it needs to be done.

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[46] Kirpichnikov, Aleksei, "The Decisions on Sending Troops Into Chechnya are Declared Constitutional", in Sevodnya, 1 August 1995, p. 1, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol.47, no. 31, pp. 4-6. See also "Judgment of the Constitutional Court of the Russian Federation of 31 July 1995 on the Constitutionality of the Presidential Decrees and the Resolutions of the Federal Government concerning the Situation in Chechnya", published by the European Commission for Democracy through Law on the Council of Europe, CDL-INF (96) 1, 10 January 1996, p. 10.

[47] Zhuravylov and Parkhomenko, p. 14.

[48] Zhuravylov, Pyotr and Parkhomenko, Sergei, "The Duma Does Not Answer the President's Questions", in Sevodnya, 14 December 1994, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 46, no. 50, p. 10.

[49] Zhukhov, Maksim, "Constitutional Court Clarifies How to So About Amending the Constitution", in Kommersant Daily, 1 November 1995, p. 3, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 47, no. 44, p, 16.

The ultimate check on presidential power, impeachment, was discussed, but never tried because there was not enough support for such a drastic measure. At one meeting of the Federation Council, one member of the administration was present. The deputies were indignant at the "neglectful attitude" of the President towards the Federation Council, especially in a time of crisis. Many vowed to amend the Constitution and called for the Duma to begin impeachment proceedings.[50] The Duma delivered a vote of 'No Confidence" in the government, which was as far as they could go towards changing the Chechen course of action. Had they voted a second time the same way within two months, the President could constitutionally dissolve the Legislature, which would have served no clear purpose.

On 10 January, well after the conflict had already begun, President Yeltsin decreed that the Chairman of the Federation Council, Vladimir Shumeiko, and the Speaker of the Duma, Ivan Rybkin, would hold permanent, voting seats on the Security Council. This move was viewed by some to be a form of oversight by the legislative bodies; however, not all meetings require a full complement of members and any votes taken are subject to veto by the President. Therefore, the positions may have somewhat checked the President's actions and served as a form of consultation, but they were by no means effectual and most likely were mere 'window dressing'.[51]

It is clear that the structural processes within the democratic structure of the Russian Federation government did not constrain the President in pursuit of the Chechen

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[50] Kutsyllo, Veronika, "The Chechen Question Could Well Bring a Redistribution of Power", in Kommersant-Daily, 19 January 1995, p. 3, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 47, no. 3, p. 14.
[51] Bulavinov, Ilya, "The Speakers Will Advise the President on a Regular Basis", in Kommersant-Daily, 11 January 1995, p. 1, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 47, no. 3, p. 19.

war. It is clear that the Legislature was impotent since their best weapon, funds, would clearly have hurt the soldiers in the field. The Constitutional Court was bogged down in a deliberately slow and meticulous process and could not render a timely decision, that is, prior to or at the beginning of the war. When they did act, it was with restraint in the 31 July 1995 precedent-setting review of the President's decrees.

In summary, it would seem that there are some mechanisms of restraint in the Russian Federation on the power of the Presidency. However, the one key weakness in the federal structure is the relative lack of *potent* constraints on the President regarding the use of force. In mature democracies such as the United States, these constraints have developed over time and become well established. The powers in the Russian Constitution given the President are immense, as the conflict in Chechnya demonstrates. The Russian President, along with his deputies in the Security Council, were able to exploit these weak constraints in order to pursue a war which would not be popular in the least.

The Normative Model and the War in Chechnya

The Structural Model exposed the weaknesses within the Russian democratic structure. Using the Democratic Peace Theory's Normative Model, one can analyze how the democratic norms in the Russian society, which existed prior to official democracy, applied the brakes on the conflict in midstream and forced Yeltsin to seek peace. Since Mansfield and Snyder predict that war is a likely event in a nation in transition, it is

probable that the emerging democratic norms of a society will have *some* effect on the outcome of that war. This is the case in the Russian Federation.

Russett states, "In relations with other states, decision-makers (whether they be few or many) will *try* to follow the same norms of conflict resolution as have been developed within and characterize their domestic political processes."[52] This is true of leaders in both democratic and non-democratic states. However, Boris Yeltsin did not follow, nor did he try to follow, "the same norms of conflict resolution as have been developed within..." Instead, he chose to exploit weakness in the government structure and act in an autocratic role, which appealed only to hard-liners in the population. However, there were two democratic norms which President Yeltsin was forced to reckon with as the conflict wore on: free speech and contested elections.

The first democratic norm is that of free speech. Out of this individual right comes freedom of the press. These two similar rights, whose presence was noted by Gibson and Duch prior to the fall of the Soviet Union, seemed to have grown with the advent of democracy and worked together to force President Yeltsin to change course in the prosecution of the war. Citizens expressed themselves time and again through such acts of speech as demonstrations, 'letters to the editor' and in polls. It was clear from the very beginning that the citizenry did not approve of the conflict. This disapproval betrayed an underlying desire to settle the war through non-violent means.

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[52] Russett, p. 35.

In *Ingushetia*, the people spontaneously took to the streets in order to block the passage of Russian vehicles into Chechnya.[53] Previously, these people would have been brutally dispersed. Four representatives from the Duma, led by the Federation's Human Rights Commissioner Sergei Kovalyov, dramatically went to Grozny in order to find out what exactly was happening, expose human rights abuses and to perhaps convince Dudayev to negotiate. He sent open letters to the President in which he pleaded for a cease-fire and in one he stated, "We believe that the path of peaceful talks has not yet been exhausted."[54] In Soviet times, he would have been arrested immediately upon his return to Moscow. Yelena Bonner, the world-renowned human rights activist, also blasted President Yeltsin in an open letter in which she accused him of waging the war at the behest of the military-industrial complex and oil company executives.[55] Even though she may be only partially correct, her accusations in public, without repercussion, demonstrate how effective free speech can be on public opinion. Rallies were held in Moscow and Ekaterinberg, among other places, in opposition to the conflict.[56] The commitment to free speech seems to have increased and become more accepted.

Soon, an informed population began to register their opinions in polls and surveys. In poll after poll, the people's desire for a peaceful resolution to the conflict was readily apparent. Even though the 'enemy' was a non-democratic opponent in this case,

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[53] Cherkasov, Gleb, "Ruslan Aushev Intends to Take Pavel Grachev to Court", in Sevodnya, 14 December 1994, p. 2, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 46, no. 50, p. 3.
[54] Yakov, Valery, "How Many More Children Must Die In Chechnya Before Moscow Hears Kovalyov's Voice?", in Izvestia, 23 December 1994, p. 2, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 46, no. 51, pp. 6-7.
[55] Bonner, Yelena, "Your Foros has Succeeded!", in Izvestia, 30 December 1994, p. 2, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 46, no. 52, pp. 9-10.
[56] Tregubova, Yelena, "The Russian Public Opposes the Military Operation in Chechnya", in Sevodnya, 27 December 1994, p. 2, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 46, no. 52, pp.11-12.

the people were not for settling the conflict in a violent manner. Before the war began for the Russian forces, a Sevodnya poll taken on 13 August 1994, registered 49% opposition to interference in the Chechen civil conflicts while a full 89% disagreed with directly helping the Chechen opposition forces.[57] After a week of war, 59% of respondents favored a peaceful resolution or withdrawal of Russian forces. This pollster concluded that, "...forcible methods do not receive the support of the majority."[58] A 27 December poll showed that 63% opposed the military action in Chechnya while 67% distrusted the President.[59] A January 1995 poll showed that 66% were against the troops being in Chechnya while 54% desired an immediate pullout and 78% felt that this action was a tragedy for all of Russia.[60] Finally, a 28 January poll in Sevodnya showed 71% against the troops' presence in Chechnya while 21% saw the war as being waged against the Chechen *people*, not their government. In this same poll, 74% did not favor indicting servicemen who refused to serve in Chechnya, which indicates that this war was viewed as a purely political maneuver.[61] Inversely with these polls, Boris Yeltsin's popularity plummeted.

During the Chechen crisis, the press asserted itself and became established as a crucial element in the system of "checks and balances" in Russian society. The role of

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[57] _____, "Yeltsin Opposes Intervention By Force", in Nezavisimaya Gazeta, 12 August 1991, p. 1, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 46, no. 32, p. 12.

[58] Levada, Yury, "The People and the War: The Majority are Opposed", in Izvestia, 23 December 1994, pp. 1-2, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 46, no. 51, pp. 11-12.

[59] Aleinik, Lev, "Sending Russian Troops to Chechnya has Lowered President Yeltsin's Rating", in Sevodnya, 27 December 1994, p. 2, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 46, no. 52, p.12.

[60] _____, "The People of Russia on the Chechen War", in Sevodnya, 19 January 1995, p. 3, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 47, no. 3, pp. 17-19.

[61] _____, "The Majority of Russia's People Are Against Putting Military Who Refuse To Serve [in Chechnya] On Trial", in Sevodnya, 28 January 1995, p. 3, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 47, no. 4, p. 12.

the press, as those who present fact and provide information, grew. Reports of a Russian operation in Chechnya began to filter out into the press as early as August 1994.[62] Of course, these reports were met with denial, yet the press continued to push the issue and exposed the denials of Defense Ministry spokesmen as well as the Defense Minister himself. A 7 June 1995 survey conducted by ARCSPO indicated that the people's opinion of "freedom of speech and press" is more positive than negative in all age groups, including the traditionally more conservative citizens over 60.[63]

At the beginning of the conflict, the government set up the Temporary Information Center for reporters who were not allowed into the war zone. This service was exposed as a sham in various exposés on propaganda efforts by the government. This was something that former Soviet citizens could relate with due to their experiences with Soviet propaganda efforts in the past. Still, reporters managed to infiltrate into Chechnya as well as obtain information from foreign sources and the Chechen Information Service, which proved to be more reliable than the Russian Federation's.[64] Also, television added a new dimension to the war. This old medium could now be relied upon for at least some truth from the independent stations. All of Russia watched as Shamil Basayev and his group struck deep into Russian territory and held hundreds of hostages at a hospital in Budyonnovsk. The pictures of the government troops storming the hospital coupled with information that some of the hostages had died at the hands of

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[62] Felgengauer, Pavel, "Conspiracy: Russian Unity Creeps into Chechnya", in Sevodnya, 30 August 1994, p. 1, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 46, no. 35, pp. 13-14.
[63] Levada, Yury, "Three Perestroika Generations", in Sevodnya, 7 June 1995, p. 3, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 47, no. 26, pp. 12-13.
[64] Dementyeva, Maria and Leontyev, Mikhail, "A Guerrilla War Has Been Under Way in Grozny for a Long Time", in Sevodnya, 14 January 1995, p. 1, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 47, no. 2, p.11.

these 'professionals' and the sympathetic reports of the captors by the captives brought about an even more intense desire to end the entire effort. As America experienced with Vietnam, the horrible pictures of war were beamed into the living rooms of nearly every home in Russia.

In conjunction with these first two norms, the idea of an upcoming periodic contested election forced President Yeltsin to consider his options regarding running for reelection. Putting an end to the war would have the most impact on his re-election bid. In addition, it would contrast him best with his Communist opponent, Gennady Zyuganov. Mary Matthews states essentially that Boris Yeltsin entered into the conflict in Chechnya for political reasons which were to appeal to the hard-liners in the Nationalist faction.[65] At the start of the war, these Nationalists, led by Vladimir Zhirinovsky's Liberal Democratic Party of Russia, had a strong presence in the Duma. However, the December 1995 Parliamentary elections brought the Communist faction into substantial control in the Duma. Using Matthews' logic, Yeltsin would have to discard his weakened Nationalist audience and appeal to his democratic base, his most vocal critics during the war, in order to shore up his position for the upcoming June Presidential Elections. His main opponents would be the Communists, and he had to ensure that he was not vulnerable on the Chechnya issue. Therefore, he pressed for a peaceful solution. He enlisted the help of popular general Alexander Lebed and gave him the mission to "end the war". Of course, Yeltsin did not necessarily agree with the *way*

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[65] Matthews, Mary Martha, The Impact of Electoral Politics on Russian Secessionist Movements: Chechnya and Tatarstan Compared, MA Thesis, University of Georgia, 1995.

Lebed ended the war[66] but, he did nonetheless. In the process, Lebed solidified his own position as a contender for the Presidency in the future.

The impact of maturing democratic norms of free speech and a free press on the President grew readily apparent as a contested election drew near. Public approval of the war plummeted, as did the popularity of the President. The fact that the President felt he needed to change his popularity numbers in order to win an upcoming election demonstrates that free speech and a free press had a positive effect in the cessation of hostilities in Chechnya.

Conclusion

In summary, Russia is a young democracy with some significant instability in its structure and with maturing democratic norms. Chechnya, throughout this time-frame, was autocratic. Under the Structural Model, democratic states which go to war with non-democratic states do so to either preempt a surprise attack or avoid making great concessions. Under the Normative Model, they do so to avoid exploitation. In the case of Russia's war in Chechnya, the Russian Federation leadership wanted to avoid making the concession of independence to Chechnya. They claimed that they feared that a whole series of secessionist movements would follow this concession and envisioned the breakup of their 'country'. However, the people seemed to feel otherwise and expressed their extreme desire to halt the war through the democratic norms of free speech and press and, given Yeltsin's low polling numbers, would surely have voted him out in June, 1996.

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[66] _____, "Peace, for the Moment", in Economist, 7 September 1996, vol. 340, no. 7982, pp. 46-47.

The threat of losing an election, to Boris Yeltsin, seemed to be a deciding factor in his efforts to end the unpopular conflict. Tragically, their inept attempt to crush the Chechens with force quickly only led to tens of thousands of dead. All they had to show for it was a poorly trained, led and fed army and a government structure with severe weaknesses.

On the world scene, other democratic leaders and nations saw a structurally unrestrained Russian president. By Democratic Peace Theory, they will evaluate their future relations with Russia based on their observations of democratic constraints. While they will be encouraged by growing norms like free speech/press and periodic contested elections, they will be concerned about Russia's structural flaws that do not seem to restrain the use of force. This concern has kept the Russian Federation with one foot in the door of the 'pacific union' and one foot out.

Chapter 4

Conclusion

"When process finally becomes more important in Russian politics than personality, the democratic transition can deemed complete"

-- Margot Light in The World Today[1]

The war in Chechnya displayed the shortcomings of the Russian Federation's constitutional structure regarding the use of force by the Executive. Although the structural accouterments of democracy – 3 branches of government, a Constitution, legislative acts, etc. – are present, the war in Chechnya has clearly shown that they do not work together as a more mature democracy's might. President Yeltsin, by virtue of his constitutional preeminence, was able to pursue violent means, unchecked, for dubious goals and disastrous results. In the face of these powers, the Legislative and Judicial bodies proved to be impotent in their efforts to stop the war.

Then why did the war stop? This thesis sought to find the answer to that question. At first glance, it appeared that both democratic structures and democratic norms worked to stop the popularly-opposed violent course of action. However, using Bruce Russett's Structural and Normative Models, it became apparent that the democratic structures of the young Russian democracy did not apply any "braking" or "slowing" mechanism in the pursuit of violent conflict resolution. Such constraints as confirmation of high officials, consultation, state of emergency decrees and budgetary powers were all bypassed by the president and his Security Council. Oversight authority is nearly nonexistent.

However, using the Normative Model, this question was answered. Growing democratic norms like free speech/press and periodic contested elections in particular, became the "braking" mechanism as the violent conflict in Chechnya wore on. Public pressure against the war mounted. The free press amplified public discontent over the war while exposing the non-democratic ploys of the administration. In the end, President Yeltsin was faced with either ending an unpopular war or potentially losing a bid for re-election. He chose the former, but had he chosen the latter, non-democratic forces would most likely have won the election. Democracy in the Russian Federation would surely have been set back years, if not permanently. President Yeltsin had no choice but to end the war. Under the Normative Model, President Yeltsin's actions should have reflected the values of society regarding conflict resolution at the beginning. They evidently did not since the outcry against the war was immediate and grew stronger over time. President Yeltsin had to change his policy in the face of this criticism.

Russia and the Democratic Peace

Russia's test in Chechnya revealed that the Russian Federation's democratic structures have weaknesses while its democratic norms are maturing. More precisely, impotent constitutional constraints on presidential power present the greatest challenge, while the continuing growth of free speech and the expectation of contested elections should give other liberal democracies some amount of optimism. But, a Russian president who is unconstrained by democratic structures, by the Structural Model, will be

[1] Light, Margot, "Two Cheers for Russian Democracy", in The World Today, August-September, 1996, vol. 52, nos. 8-9, p. 202.

perceived as unconstrained by other democratic leaders. Therefore, these leaders will see the Russian president and his advisers as more unpredictable and, to some degree, will be more fearful or wary of their actions. One journalist in Washington D.C. observed, "The use of force in Chechnya is regarded here as a result of impotence on the part of the democrats in Moscow."[2] With this in mind, it will be even harder for Russia to garner unqualified acceptance in the democratic West. By the Normative Model, the Russian Federation will begin to be more accepted by other peoples of the world who will consider the Federation to be another democracy like themselves and will press for only non-violent measures of settling conflict.

If Russia is ever to be a member of that elite club of democracies enjoying the Democratic Peace, or a member of Kant's 'pacific union', then they must take action to correct these structural weaknesses. The only truly democratic and lasting way in which this can be done is through the amendment process. Federal laws could be repealed by a subsequent legislature or by the Court and are therefore temporary in comparison to an amendment. In order to prevent something similar to Chechnya from ever happening again, which would most assuredly doom democracy in the Russian Federation for quite a long time, the Duma should begin the amendment process as soon as possible. There are two amendments in particular that they should consider.

The first amendment to take into consideration would be one that extends to the legislature more extensive oversight powers over the Executive's ability to use armed force internally. The absence of this type of built-in legislative control weakens the

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[2] Sturua, Melor, "Washington is Losing Faith in the Russian President and His Ability To Govern", in Izvestia, 5 January 1995, p. 4, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 47, no. 1, p. 10.

people's ability, through their elected representatives, to apply the brakes on this type of executive action. Using the Structural Model in Russia's conflict with Chechnya, it became clear that the absence of this type of constraint allowed Boris Yeltsin and the Security Council to pursue the war effort for *whatever* reason. Two Russian political scientists wrote that "a new social contract from "below" must be initiated. It must not only cover the Chechen Conflict, but also on strengthening public oversight on the actions of the power-wielding structures."[3] A democracy in transition may indeed need a strong central authority in order to combat non-democratic forces within a country. Considering that President Yeltsin and his Security Council prosecuted the Chechen war without the consent of the Legislature against those they all considered to be their own citizens, it is clear that some particular oversight be placed on the Executive's authority. As previously mentioned in Chapter 3, the Duma recognized their limited powers during the war's opening months, but could not gather enough votes to get oversight legislation passed on to the Federation Council, given the amount of Nationalist faction members in the Duma at that time. This does not mean that they should not continue to try. By Democratic Peace Theory, other democracies will perceive that the Russian President is similarly constrained and is therefore less likely to engage in unpredictable violent action to solve conflicts.

Secondly, the Duma should immediately move to amend the Constitution to allow the right of secession for the constituent republics. One pundit noted, "A precedent was

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[3] Pain, Emil and Popov, Arkady, "The Authorities and Society at the Barricades", in Izvestia, 10 February 1995, p. 4, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol.47, no. 7, pp. 8-9.

needed – a war – in order to make it clear that there was no other way" to secede.[4] If Chechnya has indeed become a precedent, then Russian democracy will surely suffer if there is a reoccurrence of a republic wishing to self-determine its own membership status in the Federation. The Duma must move resolutely to eliminate war as the only alternative for secession. One of the Russian Federation legislature's prime considerations in this endeavor should be a consideration of the specific histories of prospective secessionist republics. Dmitry Furman wrote, "Russia, if it is to be a great country must be willing to compromise its territorial integrity for the sake of some nationalities because of 'the demand of morality and humaneness.' It is the right of the Russians to legally oppose forcible changes in the borders, but also its right to grant independence/secession."[5] A mechanism should be employed by which these histories could be considered in the grounds for secession. This will be very difficult to do given that Russia is a multinational state.

As Antonio Cassese noted, "In the hands of would-be states, self-determination is the key to opening the door and entering into that coveted club of statehood. For existing states, self-determination is the key for locking the door against the undesirable from within and outside the realm."[6] This is where the Russian Federation finds itself today. They are a multinational-state and therefore will always be subject to internal centrifugal forces such as secession. The most painless way to avoid future wars in connection with

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[4] Makarenko, Vadim, "Drawing Conclusions from the Chechen Experience", in Rossiiskiye Vesti, 30 November 1996, p. 2, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 48, no. 48, p. 16.
[5] Furman, Dmitry, "We and Our Neighbors – On the Question of Border Revision", in Nezavisimaya Gazeta, 3 July 1992, p. 3, in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, vol. 44, no. 27, pp.11-12.
[6] Cassese, Antonio, Self-Determination of Peoples: A Legal Reappraisal, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1995, p. 6.

efforts to secede would be an amendment that allows for the peaceful secession of constituent republics, thus leaving the metaphorical door unlocked.

There are several benefits to letting Chechnya go. The Federation would be rid of any future uprisings, state economic aid and subsidies would no longer place a drag on Russian Federation's annual budget expenditures. The Russian people may feel the same way about other republics. The sooner the Russian Federation drops its insistence that no other country of the world recognize Chechnya, the faster that the world community will begin to take interest in this small corner of the world and start the process of economic aid, thus relieving Moscow of the obligation. The OSCE is already there and would be an excellent conduit by which this could be done.

Chechnya and the Democratic Peace

As with the Russian Federation, Chechnya has some ground to make up before it can join the world democratic community. This thesis has shown that the democratic structures and norms within Chechen society are embryonic. However, there seems to be a rhetorical commitment to democratic ideals which have been followed through by means of a fair and democratic election. In Chechnya, there are the accouterments that accompany democracy, but only time will tell if the Chechen people have committed themselves to these principles.

Chechnya must work diligently over the next five years to secure some measure of economic stability. Economic stability will provide an atmosphere free of uncertainty in which the people can work to determine their future. At some point during that five

years, they need to secure foreign aid outside of the Russian sphere of influence as well as demonstrate political stability. By doing this, other democracies may *begin* to consider the Chechen leader to be constrained by a democratic structure and the peoples of other democracies will begin to recognize the Chechen people as possessing similar democratic ideas. Once again, this can only be done over time.

A Sign of Permanent Democracy?

What we have seen in Russia may be a historical first. In the Russian Empire, the use of violence resulting in a loss seemed to bring about some form of fundamental regime change due to popular unrest. After the loss in the Crimea, Alexander II instituted widespread changes including emancipation of the serfs. Nicholas II allowed the formation of the first Duma and a Constitution after the loss to Japan in 1905. The Bolsheviks overthrew the Provisional government who had previously forced the Tsar to abdicate due to dissatisfaction over World War I. After the loss in Afghanistan, the Soviet Union crumbled after its weakened military forces could neither hold it together nor retain a hold on Eastern Europe.

However, a different result seems to be evident after Russia's dismal showing in Chechnya. Instead of facing a regime crisis, simple military reform is underway. The Ministry of Defense has proposed transition to an all-volunteer service, adoption of civilian control, downsizing and doctrinal revision. More importantly, however, the leadership of the Russian Federation has allowed some amount of popular opinion to

effect policy. These are surely signs of democracy and could signal the permanence of democracy in the Russian Federation.

Repairs of the democratic structural weaknesses will enable the proper democratic bodies act as the "brakes" they are supposed to do. Continuing growth of democratic norms in addition to those mentioned previously will undoubtedly cement the democratic system with the Russian people. Any actions taken towards either of these propositions will help Russia gain access to the Democratic Peace.

Postscript

Doku Zavgaev, the erstwhile former head of the Chechen-Ingush ASSR and puppet head-of-state during the war was given a new job:

Moscow Posts Ousted Chechen Leader to Africa

MOSCOW -- President Boris Yeltsin on Friday named the ousted pro-Moscow leader of the breakaway republic of Chechnya as Russia's ambassador to Tanzania.

Doku Zavgaev, Chechnya's Soviet communist boss until forced out by secessionist rebels in 1991, won a flawed presidential election in December 1995 while Russian troops held the capital Grozny.

But Zavgaev, branded Moscow's "puppet" by the separatists, was chased from the mainly Moslem region once again last August when rebel guerrillas stormed the city and succeeded in forcing Yeltsin to withdraw all his forces.

Separatist commander Aslan Maskhadov was elected Chechen president in January after elections judged free and fair by international observers.

A month earlier, Maskhadov pledged to punish Zavgaev. (Reuters)[7]

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[7] _____, "Moscow Posts Ousted Chechen Leader to Africa", Reuters News Service, 17 March 1997.

Sometimes, a guy just can't get a break.....

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Appendix A

CHECHEN HISTORY

"Ye inhabitants of Dagestan and Tchetchenia! I assure you that these troops have in nowise been sent to root out the doctrine of Mohomet and to destroy his people, but simply for the punishment of Schamyl and his followers."

-- Tsar's Caucasian Corps Commander, ca. 1845[1]

The Chechen existence has been intertwined with the larger nations around them: the Russians, the Turks and the Persians. Of the three, the Russians have had the most impact. Through it all, the Chechen people had existed mainly in a clan-type family structure as a society. Unity, as a nation, has not been of overriding concern until the late 19th Century.

In the course of this history, there have been some remarkable individuals who have managed to unify the Chechen people in times of crisis as well as rallying other nations in the North Caucasus. Such individuals as Sheikh Mansur in the late 18th century and Imam Shamil in the middle 19th century rose to power under their particular brand of Sufi Islam to unite these peoples who would not otherwise have come together against a common foe.

The Russians, on the other hand, viewed the Caucasus as strategically important for their empire. It gave them a secure southern boundary against the rival Ottoman Turks and Persians and opened the door for trade routes to the south and east. At the end of the 19th Century, when oil was discovered in Chechnya and Azerbaijan, possession of

the Caucasus became all the more important as Russia was already behind in the Industrial Revolution.

This appendix will discuss the foundations of the nationalist character of the Chechen people and why they fought and won their independence after all these centuries. It will also illuminate you as to the background of why it is the Russians view the independence of Chechnya with such disdain and are willing to send soldiers there to fight against it.

Pre-History to 1785

The Chechen people have inhabited this area for thousands of years. One researcher dates the existence of culture to the Bronze Age or ca. 2000 BC.[2] According to Chechen tradition, the Chechen people are indigenous to the Caucasus Mountains but descended into the Terek and Sunzha river valleys below in the 14th Century.[3] One researcher claims that the descent from the mountains coincides with the "Little Ice Age [which] caused glacial advances and shortened growing seasons in the alpine highlands, weakening the highland economies and triggering migrations to the lowlands and abandonment of some alpine villages."[4] The Chechens claimed to be a people with noble qualities who were free and equal with each other. However, it seems that they were actually ruled by four families or clans who descended from two common ancestors -

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[1] Mackie, J. Milton, Life of Schamyl and Narrative of the Circassian War of Independence Against Russia, published by John P. Jewett and Co., Boston, 1856, p. 272.
[2] Wieczynski, Joseph L., ed., The Modern Encyclopedia of Russian and Soviet History, Academic International Press, 1978, vol. 6, p. 215.
[3] Akiner, Shirin, Islamic Peoples of the Soviet Union, Kegan Paul International, Ltd., 1983, p. 175.

Nashekho and Jakho. Moreover, other "noble" families existed but were not as powerful as the leading four.[5] The clan or the extended family seemed to be the primary form of allegiance up until the 19th Century.[6] The Chechens call themselves a "Nakhchuo" or "Nakhcho" with "Nokhchi" being the plural form.[7] [8] The Russians gave the Nakhchuo their current name based on one of the first or largest settlements they encountered in the area. The village was called Bol'shoy Chechen and located on the shores of the Argun River.[9]

The earliest mention of the Chechens is found in a 7th Century source as well as in some early Georgian sources.[10] The Chechen tribes of the 16th Century lived mainly in the Terek, Sunzha, and Argun river valleys north of the mountains, in the higher mountain foothills and in some of the higher mountain valleys. According to Edward Kline, the president of the Andrei Sakharov Foundation, "Part or all of their territory has been overrun for long periods by the Iranian Alans (ancestors of the Ossetians) in the 9th - 12th Centuries, by the Golden Horde in the 13th - 15th Centuries, and then by the Russian Empire, which in a competition for domination of the North Caucasus that began in the 16th Century, finally bested its Ottoman and Persian rivals."[11]

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[4] Nichols, Johanna, "Who are the Chechens?", *http://www.csam.montclair.edu/~chechen/who.are.chechens* Johanna Nichols is a doctoral student at UC Berkeley in linguistics and is currently studying Chechen and Ingush.
[5] Wieczynski, p. 215.
[6] Ibid., p. 215.
[7] Wixman, Ronald, The Peoples of the USSR: An Ethnographical Handbook, M.E. Sharpe, Inc., Armonk, New York, 1984, p. 43.
[8] Nichols, Johanna, "Who are the Chechens?".
[9] Akiner, Shirin, p. 175.
[10] Ibid.
[11] Kline, Edward, "The Conflict in Chechnya", *http://www.wdn.com/asf/chechbp.html*

The Russians referred to them as the 'Gorskii' or 'Mountaineers', in general, and to the smaller groups or clans by the village name from which they came, in particular. Typically, Soviet sources say that there was no class society because there was no feudal system. Rather, family clans made up the society, "whose members considered themselves free, noble and equal to each other - 'equal and free like wolves' according to their own saying."[12] The symbol of the wolf will be significant later on in Chechen history.

In religious terms, the Chechens were animists prior to the introduction of Islam.[13] Shirin Akiner states that some of the Chechens were converted to Christianity prior to the introduction of Islam. The existence of the ruins of gothic-like churches located in Chechnya proves his point. Christianity probably came through Georgia.[14] According to Suzanne Goldenberg, "Islam came to the lowland areas of Dagestan as early as the beginning of the 8th Century, but peoples living in the remote mountainous areas were relatively late converts, embracing the religion in the 17th, 18th, and 19th Centuries. The last pagan Ingush village was converted in 1864."[15] The center of Islamic culture in the North Caucasus was in Dagestan and many Chechens probably went there for their training and eventually brought Islam back to their families and clans. Avar and Kumyk missionaries brought Islam to the Chechens in the first place.[16] Akiner states that in the 18th Century, the Chechens finally submitted to the Islamic code of laws (called the

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[12] Lemercier-Quelquejay, Chantal, "Cooptation of the Elites of Kabarda and Dagestan in the Sixteenth Century", in Broxup, Marie Bennigsen, ed., The North Caucasus Barrier: The Russian Advance Towards the Muslim World, Hurst & Co. Ltd. Publishers, London, 1992, p. 35.
[13] Ibid., p. 35.
[14] Akiner, p. 175.
[15] Goldenberg, Suzanne, Pride of Small Nations: The Caucasus and Post-Soviet Disorder, Zed Books Ltd., London, 1994, p. 191.

Shari'a) as a group and subordinated their customary Chechen laws (called the *adat*) to the Shari'a.[17]

Where the Russians are concerned, their interest in the Caucasus as a region was piqued in 1556 after they defeated the Kazan and Astrakhan Khanates. To the south, the Russians saw opportunity for conquest, trade and the spread of Orthodoxy. The Muscovites' desire to control the Caucasus brought them into conflict with other regional powers of the region such as Iran or Persia, the Ottoman Turks, the Crimean Tatars, the Nogais, and the Shaybanis of Turkestan. Each had their own strategic and economic reasons to covet the Caucasus.[18] Ivan IV (or Ivan the Terrible) sought but failed to incorporate the Caucasus region into his empire through a marriage arrangement with a Cherkess princess names Maria Temrukovna and attempted to "settle" the area with Russian nobles and peasantry.[19] They established a series of fortresses to act as centers of power in the region as well. However, these fortresses were destroyed in wars with the Persians and the settlers forced to flee.[20] Tsar Boris Godunov's attempt to finally take control of the area in 1604 failed as well which marked the end of Russian efforts to control the area for nearly a century. Peter the Great failed when his armies were

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[16] Akiner, Shirin, p. 175.
[17] Ibid.
[18] Broxup, Marie Bennigsen, ed., "Introduction: Russia and the North Caucasus", in The North Caucasus Barrier: The Russian Advance Towards the Muslim World, Hurst & Co. Ltd. Publishers, London, 1992, p. 1.
[19] Avtorkhanov, Abdurahman, "The Chechen and Ingush during the Soviet Period and its Antecedents", in Broxup, Marie Bennigsen, ed., The North Caucasus Barrier: The Russian Advance Towards the Muslim World, Hurst & Co. Ltd. Publishers, London, 1992, p. 149.
[20] Broxup, "Introduction: Russia and the North Caucasus", p. 2.

defeated by Mountaineers, Azeris and Persians in 1732 when the fortresses at Derbent and Tarku, located on the Caspian Sea coast, fell after a ten year occupation.[21]

As time passed, the Caucasus became more and more important to the Russians not only due to their rivalries with the empires to their south but also because of their newly acquired allies in Georgia under the Treaty of Georgievsk in 1783.[22] The Darial Pass leads through the Caucasus Mountains from North Ossetia into Georgia and is the traditional trade route through the mountain barrier. It was therefore strategically important for maintaining control over their lands in Georgia. The implied task for controlling access to Georgia involved the pacification of the peoples along or near the Darial Pass, and this included the Chechens.

Sheikh Mansur: 1785 -1791

The first major war fought in the North Caucasus by the Russians was against an array of North Caucasian ethnic groups led by a Naqshibandyi sheikh named Ushurma.[23] Ushurma took the name Mansur, meaning 'victor', when he became their leader.[24] According to Avtorkhanov, Mansur was, "a Chechen from Aldy," and, "assumed the title of imam of all the Caucasian Mountaineers, a move which effectively united all the tribes of the North Caucasus: the Chechens, the Ingush, the Dagestanis, the Ossetians, the

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[21] Goldenberg, p. 18.
[22] Panico, Christopher, Conflicts in the Caucasus: Russia's War in Chechnya, The Research Institute for the Study of Conflict and Terrorism, London, 1995, p. 2.
[23] Broxup, "Introduction: Russia and the North Caucasus", p. 3.
[24] Henze, Paul, Islam in the North Caucasus: The Example of Chechnya, published by RAND, Santa Monica, CA, 1995, p. 7.

Cherkess and the Kabardins."[25] To the North Caucasian peoples, especially those in Dagestan and Chechnya, this war became a *jihad*, or holy war, against the infidels from the north.[26] "In 1785, Mansur's warriors encircled an important Russian force on the bank of the river Sunja and completely annihilated it – the worst-ever defeat inflicted on the armies of Catherine the Great."[27] Eventually, the Ottoman Turks sent aid and soldiers to Mansur and his rebellion. They viewed this as an opportunity to exert influence over the region at Russia's expense. However, the *jihad* ended six years later in 1791 when the Ottoman fortress of Anapa fell and Mansur, along with the Turkish Pasha, was captured and imprisoned in Schlusselburg prison in St. Petersburg. Afterwards, thousands of Chechens fled the Caucasus for Turkey, which accounts for the large Chechen Diaspora located there. Mansur died in the prison in 1793.[28] Even after the defeat of Mansur, the Russians still could not adequately maintain control and security of the region. In 1801, the Russians formally annexed all of Georgia, thus securing their positions south of the Caucasus Mountains and placing them in direct contact with their Persian and Ottoman rivals. The Persian kings attempted and failed to take control of the Eastern Caucasus in 1804 and 1813. However, after the Treaty of Gulistan, the Russians were 'legally' in possession of Dagestan, all of Georgia and several Khanates in the Caucasus.[29] According to Marie Broxup, "The Naqshbandiya disappeared from the

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[25] Avtorkhanov, "The Chechen and Ingush during the Soviet Period and its Antecedents", p. 149. Paul Henze states that Aldy is located, "on the river Sunja north of the site of the future Grozny." (Henze, p. 7) This makes Mansur a lowland Chechen.
[26] Broxup, "Introduction: Russia and the North Caucasus", p. 1.
[27] Ibid., p. 3.
[28] Ibid.
[29] Goldenberg, p. 19.

Caucasus, but the jihad left the memory that resistance and unity around Islam were possible."[30]

The Murid Wars and Shamil: 1824 - 1859

In 1816, a Napoleonic War hero named Prince Aleksei Petrovich Ermolov became the Governor-General of Transcaucasia. His headquarters was located in Tblisi, the capital of Georgia. His position required him to represent the Tsar in the area and to maintain the lines of communication to Russia through the mountains. Ermolov also represented the Tsar in the courts of the Ottoman and Persian emperors. The Tsar commanded Ermolov to pacify the tribes of the North Caucasus and to bring their allegiance to the Tsar. Ermolov, with the aid of his Chief of Staff Veliaminov, established a web of fortresses, now called the "Ermolov System", on key areas in Dagestan and Chechnya in order to force the Chechens and any other resistance groups out. Moshe Gammer relates how the Russians used tactics such as expelling the Chechens in the areas and resettling the region with Cossacks, engaging in the slave trade, destruction of villages, genocide and executions.[31] According to another scholar, Russian commanders tried to coopt friendly villages to their side, thus setting off inter-

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[30] Broxup, Marie Bennigsen, "The 'Internal' Muslim Factor in the Politics of Russia: Tatarstan and the North Caucasus", in Mohiaddin, Mesbahi, ed., Central Asia and the Caucasus after the Soviet Union: Domestic and International Dynamics, published by University Press of Florida, Gainesville, Florida, 1994, p. 84.

[31] Gammer, Moshe, "Russian Strategies in the Conquest of Chechnia and Dagestan: 1825 - 1859", in Broxup, Marie Bennigsen, ed., The North Caucasus Barrier: The Russian Advance Towards the Muslim World, Hurst & Co. Ltd. Publishers, London, 1992, pp. 46-48.

clan strife by touching off old feuds.[32] Firuz Kazemzadeh believes that these acts led to the declaration of *jihad* in the North Caucasus.[33]

The first shots of the Caucasian Wars were instigated in 1824 by a Dagestani named Said al-Harakani who led a *jihad* against the Russians. Although he was eventually beaten about a year later, the Chechens refused to quit fighting as the Dagestani groups did. In 1826, the Qajar Persians once again invaded Dagestan, Chechnya, Georgia and Karabakh in an effort to use the Decembrist Uprising to claim the region for itself. In a span of a year and a half, the Russians managed to defeat both the Persians and the Mountaineers. In the ensuing Treaty of Turkmanchai, the Qajars abandoned their claims to Dagestan and Chechnya in favor of the Russians as well as Armenia and the rest of Azerbaijan.[34] At this point the Russians now felt that they had an internationally recognized and legitimate and legal claim over the area. The North Caucasians did not accept this reasoning and tried to do something about it.

Led by a mullah named Ghazi Mohammad (a.k.a. Khazi Moolah), the Chechens sacked several fortresses and killed several general officers, including the cruelest of them all, an officer named Grekov.[35] However, Ermolov did not remain quiet. He mounted a punitive slash and burn offensive against the Chechens. Although the resistance collapsed out of internal strife, the Chechens did not forget the actions of the Russian. Their rage at Ermolov, "...practically pushed the Mountaineers into the arms of

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[32] Thomas, Timothy L., The Caucasus Conflict and Russian Security: The Russian Forces Confront Chechnya, Foreign Military Studies Office, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 1995, p. 3.
[33] Ibid.
[34] Goldenberg, p. 19.
[35] Gammer, "Russian Strategies in the Conquest of Chechnia and Dagestan: 1825 - 1859", pp. 47-48.

the Sufi order, which would lead them in a thirty year struggle against the Russians."[36] The political activism of the Sufi brotherhoods combined with the holy warrior mentality and local traditions is collectively known as *muridism*. Marie Broxup asserts that the Russians and their Soviet counterparts have both used these same methods of assimilating neighboring Islamic cultures.[37]

Ghazi Mohammad was killed in 1832 along with many of his closest warriors in a battle in his hometown of Gimri. Fifty were killed and only two escaped.[38] One of the two was named Shamil. However, from 1832-1834, Hamza Bek (a.k.a. Hamsad Bey) led the resistance against the Russians. His abilities were adequate but not inspiring. In an internal dispute, he was killed by a pair of brothers in his group of murids after he treacherously murdered the Khaness of Avaria, her son the Khan, and two other sons at Chunsach.[39] At that point, Shamil became the most widely recognized and inspirational ruler of the muridist movement. Shamil was a member of the Naqshibandyi brotherhood and was named Imam of all the North Caucasus, just as Mansur had been nearly 50 years earlier. Shamil united the peoples of the North Caucasus. He was a guerrilla fighter who inspired people to fight for him and for Allah. On more than one occasion, Shamil took advantage of typical Russian tactics and defeated them. He used the forested areas of Chechnya for cover. Shamil would lead diversionary raids in order to lure the Russians away from their lines of communication, encircle and destroy them. After the Tsar relieved Ermolov, a series of commanders took up the fight against Shamil. They all

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[36]Ibid., p. 49.
[37] Broxup, "Introduction: Russia and the North Caucasus", pp. 4-11.
[38] Gammer, "Russian Strategies in the Conquest of Chechnia and Dagestan: 1825 - 1859", p. 51.

failed for reasons ranging from lack of competence and discipline to a lack of support from the Tsar. However, one commander, Prince Mikhail Semenovich Vorontsov, began the systematic destruction of the Chechen forests and all the hamlets, fields and livestock therein in order to force the rebels into the open or starve them to death in the mountains.[40] [41] Using these hit-and-run tactics as well as all-out frontal assaults and sieges, Shamil fought the Russians until 1859. During this time, Shamil's feats took on mythical proportions. In one instance, he was shot twice in the chest, given up for dead and then miraculously reappeared back in base camp in front of his followers and showed them his wounds.[42] Eventually, Shamil surrendered to the Russian Prince Bariatinskii, but he had inspired generations of Chechens with the fire of rebellion and hate for the Russians. Shamil's exploits became famous in the West for their audacity and tenacity.[43] Prince Bariatinskii, in the name of the Tsar, proclaimed that several rights be accorded to the Chechens:

> I declare in the name of the Emperor:
>
> (1) that the Russian government leaves you forever absolutely free to profess the faith of your fathers.
> (2) that you will never be forced into the army as soldiers or be transformed into Cossacks.
> (3) that you are given a three year exemption period from the date of ratification of this Act, after which you will be compelled to pay three roubles per household for the maintenance of your national administration services. However, the *aul* [i.e. village] communities are free to distribute this tax among you as they see fit.

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[39] Mackie, J. Milton, Life of Schamyl and Narrative of the Circassian War of Independence Against Russia, published by John P. Jewett and Co., Boston, 1856, pp. 156-160.
[40] Gammer, "Russian Strategies in the Conquest of Chechnia and Dagestan: 1825 - 1859", p. 55.
[41] Speake, Graham, ed., Atlas of the Islamic World Since 1500, published by Equinox, Ltd., Oxford, England, 1982, p. 124.
[42] Von Haxthausen, Baron August, The Tribes of the North Caucasus with an Account of Schamyl and the Murids, Chapman and Hall Publishers, London, 1855, p. 105.
[43] Henze, p. 12.

(4) that the authorities in charge of your government will exercise their authority according to the shariat and the adat. Judgment will be administered and decisions taken by popular courts composed of the best people.[44]

The Russian poet Mikhail Lermontov wrote of the Chechens, "Their God is Freedom, their Law is War."[45] Another Russian Great, Lev Tolstoy, wrote in Hadji Murat, "The emotion felt by every Chechen, old and young, was stronger than hatred. It was not hatred, it was a refusal to recognize these Russian dogs as men at all, and a feeling of such disgust, revulsion and bewilderment at the senseless cruelty of these creatures that the urge to destroy them – like the urge to destroy rats, venomous spiders or wolves – was an instinct as natural as self-preservation."[46] Karl Marx also admired the Chechens for their revolutionary fighting spirit.[47]

After the Russians captured Shamil, they imprisoned him in Kaluga and Kiev but allowed him to emigrate in his old age to Mecca, Saudi Arabia for the *hajj*.[48] They feared that he would become a martyr if they executed him and thereby spark another uprising in the Caucasus.[49] He died in Arabia in 1871 and is buried in Medina where many come to visit his graveside and leave stones in remembrance.[50] [51] Ironically, but perhaps out of respect for Shamil, Shamil's son attended a St. Petersburg university and eventually

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[44] Avtorkhanov, "The Chechen and Ingush during the Soviet Period and its Antecedents", p. 150.
[45] Erlanger, Steven, "In Chechnya Invasion, Russians Must Battle Demons", New York Times, http://www.csam.montclair.edu/~chechen/demons.chechen
[46] Ibid.
[47] Henze, p. 12.
[48] Broxup, "Introduction: Russia and the North Caucasus", p. 13.
[49] Goldenberg, p. 192.
[50] Paxton, John, Encyclopedia of Russian History: From the Christianization of Kiev to the Break-Up of the USSR, ABC-CLIO, Inc., Santa Barbara, California, 1993, p. 364.
[51] Goldenberg, p. 192.

became a general officer in the Russian Army.[52] Later on, under Stalin, Shamil was characterized as a British and Turkish agent.[53] The characterization of Shamil, as with many other historical Russian figures under the Soviets, has changed over the years. He has been ignored, praised as a misguided patriot, condemned, and rehabilitated.[54] The mere fact that Shamil's reputation has been questioned and revised for so long by Soviet leaders and historians is itself insulting. To the Chechens of today, he is a legend and an inspiration, both politically and spiritually. Suzanne Goldenberg states, "the lesson of Shamil was that Islam and national sentiment could overcome ethnic divisions and unite all the Caucasian peoples."[55]

The Interim Years: 1859 - 1917

The capitulation of Shamil in 1859 marked the end of the Caucasian Wars (sometimes called the Circassian Wars) for Russia. It is estimated that nearly 500,000 North Caucasians were forcibly deported to Turkey after hostilities ceased.[56] However, the Chechen people that stayed behind did not entirely devote themselves to the Tsar and to Mother Russia. While Russia continued to try to assert itself in the world as a major power, the Chechen people fought sporadically with their new Russian masters.[57]

Around 1861, a new *tariqat*, or priestly order, called Qadiri became popular in the area. Many of the Naqshibandyi mullahs were killed in the Murid Wars, many deported

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[52] Ibid.
[53] Paxton, p. 364.
[54] Gammer, Moshe, "Shamil in Soviet Historiography", in Middle Eastern Studies, October, 1992, vol. 28, no. 4, pp. 729 - 777.
[55] Goldenberg, p. 192.
[56] Thomas, p. 3.
[57] Akiner, p. 176.

and many went underground. A Kumyk mullah who lived in a Chechen village named Kunta Haji Kishiev began to preach of pacifism and cooperation with the Russians. This new thought became widely accepted by the war-weary population of Chechnya and Dagestan. However, as many of Shamil's former followers became involved with this new *tariqat*, they couldn't give up their fighting spirit. Once again, rebellion broke out and continued through 1864 when the last followers of Shamil were finally defeated. Kunta Haji was captured and placed in a mental institution in Russia where he died in 1867.[58] [59] In 1864 and 1865, many North Caucasians were again forcibly and brutally deported to the Ottoman Empire at the cost of many lives.[60]

In 1877, the Russo-Turkish Wars began. The Chechens, under the leadership of 22 year old Ali-Bek Haji, took advantage of the hoped for removal of Russian troops from the area and the preoccupation of the Tsar with a war somewhere else to revolt again.[61] After a year, the uprising was eventually crushed by six and a half Russian divisions.[62] Revolt and repression sporadically continued. However, many Chechens continued to leave their homeland for places such as Turkey, Jordan and Iraq. An 1894 study stated that the Chechens still in Chechnya had not yet been totally pacified.[63] Between 1895 and 1905, over 10,000 Chechens fled the country. Revolt and repression

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[58] Henze, p. 14.
[59] Broxup, Marie Bennigsen, ed., "The Last Ghazawhat: The 1920-1921 Uprising", The North Caucasus Barrier: The Russian Advance Towards the Muslim World, Hurst & Co. Ltd. Publishers, London, 1992.
[60] Avtorkhanov, "The Chechen and Ingush during the Soviet Period and its Antecedents", p. 150.
[61] Ibid., pp. 150-151.
[62] Conquest, Robert, The Nation Killers: The Soviet Deportation of the Nationalities, MacMillan & Co. Ltd. Publishers, London, 1970, p. 20.
[63] Panico, p. 3.

after the 1905 revolution in Russia led directly to the internal exile to Siberia for thousands of Chechens.[64]

Another momentous event occurred in Chechnya in 1894. Oil was discovered near Grozny. From this point forward, the Caucasus not only remained an important area from a geo-strategic standpoint, but it also became vital due to the natural resources found there. According to Paul Henze, Russian and international capitalists rapidly developed the oil fields in Chechnya so that in 1910, Grozny ranked second in all of Russia in oil production.[65]

The Bolshevik Revolution, Persecution and World War II: 1917 - 1944

When the reign of Tsar Nicholas II collapsed due to the pressures of WWI, a poor economy and the popular rise of socialism, the Chechens and other Northern Caucasians saw an opportunity to strike out for independence as they had done in the past. After the Tsar abdicated in favor of the Provisional Government, another Naqshibandyi sheikh named Najmuddin of Hotso (a.k.a. Najmuddin Gotsinskii) was elected Imam of Chechnya and Dagestan in March, 1917. He and fellow sheikh and spiritual leader, Uzun Haji, assembled a force of nearly 10,000 Mountaineers.[66] In the North, a regiment of Chechen soldiers, who had distinguished themselves in battle in World War I, joined Kornilov in his attempted counter-coup against the Bolsheviks.[67] In the South, a North

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[64] Goldenberg, p. 22.
[65] Henze, p. 15.
[66] Ibid., p. 16.
[67] Avtorkhanov, "The Chechen and Ingush during the Soviet Period and its Antecedents", pp. 179. These soldiers were part of what was known as the 'Wild Division'. These Chechens fought in the Carpathian Mountain campaigns under Grand Duke Mikhail Alexandrovich Romanov, the Tsar's brother. Kornilov most likely offered them independence of some kind in return for their doomed efforts.

Caucasian Congress assembled in 1918 in order to organize the Republic of the North Caucasus.[68] Lenin and the Bolshevik Party did not yet have enough strength in the region to take control of this Congress nor influence its outcome. The Bolsheviks were resigned to the fact that they, in order to defeat the White General, Anton Denikin, needed to align themselves militarily with the Mountaineers, despite the fact that the Chechens' main goal was the 'bourgeois nationalist' formation of a independent country outside the realm of Socialism. Both the Bolsheviks and the Mountaineers vehemently opposed Denikin's desire, "for an indivisible Russia".[69] The Mountaineers proved to be more of a match than the Red Army did in this area which forced Denikin to commit his best units to the Caucasus region in order to defeat the *gorskii*.[70] However, by February 1920, Denikin had to abandon this region, subsequently called the Emirate of the North Caucasus by Uzun Haji and his followers.

Denikin fought against an array of forces assembled in 1919 by Sheikh Uzun Haji which included Caucasian Bolshevik partisans. Haji's intent was the restoration of the *shariat* laws and *adat* customs which his ancestors had fought for, however, he died a natural death in May, 1920 at aged 90. His distaste for anything Russian had been particularly well-known.[71] The Red Army provided troops and supplies to the rebels.[72] After assisting the guerrillas, the Red Army entered Chechnya and the Dagestan areas as arrogant 'liberators'.[73] According to Marie Broxup, a Lezhgin and leading Communist in Dagestan named Samurskii noted that as the Bolsheviks began to consolidate, they

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[68] Avtorkhanov, "The Chechen and Ingush during the Soviet Period and its Antecedents", pp. 152-153.
[69] Ibid., p. 153.
[70] Ibid.
[71] Broxup, "The Last Ghazawhat: The 1920-1921 Uprising", p. 115.

became "...gripped with 'organizational fever'", and "...conducted sovietization in improper ways". Some of those 'improper ways' included, "...attacks on patriarchal traditions of Islam,...punitive raids, police denunciations, blackmail, settling of private feuds, plundering, confiscation of food supplies and fodder, forced conscription into Red regiments, requisitions and destruction of small trade."[74]

When it became clear to Gotsinskii and other Chechen freedom fighters in August, 1920 that the Soviets did not wish to live up to their promises and these abuses occurred, another uprising took place. This time, however, it would not be quelled completely for the next 24 years. This first anti-Soviet uprising was officially led by the great-grandson of Shamil himself, Said Bek, who, according to Henze, was mostly a figurehead whose name lent credibility to the movement among the people.[75] Gotsinskii, some fellow sheiks and mullahs and Caucasian former Tsarist officers began what Marie Broxup calls The Last *Ghazawhat* or Holy War.[76] They were well disciplined and organized. These fighters managed to fight until May, 1921. They inflicted heavy casualties on the Red Army and Bolshevik partisans totaling nearly 5,000 dead.[77] Others took up the banner of independence over the next two decades as fighting broke out in 1924, 1928 and 1936, while various banditry (we call it terrorism today) took place through 1944.[78]

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[72] Conquest, The Nation Killers: The Soviet Deportation of the Nationalities, p. 34.
[73] Avtorkhanov, "The Chechen and Ingush during the Soviet Period and its Antecedents", p. 153.
[74] Broxup, "The Last Ghazawhat: The 1920-1921 Uprising", p. 122.
[75] Henze, p. 16.
[76] Broxup, "The Last Ghazawhat: The 1920-1921 Uprising", pp. 112-145.
[77] Ibid., p. 141.
[78] Ibid., p. 143.

In January 1921, a Bolshevik Congress convened in Vladikavkaz (now in North Ossetia) for the purpose of establishing the Soviet Mountain Republic. While Said Bek and his followers warned of the dangers of becoming a part of the Bolshevik state, the congressional delegates asked for and got some concessions from Moscow regarding their status and internal autonomy within the Russian Federation. Moscow offered a general amnesty to Said Bek and his followers.[79] Avtorkhanov wrote:

"The constitutional assembly of the new Republic made their recognition of the Soviet government conditional on the Shariat and the Adat being officially acknowledged as the basic constitutional laws of the Republic of the Mountain, and that the central government should not be intervening in their internal affairs; also on the lands of the Mountaineers, of which they were deprived by the Tsars, being given back to them. Stalin accepted both conditions, after which the delegates officially recognized the Soviet government."[80] [81] The new Soviet Mountain Republic consisted of Karachay, Balkaria, Kabarda, Ossetia, Ingushetia, and Chechnya.

However, as Robert Conquest points out, the Soviet Mountain Republic did not last long at all. It was systematically partitioned and divided over the next several years. In January 1922, the Soviets combined the Karachay and the Cherkess into a new oblast or district. Simultaneously, the Soviets formed the Kabards and the Balkars into yet another new oblast. The Chechen were given their own autonomous oblast in December 1922. Finally, the Soviets separated the two remaining nationalities, the Ossetians and the Ingush, in July, 1924. In April 1926 the Soviets re-separated the Karachay and the

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[79] Avtorkhanov, "The Chechen and Ingush during the Soviet Period and its Antecedents", p. 154.
[80] Ibid.

Cherkess, while in January 1934, the Soviets merged the Chechens and the Ingush. The Kabardino-Balkars, Chechen-Ingush, and the North Ossetians received Autonomous Republic status (ASSR) in December 1936.[82] Dagestan never became a part of the *Gorskaya Sovietskaya Respublika*, but became an Autonomous Republic from the beginning in 1917.

Jane Ormrod noted that these new groupings had no basis in history. All previous alliances were done by clans or tribes on a local level, which explains why there was a lack of enthusiasm for the new 'national' identities thrust upon them by the Soviets.[83] Avtorkhanov asserted that the breakup of the Mountain Republic was intentional and designed to reduce the threat of an anti-Soviet alliance.[84] According to Paul Henze, the Bolshevik strategy for grouping the nations together was to get them to turn away from their tribal or clan affiliations and to accept the concepts of national and local government, which were foreign concepts.[85] In other words, the Soviets wanted to create a new national identity. Up until this point, all the revolts against the Russians had been fought by a collection of family groups and villages that allied against a common enemy. However, previous rivalries still remained in an undercurrent to these alliances.

Under Stalin, the Caucasian peoples suffered greatly, as did many other nationalities, including Russians. Ironically, Stalin himself was Georgian. Many of the original leaders of the Mountain ASSR were exiled, jailed or executed for 'bourgeois

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[81] Kline, "The Conflict in Chechnya".
[82] Conquest, Robert, The Nation Killers: The Soviet Deportation of the Nationalities, p. 24.
[83] Ormrod, Jane, "North Caucasus: fragmentation or federation?", in Bremmer, Ian and Taras, Ray, eds., Nation and Politics in the Soviet Successor States, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1993, p. 450.
[84] Ibid.
[85] Henze, p. 17.

nationalism'. In 1928 and 1929, collectivization began in the North Caucasus before anywhere else in the Soviet Union. Once again, revolt struck Chechnya.

Avtorkhanov relates the following story of that revolt:

A Chechen named Shita Istamulov gathered some followers who also opposed the Soviets and collectivization. The revolt began with the seizure of some Soviet national assets and arrests of Soviet officials. The rebels made the following demands of the Soviet authorities: an end to collectivization in Chechnya, the return of *Shariat* courts and the cessation of Soviet interference in internal Chechen affairs. In response, the Soviets set up a commission made up of Moscow representatives and local leaders to deal with the crisis. The commission convinced the rebels that the problems and brutality in collectivization occurred because some administering officials did not follow the program as it was meant to be implemented. Istamulov and the rebels, after some other reassurances, returned home. Several days later, a shoot-out occurred at Istamulov's home where 150 GPU troops were killed. Istamulov then proclaimed a holy war and the restoration of the Imamate of Shamil. Word got out to the other North Caucasian provinces where revolts also broke out. The Soviets sent in a mixture of regular army, military school cadets, GPU troops and border guards to quell the uprising. The Soviets took heavy casualties but managed to force the rebels into the mountains. A subsequent expedition into the mountains came up empty. Istamulov insisted that the rebels would return to their *auls* or villages only when the Soviet soldiers left Chechnya. Suddenly, Stalin had a revelation that the entire collectivization process was hatched by left wing deviators. Istamulov was granted amnesty and given the position of President of the

Rural Consumers Cooperative. When the chief of the regional GPU office tried to give Istamulov his amnesty papers, the chief shot Istamulov. However, Istamulov managed to stab the chief to death before he was killed by a guard. Shita Istamulov's brother, out of revenge, led a group Chechen rebels into the mountains from where they hunted down and killed Chekists.[86]

Beginning in 1937, the now infamous *ezhovshchina* or Great Terror began. The NKVD terrorized the people of the Chechen-Ingush Republic as well as the rest of the Soviet Union. Again, Avtorkhanov told of the night of 31 July 1937 and the ensuing months when the NKVD rounded up nearly 14,000 Chechens (3% of the total population) for various trumped up crimes. Mock trials and executions ensued.[87] Avtorkhanov asserted, "As a result of this operation, thousands of Chechens and Ingush joined the guerrilla groups".[88] Assassinations of local NKVD chiefs soon followed in retribution. The Soviet authorities responded with mass arrests of all the Chechen and Ingush members of the Regional Party from the President on down. Many confessions were extracted under duress and punishments doled out.[89] When all was said and done, nearly 100,000 people were seized in Checheno-Ingushetia.[90]

The Great Patriotic War began for the Soviets with Operation Barbarossa in 1941. However, the Chechens, for the most part, were excluded from mandatory service in the

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[86] Avtorkhanov, "The Chechen and Ingush during the Soviet Period and its Antecedents", pp. 157 - 161. It is interesting to note the similarities between this uprising and the one led by Dzokhar Dudayev some 60 years later, which I describe in Chapter 2.

[87] Avtorkhanov states that at the time, there was one man who signed off on the warrants and guilty verdicts. These were on two forms with everybody's name attached by the NKVD. Avtorkhanov published his first book in 1936 in Grozny as a young historian. This account is from first hand knowledge.

[88] Avtorkhanov, "The Chechen and Ingush during the Soviet Period and its Antecedents", p. 175.

[89] Ibid., pp. 174 - 179.

[90] Goldenberg, p. 41.

Red Army. Some North Caucasian units, which included Chechens, were assembled but were annihilated by the advancing Germans near Stalingrad on 4 August 1942.[91] During this time, the Germans captured a number of Chechens and assembled them into a company to fight on the Western Front. The Chechens were once again captured, this time by the British in Holland. Of course, they were sent back to the Soviet Union where they were most likely executed for treason.[92]

Hassan Israilov, a Chechen writer and a member of the Communist Party at a young age, was jailed twice over several years and each time released after his accusers were themselves arrested and found to have been lying. After he passionately rejected an offer to be reinstated into the local Party, Israilov became a wanted man. Along with a lawyer named Maribek Sheripov, Israilov led an uprising in 1940 while the USSR and Nazi Germany were still officially at peace. Israilov established the Provisional Popular Revolutionary Government of Chechnya-Ingushetia. He and his rebels began their fight by capturing armaments from the local NKVD offices. They soon cleared the mountain regions and conducted raids against the Red Army in order to secure more weaponry. The Soviets conducted air raids and shelled rebel held villages in response.

In February 1942, as the Germans approached the territory intent on reaching the oil fields in Grozny and Baku, Israilov and Sheripov took control of the towns of Shato and Istumkala and united their forces.[93] The two soon issued a decree which welcomed

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[91] Avtorkhanov, "The Chechen and Ingush during the Soviet Period and its Antecedents", pp. 180.
[92] Ibid., pp. 147-148.
[93] According to Edward Kline, the furthest extent of the German lines was Mozdok in Northern Ossetia. The Germans had to stop their advance due to the Soviet counteroffensive at Stalingrad. Mozdok has been claimed by the Chechens since Tsarist times when Cossacks were settled in the area and given the land. The Germans also reached Ordzhonikidze, formerly and now currently Vladikavkaz, in what is now Ingushetia.

the Germans as guests but only if they recognized Caucasian independence. They also sent out a communiqué to the civil affairs leaders of the Wehrmacht (the *Ostministerium*) which in effect stated that if "the liberation of the Caucasus meant the exchange of one colonizer for another, then the Caucasians would only consider this a new stage in the national liberation war."[94] Eventually, the Germans lost the battle of Stalingrad and were forced over to the defensive and out of Russia. Meanwhile, the Chechens and other North Caucasians had their own troubles with which to deal.

Deportations and Exile: 1944-1957

Robert Conquest wrote, "Early in 1943, Stalin had taken a decision on an operation against a section of those he had been fighting much longer than he had been fighting the Germans – his own citizens."[95] Stalin's stated reasons were that these nationalities had been complicit in aiding the Nazi armies in Russia. Stalin announced the deportations of the entire Chechen nation on 7 March 1944. The Chechens were not the only nationality to be deported. The Soviets also deported the Balkars, the Karachay, the Ingush, and the Kalmyks, for the same fabricated reasons. Due to their unwavering hope for independence, some elements of these nations indeed gave aid and comfort to the enemy, but it was by no means everybody. Panico says, "...the deportation was punishment for alleged collaboration...[the] change was not made public until two years

[94] Avtorkhanov, "The Chechen and Ingush during the Soviet Period and its Antecedents", pp. 181-183.
[95] Conquest, Robert, Stalin: The Breaker of Nations, Penguin Books Publishers, New York, 1991, p. 258.

later." The Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR passed the decree which abolished the Chechen-Ingush ASSR on 25 June 1946.[96]

The main point of Avtorkhanov's article is that the Chechens were exiled not because of their alleged complicity with the invading Nazis, but because, as the 15 January 1939 issue of Izvestia said, "The history of Chechnia-Ingushetia is that of a decades long bloody struggle by a freedom-loving people against colonizers..." He essentially says that due to the ferocity of the Chechen resistance to Russian and then Soviet colonization, Stalin took revenge on the North Caucasians through the cruel and inhumane act of wholesale deportation.[97]

In reality, the Nazis did not occupy one square inch of Chechnya.[98] Aleksandr Nekrich noted, "The fundamental principle was surprise," when executing the deportation plan.[99] The round-up and processing of the Chechens actually began on Red Army Day, 23 February 1944. According to witnesses, Chechen men were invited to the village centers for meetings, Red Army Day celebrations or for ethnic observances and song. Once gathered before the bonfires, the Soviet NKVD forces herded them into confinement areas while the women were allowed to pack some baggage, which was limited to 20 kilos. American lend-lease Studebaker trucks hauled them away.[100]

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[96] Panico, p. 4.
[97] Avtorkhanov, "The Chechen and Ingush during the Soviet Period and its Antecedents", p. 148.
[98] Ibid., p. 147. The author goes on to say that Germans *briefly* occupied the frontier town of Malgobek which is now in the Ingush Republic.
[99] Nekrich, Aleksandr Moiseevich, The Punished Peoples: the Deportation and Fate of Soviet Minorities at the End of the Second World War, translated by George Saunders, published by W.W. Norton and Co., Inc., New York, 1978, p. 108.
[100] Henze, p. 20. In addition, Avtorkhanov, in his article, "The Chechen and Ingush during the Soviet Period and its Antecedents" reprints the diary entry of a Russian student who participated in the round-up. He was required to act as a caretaker for a farm until ethnic Russians from Kursk or Orel arrived to take possession of it, complete with growing crops and livestock, pp. 184-185.

Vachnadze writes of the mountain village of Khaibakh where the NKVD soldiers herded all the residents into a barn and set it on fire because it was too much trouble to remove them from that remote area. He says, "The Chechens, who still recall that tragedy, say: Russians did it. Many generations of the Chechen will remember Khaibakh for a long time to come. But Russians should know about it, too."[101]

Conquest notes that over 6,000 trucks and 15,200 railcars were used to haul away the Chechen nation while over 100,000 able-bodied men were used as guards in prison and relocation camps.[102] Henze notes that Chechens and Ingush living elsewhere in the USSR and even those serving in the Red Army were also arrested and deported.[103]

According to Conquest, approximately 2 million non-Russians were deported from the area of the North Caucasus, the Crimea and the Volga between 1943 and 1945.[104] Of those 1.5 million, Edward Kline claims that approximately 400,000 were Chechens and Ingush and that nearly 30% of them died en route or within the first year in Kazakhstan or Kirghizstan.[105] A British Information Service Background Brief claims that, "up to 200,000 Chechen died during the transportation alone."[106]

Not all Chechens were deported, however. Some managed to escape into the mountains or forests where they were hunted by the NKVD. According to George

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[101] Vachnadze, George N., Russia's Hotbeds of Tension, Nova Science Publishers, Commack, New York, 1994, p. 142.
[102] Conquest, Stalin: The Breaker of Nations, p. 258.
[103] Henze, Paul, Islam in the North Caucasus: The Example of Chechnya, published by RAND, Santa Monica, CA, 1995, p. 21.
[104] Conquest, Stalin: The Breaker of Nations, pp. 258-259. In Conquest's earlier works, the estimate of the number of those deported was 1.25 million in 1960 and 1.5 million in 1970. He discovered that other groups had been deported such as the Greeks.
[105] Kline, Edward, "The Conflict in Chechnya".
[106] "The Russian Federation: Independence Issues in Chechnya", Background Brief prepared by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office of the British Information Service, New York, April, 1995, p. 2.

Vachnadze, Lavrenti Beria, Stalin's Chief of the NKVD, ordered the leveling of all mountain villages. Some captured residents were drowned in Kezenoi-Am Lake, burned in their dwellings, bombed from the air and killed with hand grenades, as well. He further states that a handful of survivors rebelled, which forced the Soviets to leave an occupation force amounting to several divisions.[107] Meanwhile, ethnic Russians, Ossetians and those ethnicities from Dagestan moved in to occupy the newly formed Grozny Autonomous Oblast. Henze asserts that the most comprehensive attempt at the elimination of a people ever occurred in the former Chechen-Ingush ASSR when, "New editions of standard reference works omitted all mention of the punished peoples. All remaining Islamic religious sites, including tombs which had continued to be maintained and revered, were destroyed. Islamic cemeteries were bulldozed and tombstones hauled away to be used in building projects. So comprehensive an effort to eliminate entire ethnic groups from history is unprecedented in modern times."[108]

While in exile, the Chechens mostly worked in menial jobs in rural areas where they lived in special NKVD settlements. Ruslan Khasbulatov, a Chechen professor and former Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR, told how his mother worked on a kolkhoz milking cows while he cleaned out their pens.[109] The future leader of the 1991 independence movement, Dzokhar Musaevich Dudaev, was deported to Kazakhstan as a 1 month old, where he spent the first 13 years of his life.[110] In Gulag Archipelago, Alexsandr Solzhenitsyn observed, "...only one nation refused to accept the psychology of

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[107] Vachnadze, George N., Russia's Hotbeds of Tension, Nova Science Publishers, Commack, New York, 1994, p. 144-145.
[108] Henze, p. 21.
[109] Avtorkhanov, "The Chechen and Ingush during the Soviet Period and its Antecedents", pp. 189-190.

submission" and that this applied, "...not to individuals, nor to insurgents, but to the nation as a whole – the Chechens."[111] The mere fact that the Chechen nation was able to survive this horrific deportation is testament to their fighting spirit as well as proof that they had in fact completely come together as a nation. The common experience of the deportation became the catalyst to thinking of themselves as one people with a common past.

Stalin's death in 1953 was ironically mourned by millions throughout the USSR. However, by the time Khrushchev delivered his now famous Secret Speech at the 20th Party Congress in February 1956, many began to officially denounce Stalin's reign of terror. Khrushchev revealed to all what had been done to the peoples of the North Caucasus and thoroughly condemned it.[112] Official rehabilitation soon followed. In January 1957, legislation was submitted for the restoration of the Checheno-Ingush ASSR and a program soon followed for the repatriation of any Chechen who wished to return from Central Asia. This program was scheduled to take three years to complete.

As it turns out, the Chechens and the Ingush who wanted to return did so faster than had been anticipated. This in turn created problems for the Soviet Organizing Committees who were trying to create new settlements, schools, political organizations, find jobs, etc., for the returning deportees. Needless to say, the already angry Chechens did not exactly cooperate. Many nationalistic attitudes and cultural customs took hold in opposition to any Russian or Russian sponsored ones. Conquest relates that from the

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[110] Henze, p. 23.
[111] Broxup, "The 'Internal' Muslim Factor in the Politics of Russia: Tatarstan and the North Caucasus", p. 85.
[112] Conquest, The Nation Killers: The Soviet Deportation of the Nationalities, p. 144.

Russians' perspective, some of the Chechens began practicing polygamy, disrupting the kolkhozes by appropriating property and practicing nepotism. Of course, these things would happen if there were a severe shortage of men, if people tried to reclaim their belongings which had been taken from them and tried to re-establish their traditional village political structures based on clans.[113] He writes, "It emerges clearly enough that the Chechens were uncooperative, addicted to ideological, social and economic practices disliked by the regime, and in general still possessed by a desire not to be under their present rulers."[114]

Acts of resistance and outright violence continued through the 1960's and 1970's. Jane Ormrod writes, "As early as the 1960s and 1970s, the Chechen national intelligentsia was active. Its more vocal and nationalist elements called for respect for Chechen ethnic and religious practices, an enhancement of Chechen language education accompanied by a curtailing of Russian education, and even discouraged the performance of folk songs in non-traditional, orchestral arrangements."[115] In 1969, there were two attempts to blow up the statue of Ermolov in Grozny.[116] Panico notes, "Job and educational discrimination against the Chechens and Ingush was common. The practice of underemployment of Chechens in the skilled trades – especially in the oil industry – continued up until the end of the Soviet Union, and many Chechens became the 'Gastarbeiter' of the Soviet Union, working as seasonal agricultural laborers in southern

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[113] Ibid., p. 155-158.
[114] Ibid., p. 158.
[115] Ormrod, p. 456.
[116] Conquest, The Nation Killers: The Soviet Deportation of the Nationalities, p. 158.

Russia and in Central Asia."[117] In 1982, when everyone in the ASSR was required to celebrate the 60th Anniversary of the voluntary joining of Chechnya to the Soviet Union, many Chechen intellectuals failed to acknowledge the Anniversary in open defiance.[118]

It is at this point in history that the latest drive for Chechen independence begins. Chapter 2 of this thesis covers this particular information.

Conclusion

All of the events described in this appendix are known to the Chechen people. Other similar stories have undoubtedly been passed on from generation to generation. Every family has its own horror story about how the Russians came and snatched a relative and how the family lost many relatives in the deportations of 1944.

The main themes to be taken from this appendix are threefold. First, Sunni Islam proved to be the consolidating and unifying force in the Caucasus. The culture of the Mountaineers tended to be a democratic one where allegiances were given to one's clan. However, the Sufi brotherhoods, the Naqshbandiya and Qadiriya, combined cultural norms with Islamic law and custom to form cohesive political and military action. Leaders such as Mansur, Ghazi Mohammed, and Shamil demonstrated that they could unite the various peoples of the Caucasus against the infidels from the north. The Chechens were the most enthusiastic of all. We see in all these affairs in the Caucasus over the centuries, that the only way that the Chechens and their fellow Mountaineers can

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[117] Panico, p. 4.
[118] Vachnadze, p. 145.

stand up to the Russians is through unity. Their population is large enough so that when combined with other smaller nations, they become a formidable force.

Secondly, the Russians and then the Soviets consistently underestimated the Chechen desire for independence. Time and time again, Russian generals, governors, tsars, and General Secretaries felt that they could rid themselves of the Chechen problem with just *one more* military operation or political campaign. However, these actions demonstrate both a Great Russian chauvinism and a complete inability to learn from the past.

Finally, Russian action in the Caucasus has created a deep hatred within the North Caucasian peoples, especially the Chechens. Blatant acts of repression such as genocide, the resettling of Cossacks into Chechen territories and the Deportations have become ingrained into the collective memory of the Chechen nation. Indignities such as the continual Soviet-style historical revision of Shamil and the intentional job and educational discrimination pursued by the Russian leadership only fan the flames of hatred.[119]

In sum, the Chechen people were the only nationality of the Russian hegemony that never voluntarily joined the Russian Empire, the Soviet Union or the Russian Federation. They were conquered. Hopefully, this appendix demonstrates that quite clearly.

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[119] Gammer's essay covers the historical revisionism surrounding Shamil and his feats. Depending upon the era, Shamil has been idolized at times and vilified or ignored completely. See "Shamil in Soviet Historiography", by Moshe Gammer, in Middle Eastern Studies, vol. 28, no. 4, October, 1992, pp. 729 - 777.