

Information

On the results of the meeting of the Expert Analytical Council under the President of the Russian Federation to discuss the political consequences of the deployment of Russian troops into the Chechen republic in order to disarm illegally armed groups on December 27, 1994.

During the meeting of the members of the Expert Analytical Council under the President of the Russian Federation to discuss the situation in the Chechen Republic and the political developments after the deployment of the Russian forces in Chechnya, the following [opinions] were stated quite explicitly.

After an objective, and in all respects balanced, report by the secretary of the Security Council of the Russian Federation O[leg] I. Lobov on the causes that prompted the Russian leadership to send troops into Chechnya, on the current situation in the Chechen Republic after the encirclement of Dudayev's fighters, as well as on recent actions by the government of the Russian Federation to provide humanitarian and financial and economic assistance to this republic, members of the Expert Analytical Council in their subsequent speeches nearly unanimously took an anti-presidential position.

Advisor to the President of the Russian Federation G[eorgy] Satarov distanced himself from the president's position on the need to deploy troops to Chechnya, which he only learned about on December 10th. He also noted that, in his opinion, there was a great inconsistency in the actions at all levels of government in the implementation of this policy. Saratov also noted that if this is the usual practice of government agencies' work, then in the future, sooner or later, it will lead to the demise of the existing regime in Russia.

Council member D[mitry] Volkogonov noted the danger of the conflict spreading to other regions and spoke about the need for negotiations between B. Yeltsin and D. Dudayev.

Council member M. Masarsky. The President and the government of the Russian Federation lost the political initiative in solving the conflict in Chechnya a while back, and it was taken up by the Chechen people "engaged in arming themselves," and this is a civil war.

Deputy head of the Analytical Center under the President of the Russian Federation and member of the Expert Analytical Council E[mil] Pain called into question the use of the army in Chechnya, that, in his opinion, will have a negative impact on the outcome of the 1996 presidential election. E[mil] Pain described the plan for the settlement of the situation in Chechnya, proposed by the Security Council (Shakhray's option, as G[eorgy] Saratov commented), as a utopia. The "invasion" by Russian troops, Pain emphasized, saved Dudayev politically, whose power in Chechnya itself was allegedly holding on by a thread. According to this political analyst, only the negotiating process can lead Russia out of the Chechen crisis, otherwise we will face coups, political scandals, etc. Without concessions to Dudayev, he concluded, any settlement plan in Chechnya would not be successful.

Council member L[eonid] Gozman. Due to the events in Chechnya, the chances of B.N. Yeltsin's re-election to the post of President of the Russian Federation in 1996 have been reduced to zero. He also proposed to approach B.N. Yeltsin on behalf of the council with a request to not run as a candidate for the post of President of the Russian Federation for a new term. Gozman offered to investigate "constitutional" options for the early removal of B.N. Yeltsin from performing official duties as the head of state.

The head of the Analytical Center and member of the Expert Analytical Council M[ark] Urnov noted the deepening political crisis in the country due to events in Chechnya that had nullified the political chances of the President of the Russian Federation.

Council member Y[uri] Karyakin. It seems that we are being given the run-around, the security structures send obvious disinformation to the president. Again, it is totally incomprehensible, and who is at fault for this situation?!

Council member O[tto] Latsis. It is necessary to abandon all existing plans for resolving the situation in Chechnya and conduct negotiations with Dudayev. The President needs to punish all of the perpetrators of the events in Chechnya (apparently, the Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of Internal Affairs); if this is not done, then all responsibility for the outcome of these events will remain with the President himself. In Chechnya, it was necessary from the very beginning to use only democratic methods of conflict resolution.

Division head of the Analytical Center and member of the Expert Analytical Council L. Smirnyagin. The deployment of troops would have been justified, if it was immediately followed by a blitzkrieg. New forms of negotiations with Chechnya are needed. Forcibly, and possibly, physically removing Dudayev from power would be a disgrace for Russia. It is imperative to organize a referendum in Chechnya, which would clarify the people's attitudes towards both Dudayev himself and Russia. It is also necessary to change the system for making important government decisions, i.e. the decision-making system for the President of the Russian Federation. Smirnyagin also noted that the work of the Security Council of the Russian Federation was creating a gloomy impression among Russia's democratic society.

Minister for the Economy and council member Y[evgeny] Yasin. The cost of the conflict in Chechnya will amount to 5 to 10 trillion rubles per year, which is equal to 1% of the GDP. For reference, IMF loans to Russia amount to a total of 0.7% of the GDP. The restoration of the railways in Chechnya will require 200 billion rubles, which is 1/3 of the Ministry of Transportation's budget. If aid to Chechnya is not suspended for another two to three weeks, the plan for the financial stabilization of the Russian economy will go up in smoke.

Y[evgeny] Yasin noted that the lack of political planning, and absence of an appropriate political campaign before the introduction of troops into Chechnya, was a stunning political mistake.

S[ergey] Filatov, presiding over the Council, informed them that the decision to send troops into Chechnya was made by the President also with the influence of the leaders of the republics of the North Caucasus.

Council members A[lexander] N. Yakovlev, A[lexander] Livshitz, and a few others did not speak during the meeting and did not ask for the floor. All of the above attests to the fact that the members of the Expert Analytical Council under the President of the Russian Federation do not share his political views at all in regards to the Chechen problem and are not inclined to side with him in resolving this issue by those methods that are now being applied. In contrast, their position largely aligns with both parliamentary and non-parliamentary opposition.

Considering also that S[ergey] Kovalev, the Commissioner for Human Rights under the President of the Russian Federation is a member of the Expert Analytical Council, it becomes clear that the members of the specified council are picked in such a way that the truth is not arising through debate, but through political affirmation and parroting each other.

It is also interesting to note that, except for O[leg] Lobov and S[ergey] Filatov, all of the other speakers said practically nothing about the violations of human rights by Dudayev's forces, about the criminalization of the republic, the arms trade, and the drug trafficking that is flourishing in Chechnya, and also....

Translated by Sara Dunn for the National Security Archive

Source: Epokha Yeltsina, pp. 625-627 TK full pub info

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