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ВЛАСТИ*

Russian Leaders in the News

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In this issue of VLASTI...

...we look at men made prominent by Russia's military incursion into Chechnya, starting with **Sergey Kovalev**, Yel'tsin's Human Rights Commissioner, who quickly became one of the president's fiercest critics. We then profile **Salambek Khadzhiyev**, the Kremlin's candidate to displace Dzhokar Dudayev as leader of Chechnya. We end with an article that considers the other **North Caucasian republic leaders as a factor** affecting whether the Russian-Chechen conflict will spread.

Sergey Kovalev: Yel'tsin's Albatross

Duma member **Sergey Kovalev** has been Yel'tsin's personally appointed human rights ombudsman since 1993. On the first day of the military incursion into Chechnya, Kovalev gave a press interview characterizing the decision as "political treachery" and "monstrous stupidity." His continuing criticisms both at home and abroad of Yel'tsin over Chechnya constitute, in our judgment, particularly corrosive publicity for the President's administration. In an arena where even reactionaries tout "democracy," no other living Russian politician can touch Kovalev's record of defending human rights. He was arrested in August 1968 for participating in a short but now legendary demonstration on Red Square against the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia, initiating a decades-long odyssey of repression and resistance.

The details of Kovalev's life come from Russian biographic reference books, Western press accounts. He was born on 2 March 1930. He earned a candidate of biological sciences degree from Moscow State University. When he got fired from his research job there in 1969, he started editing the *Chronicle of Current Events*, the most significant samizdat journal of the Soviet era. In 1973 he helped establish the Soviet

***VLAH-stee: the powers that be.**

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chapter of Amnesty International. Around 1974, he helped create the Initiative Group for the Defense of Human Rights, along with Academician Andrey Sakharov. In that year Kovalev was tried and convicted for "slandering the Soviet state" and sentenced to a forced labor camp in Perm' Oblast. There his remonstrations on behalf of his fellow prisoners landed him repeatedly in punishment cells. His weight dropped from 169 to 136 pounds. In 1977 Kovalev was operated on for cancer in a Leningrad prison hospital. In 1980 he was transferred from Perm' to the notorious Chistopol' Prison in the Tatar Autonomous Republic. In December 1981 Kovalev began his term of internal exile in remote Magadan Oblast. His sentence ended in 1984. Returning to Moscow, Kovalev resumed pressuring the authorities on behalf of the politically repressed. [redacted]

As of 1990, he worked at the Institute of Information Transmission Problems. In March of that year he was one of the few candidates for a seat in the Russian Congress of People's Deputies (CPD) to win in the first round of balloting. He gained the chairmanship of the legislature's Human Rights Committee three months later by acclamation. In 1993, Yel'tsin appointed Kovalev chairman of the Human Rights Commission, subordinate to the office of the president. As a member of the CPD factions "Democratic Russia" and later "Accord for Progress," Kovalev publicly backed Yel'tsin and his government's reforms. He never hesitated to chide Yel'tsin or other political figures, however, whenever they strayed from the constitutional straight and narrow. In October 1993, for example, he said that Yel'tsin's dissolution of the parliament had transformed speaker Ruslan Khasbulatov "from a maniac into a prophet." [redacted]

In December 1993 Kovalev beat ten other candidates for a seat in the State Duma from a district in Moscow. In the Duma he joined the pro-market "Russia's Choice"

faction, headed by former Acting Premier Yegor Gaydar. [redacted]

Kovalev's persistence promises to make him a thorn in Yel'tsin's side for as long as the fighting in Chechnya drags on. [redacted]

Salambek Khadzhiyev: Yel'tsin's Democratic Choice

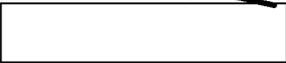
In December 1994 Yel'tsin named Dr. **Salambek Khadzhiyev**—one of several Chechen opposition politicians vying to lead Chechnya—as the Russian Government's candidate to displace the republic's rebellious President Dzhokar Dudayev, according to the government's press service. [redacted]

The choice of Khadzhiyev, born in 1941, suggests to us that Yel'tsin still sees some political value in a veneer of popular electoral legitimacy and democratic credentials:

—The independent and pro-democratic *Moscow News* identified Khadzhiyev as the only Chechen opposition leader "never to have made a claim for power," having aspired only to ensure free elections in the republic. In an interview on 5 January 1995, Khadzhiyev said he intended to serve as Chechnya's provisional leader until elections could be held six to eighteen months from the time of his accession.

—Gen. Dmitriy Volkogonov, a pro-democracy Duma deputy, described Khadzhiyev in a December 1994 interview as "a man of democratic convictions." [redacted]

Khadzhiyev's record bears out Volkogonov. For all his prominence during the Soviet era (he was a leading petrochemical scientist and ultimately USSR Minister of the Petroleum Industry during April-December 1991), Khadzhiyev appears to have had little sympathy for that period's



institutions and practices. As a member of the USSR Congress of People's Deputies (CPD) and USSR Supreme Soviet during 1989-91, he spoke out in favor of market economics and greater autonomy for the Soviet Union's and Russian Republic's constituent elements. In March 1990 he was among those CPD deputies voting to eliminate the Communist Party's constitutional political preeminence. The following January he signed an appeal to then USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev calling for an end to military operations against Lithuanian separatists. In July 1991 Khadzhiyev joined the Movement for Democratic Reforms, led by Yel'tsin and other prominent democrats. During the August 1991 coup attempt, Khadzhiyev announced he would resign as Minister before supporting the insurgent Emergency Committee. 

Can the Chechen Conflict Spread? The Leadership Dimension

The views of the leaders of the six North Caucasian ethnic-based republics that neighbor embattled Chechnya are only one factor affecting the prospects for wider turmoil in the region. Nevertheless, it appears to us that the leadership factor militates against these republics taking up arms against Moscow or each other. Five of the six individuals running these republics are former Communist Party functionaries loyal to Russia. All sit on multiethnic powder kegs and, judging from their public comments, deplore Dudayev's anti-Russianism as an unsettling example to many of their own citizens. 

Dzhokar Dudayev recognizes these leaders' enmity. According to an independent and pro-democratic Russian newspaper in late 1994, Dudayev told a subordinate in the spring of 1993 that he "would very much like to eliminate, including physically, some uncooperative leaders of the Northern Caucasus, primarily the presidents of Adygea and Kabardino-Balkaria." 

Most of these leaders have long been wind-sniffing centrists concerned primarily with stability. Whether such a political style will suffice to maintain peace in their respective republics remains uncertain. However, the ouster of any one of these individuals, in our judgment, would signal that chaos in the region was starting to spread. 

Dagestan's Magomedali Magomedov: A Fence-Sitter on the Front Lines

A fixture in Dagestan's government since the Soviet era, **Magomedali Magomedov**, born in 1930, chairs both the Supreme Soviet and State Council of the Republic of Dagestan, which abuts the eastern border of Chechnya. On 20 December 1994 Magomedov publicly urged his citizens to "abstain from any actions that may destabilize the regional situation," denouncing specifically the seizure of Russian hostages by ethnic Chechens in western Dagestan. 

Dagestan, with over 30 different nationalities, is one of Russia's most ethnically complex republics. Probably because he has coped with this challenge throughout his political career, a concern for avoiding confrontation has long been Magomedov's political style. 

—He made no clear public choice during the August 1991 coup attempt, according to the Russian press.

—At the Ninth Congress of People's Deputies (CPD) in March 1993 Magomedov declined to vote one way or the other on 25 of 40 key issues dividing conservatives from reformers, according to data compiled by a private Moscow think tank. The think tank also rated the ideological and political orientation of each People's Deputy on a scale of

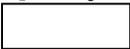


1 to 9 (1 being the most progressive); it buried Magomedov in category 5.

—Despite the high anti-Yel'tsin sentiment reported by the Russian press in his republic, Magomedov voted against all CPD proposals in 1992 and 1993 to consider Yel'tsin's impeachment.

—In early March 1994 Magomedov officially proclaimed Dagestan's neutrality in all "interethnic conflicts and other controversial issues throughout the North Caucasus."

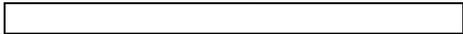
—Although Russians make up only nine percent of Dagestan's population, Magomedov, an ethnic Dargin, has publicly advocated keeping the republic within the Russian Federation.

—In early 1994 a reformist newspaper described him as "a figure striving for caution and compromise even more than yesterday's republic leaders from the [Communist] Party *obkom* [oblast committee]." 

Ingushetia's Ruslan Aushev: A War Hero Preaches Peace

A telegenic Afghan War hero and former major general in the Soviet army, **Ruslan Aushev** has been president of the Republic of Ingushetia since March 1993. In his public remarks Aushev—an ethnic Ingush born in 1954—continually reaffirms his republic's allegiance to Russia and his own commitment to constitutional government. Aushev opposed the leading political role of the Soviet Communist Party and today he appears cynical about the array of parties—from democrats to reactionaries—that has come along since:

—As a USSR People's Deputy in March 1990, Aushev voted to abolish the constitutional political preeminence of the Communist Party.

—During the December 1993 legislative elections, Aushev  that he had voted for none of the party lists, according to the Russian press. 

Aushev professes an aversion to violence and has sought to defuse several political conflicts in both Moscow and the North Caucasus.

—Aushev publicly welcomed the Russians' intercession when Ingush irredentists attacked neighboring North Ossetia in October-November 1992. (Russian troops intervened, repulsed the Ingush attackers, and occupied a buffer zone separating the two republics.)

—During the faceoff in October 1993 between Yel'tsin and the Russian parliament, Aushev entered the besieged parliament building and persuaded then speaker Ruslan Khasbulatov and then Vice President Aleksandr Rutskoy to surrender. Aushev publicly blamed them both later for the bloodshed and suggested that Rutskoy commit suicide.

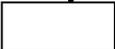
—In the first days following Russia's incursion into Chechnya, Aushev met with Premier Viktor Chernomyrdin and offered to mediate between the Russian government and Dzhokar Dudayev. A Swedish newspaper put Aushev's peacemaking efforts on a par with those of Sergey Kovalev (see above).



—Since then, Aushev has publicly protested against what he calls “provocations” by Russian troops in his tiny republic and has excoriated Yel'tsin for conducting “genocide” in Chechnya, but he implores Ingush citizens to keep calm and stay neutral. 

Aushev might enjoy sufficient popularity to contain Ingush hotheads eager to help Dudayev. The Ingush leader won a contested race for one of the republic's two seats in the Federation Council in December 1993 and gained reelection as president in February 1994, receiving over 94 percent of the votes in each race. 

North Ossetia's Akhsarbek Galazov: The Perennial Apparatchik

North Ossetian President **Akhsarbek Galazov**, born in 1929, publicly backs Yel'tsin's efforts in Chechnya with a loyalty typifying Communist Party functionaries, which Galazov once was. On 13 January 1995 he characterized as “blasphemy” the desire of “some political figures and People's Deputies [sic] to torpedo efforts by the authorities to disarm gangs in Chechnya, thus making political capital on the back of this tragedy.” Galazov also has repeatedly emphasized the inseparability of the North Caucasus and Russia. 

Galazov is not one for bold moves or swift accommodation to political change.

—In the Russian Congress of People's Deputies, he voted in June 1990 to maintain the Communist Party's political supremacy in Russia.

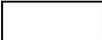
—According to a Russian press biography, Galazov in March 1991 “torpedoed” a Yel'tsin-inspired rider to a referendum on the USSR that

would have allowed North Ossetian citizens to vote also on Russian sovereignty.

—In June 1991, according to the same source, Galazov campaigned furiously against Yel'tsin in the Russian presidential election.

—During the August 1991 coup attempt, again according to the Russian press, Galazov “occupied a sympathetic position regarding the putschists.”

—North Ossetia carried its Communist-era name of North Ossetian Soviet Socialist Republic until January 1994, years after other Russian localities had updated their names.

—In his public remarks Galazov today laments the loss of the USSR as underlying all the ethnic turmoil tormenting Russia and the rest of the former Soviet Union. 

Galazov has never shaken the apparatchik's habit of often hedging his bets.

—He refused to join any faction in the CPD.

—Galazov declined to vote when the question of Yel'tsin's tenure arose in the CPD in March 1993.

—Galazov was publicly noncommittal during Yel'tsin's face-off against the Russian parliament in September-October 1993. 



Kabardino-Balkaria's Valeriy Kokov: A Balancing Act

Valeriy Kokov, a Kabardin born in 1941, is another former CPSU apparatchik trying to contain potential unrest in an ethnically

[redacted]

fractious province. He started work as an agricultural specialist and served until 1991 as a government and Communist Party apparatchik in Kabardino-Balkaria, ultimately as his republic's party boss. As republic president he must cope with divisive Kabardins, restive Balkars, and popular anti-Russian Muslim radicals based in his republic. In November 1994 the Kabard president, along with other North Caucasian leaders (save Magomedov and Aushev), signed an appeal to Yel'tsin demanding that he "take all possible measures to introduce constitutional order" in Chechnya. To placate his chagrined constituents, Kokov promised in mid-December that his government would hold an emergency session and pass a resolution condemning "Russian aggression." As of early February 1995, the resolution had not been issued. [redacted]

Speaking out of both sides of his mouth has helped Kokov weather Communism's collapse. He publicly claims that he voted in the December 1993 Russian legislative elections for the party of Sergey Shakhray, a native of the republic who advocated greater regional autonomy. When making this announcement, Kokov said he also sympathized with the Russia's Choice Party (which is pro-market), the Agrarian Party (pro-Communist), and the Women of Russia Party (centrist), suggesting to us a public relations effort to span as much of the political and demographic spectrum as he credibly could. [redacted]

Kokov's political style is to test the winds before acting. He has publicly resisted economic reforms, because [redacted]

[redacted] he wants to see how such changes play out in other regions before trying them in his own. At the Ninth CPD in March 1993 he avoided voting on 31 of 40 issues that a private Moscow think tank used to plot the political and ideological orientation of each deputy; on the think tank's scale of 1 to 9, Kokov fell into category 5. [redacted]

*Karachevo-Cherkessia's Vladimir Khubiyev:
Astride a Powder Keg?*

Of these six republics, **Vladimir Khubiyev's** Karachayevo-Cherkessia may be the most unstable. After the republic declared its independence from neighboring Stavropol' Kray in November 1990, Karachay and Cherkessian congresses each began lobbying for their own separate republics, while local Russian Cossacks sought to return to Stavropol' kray. Karachayevo-Cherkessia, moreover, has the largest number of constituent nationalities in the North Caucasus and is the only one where Russians are a majority. Khubiyev also spars frequently with the republic's parliament, led by an ethnic Russian, Viktor Savel'yev. In October 1994, then Minister of Nationalities Sergey Shakhray told a Russian press interviewer that the situation in Karachayevo-Cherkessia was "far more dangerous" than that in Chechnya, with Russian Cossacks and Karachay claiming the same land. A clash between the two, Shakhray feared, would draw in all Russia and the rest of the North Caucasus. [redacted]

Western and Russian observers alike note that Khubiyev's fate and that of his republic are closely intertwined. Khubiyev, an ethnic Karachay born in 1932, previously headed the Soviet-era government in Karachayevo-Cherkessia (from 1979) and spent the bulk of his career as a CPSU apparatchik there. He publicly argues that splitting his republic or removing it from Russia would provoke still more inter-ethnic strife and economic deterioration. To help cool the situation, he organized a referendum in March 1992 in which the population voted in favor of a single Karachayevo-Cherkessk republic (even though levels of support differed sharply among the republic's constituent ethnic groups, according to the Russian press). Since then Khubiyev has ensured that the multiethnic population of his republic is represented in republic government structures with a proportionality



observed in no other North Caucasian republic, according to another Russian press account.

Khubiyev's political history reveals a style differing little from those of other former apparatchiks heading North Caucasian republics. As a USSR People's Deputy during 1989-91, he voted to protect the Communist Party's constitutional political preeminence. While he voted generally pro-market at a Congress session in April 1992, at the Ninth Congress in March 1993 he voted to discuss Yel'tsin's impeachment. He also declined to vote on 21 of 40 issues that a private Moscow think tank used to rank deputies' political and ideological orientation. On the think tank's nine-point scale dividing the political spectrum, Khubiyev wound up in category 5. Khubiyev had been among those urging greater cooperation between Russian parliament speaker Ruslan Khasbulatov and Yel'tsin in early 1993, but the republic leader made no comments in the central Russian press during the October 1993 crisis.

Adygea's Aslan Dzhariimov: Unreconstructed Communist

Of the seven North Caucasian republic leaders, **Aslan Dzhariimov**, an ethnic Adygey born in 1939, has the deepest roots in the old Communist Party (CPSU) establishment. He was educated at an agricultural institute and later at the Academy of Social Sciences attached to the CPSU Central Committee. He performed full-time party work in his region from 1975 until 1991. He has managed to keep his republic one of the calmest in the North Caucasus. In his interviews and press articles he swears Adygea's eternal union with Russia.

The Adygey president was among the North Caucasian republic leaders who signed an appeal to Yel'tsin in November 1994 to take measures to restore order in Chechnya. However, in late December Dzhariimov took a

swipe at Yel'tsin's methods, asserting that "had the meetings of the Security Council been attended by regional representatives, the decisions it had adopted on the Chechen Republic would have been different."

Dzhariimov has never occupied the vanguard of political or economic reform during his career:

—As a USSR People's Deputy he voted in March 1990 to preserve the CPSU's constitutional political preeminence.

—He sat in the shortlived (1990-91) RSFSR Communist Party Central Committee—a collection of mostly anti-perestroika holdouts.

—In 1992 he publicly praised the October Revolution of 1917 for having preserved the Adygey people. He extolled the republic's gains under Communism.

—In November 1992 he told *Pravda* that his republic had no plans to press for the privatization of local agriculture.