

# Experts Say Problems in Chechnya Won't Be Resolved in Near Future

Even If Russians Ease Up, Chechens Plan to Begin Guerilla Warfare Tactics

BY JENNIFER ADAMS  
STAFF WRITER

With a full siege under way in Chechnya, convoys of Russian troops, tanks and military artillery continue their descent upon the capital of Grozny, raising questions about the motives and the need for the attack.

Although Grozny is expected to fall soon, the war is far from over. If driven out of the capital, the Chechens are expected to retreat into the mountains and maintain the fighting as guerillas.

Willis Brooks, a UNC Russian history professor, said that he thought the Chechens "were not likely to be saved" and that the war would continue for the foreseeable future.

"The next stage will be of indeterminate length and may outlast our lifetimes, where the Chechens will continue to fight to the best of their ability," Brooks said. "Their goal is to drain the Russian will to fight."

The war began Dec. 11 when Russian tanks rolled across the borders of Chechnya, a small mountainous area of Russia in the northern Caucasus region with more than 1.5 million residents. Chechnya is rich in natural gas and oil refineries and is considered strategically important as an oil pass from Azerbaijan to Russia.

The New York Times said the war against Chechnya had caused "the worst internal crisis in Russia" since Russian President Boris Yeltsin fired on the Moscow Parliament in 1993.

Brooks said Russian troop morale was low and military mistakes had been numerous. The Russians sent in tanks and motorized infantry who were not trained to work together. They also failed to go ahead with a full encircling siege until last week and left open the southeast entrance to Grozny, providing a way for Chechen reinforcements to enter.

"It's so irrational, so nonsensical, so incompetent," Brooks said. "Why did Yeltsin send his least trained soldiers?"

Brooks estimated that as much as 3 percent of Russia's annual spending was being expended on the war effort. As a result, the war will affect everyone in Russia regardless of the outcome because the inflation rate will rise. Those with fixed incomes will suffer the most.

"It has been a tragic series of errors," Brooks said. "It calls into question the Russian leaders' abilities."

Last week, the possibility for a peaceful negotiation was discussed, but proposed cease-fires have lasted only hours, and the war has continued to escalate with the siege of Grozny.

Many observers, including Brooks, said they considered certain measures, such as cease-fires and the temporary halt in bombing by the Russians, merely as attempts to pacify the West.

Chechnya first declared independence from Russia in 1991 after the breakup of



DTH/CHRIS ANDERSON

the Soviet Union, but the Russians refused to accept Chechen claims to independence.

Dhokhar Dudayev, a former general in the Soviet air force, deposed the leadership of the Chechen Autonomous Republic and seized power in Grozny. Subsequently, he became president of the Chechen Republic and declared it independent from Russia. Dudayev then faced Russian Interior Ministry troops sent to Grozny by Yeltsin. When the Russian legislature demanded their return, Yeltsin complied and the conflict ended, although he still refused to accept Chechnya's independent status.

Last week, Dudayev told reporters he did not rule out the possibility of remaining an autonomous republic within the Russian Federation. He said he hoped for a peaceful end to the war.

Russian leaders have also offered to renegotiate extensive autonomy for Chechnya but refuse to grant complete independence.

"There has been a level of posturing on both sides that is so dramatic that no one knows what the other side will do," Brooks said.

Publicly, Yeltsin said the territorial integrity and unity of Russia was at stake in preventing Chechnya from seceding from the Russian Federation. But the question remains why he chose to invade Chechnya now.

"There didn't appear to be a threat," Brooks said. "It is not at all clear why he invaded when he did."

David Griffiths, also a UNC Russian history professor, said there were numerous theories about why Yeltsin chose to invade when he did, including one that Yeltsin's head bodyguard, a former hard-liner, was now dictating policy.

"There are an awful lot of curious goings-ons," he said. "There is a question as to whom Yeltsin is listening to."

"Some people I've talked to think the hard-liner nationalists are getting more support from Yeltsin," Griffiths said. "The problem for the West is, if not Yeltsin, then who?"

Griffiths said the democrats who had traditionally supported Yeltsin were the most upset with his decision to invade Chechnya, while the military and nationalists were strongly behind this decision, causing a shift in his base of support.

Judy Shelton, a former adviser to Yeltsin's economic team, said she thought the crisis in Chechnya had been "extremely divisive" and had caused political instabil-

ity. Shelton said she thought Yeltsin had failed to exercise control democratically, especially by relying on advisers who were "throwbacks" from Soviet years.

"His mishandling [of Chechnya] since 1991, when they were trying to get out of the Soviet Union, casts doubt on his ability to lead," she said. "It has undermined everything Yeltsin was trying to work for."

Shelton said she feared that one of the ramifications of Yeltsin's role in the war would be that the United States might retreat from its involvement in Russia and withdraw aid.

"It provides a ready excuse to turn our backs on Russia," she said. "I see indications this will happen."

If the United States and other Western nations curtail aid, Shelton said increased instability would be the result, especially if Russian citizens feel the West has reneged on its promises to help Russia.

"If the West is seen as reversing its position, this could have some weight with Russians who are disappointed with Yeltsin and blame the West," Shelton said.

She said she understood why Yeltsin wanted to prevent the disintegration of the union that might result if Chechnya seceded. "Russia is fighting for cohesion," she said.

If Chechnya were granted independence, this could cause a problem for Russia given the numerous ethnic minorities along its periphery.

"It would be a signal to other fiefdoms that there was money to be made by separating," Shelton said. "If allowed to be independent, they can exercise a significant territorial control over the resources in the borders."

Griffiths also said he believed the potential for an unraveling of the Russian Federation existed.

"There is a real fear if Chechnya is independent that other minorities on the periphery will be inspired to secede," he said.

Griffiths said he thought this created a problem for Western leaders in deciding what to do. He said the choice was between which option was "not as bad" as the other.

"The West is in a dilemma. If they back Yeltsin and he goes in and bloodies up Chechnya, they will be supporting brutality," Griffiths said. "Otherwise, by supporting the independence of Chechnya, there could be a disintegration of Russia."

He said he thought Chechnya's current relationship with Russia had been strongly influenced by two past events: the tremendous Chechen resistance to Russia's imperialist expansion during the 19th century and Stalin's brutal treatment of the Chechen people.

"There is a long history of resistance, of ferocious fighters," Griffiths said. "They do not have a lot in common with Russians and have never accepted Russian domination."

During World War II, approximately 400,000 Chechens were sent to Kazakhstan and other Central Asian republics when Stalin decided they were not "loyal" enough, he said.

# Farrakhan Conspiracy Theory Disputed

BY WENDY GOODMAN  
STAFF WRITER

In the midst of celebrations of Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday and not long before the upcoming 30th anniversary of Malcolm X's death, an alleged plot on the life of another black leader, Louis Farrakhan, has come to light.

Malcolm X's daughter, Qubilah Shabazz, 34, is accused of conspiring to hire a hit man to kill Farrakhan, the leader of the Nation of Islam.

Shabazz surrendered to authorities Thursday and was charged with murder for hire, according to a press release from the U.S. Attorney in Minnesota. Shabazz was indicted on these charges Friday and is scheduled to be arraigned today.

The FBI had been investigating Shabazz for seven months before the indictment, the release said.

There is controversy as to whether the charges against Shabazz are legitimate.

Prominent experts from Chapel Hill have questioned the validity of the charges.

"When I first heard it, I thought it was inconceivable. I couldn't believe it," said Chuck Stone, a UNC journalism professor and friend of Malcolm X. "I don't give any validity to it, [knowing] the family."

Michael Dyson, a UNC professor of communication studies who wrote a book on Malcolm X, said he questioned the legitimacy of the charges.

"It may or may not be true. Many African-Americans have justification for skepticism. First there is the timing, when we are celebrating King's birthday; and why seven months later?" Dyson said.

Both Stone and Dyson said they believed Shabazz was a victim of entrapment, especially as the only witness against her is Michael Fitzpatrick.

Shabazz allegedly hired Fitzpatrick, a former classmate of hers, to kill Farrakhan.

Fitzpatrick is currently facing drug charges. However, in previous years, he helped the government to arrest members formerly in the Jewish Defense League.

"Entrapment is always a possibility. Given the man's circumstances and back-



Leader of the Nation of Islam LOUIS FARRAKHAN said he didn't believe there was a conspiracy to kill him.

ground, he is not the most reliable man," Stone said. "He is not exactly a choirboy."

Dyson questioned the way in which this case was linked to Malcolm X's murder.

"If it is true, it is clear that Shabazz was trapped, especially if in her mind she believed that Farrakhan had anything to do with her father's murder," Dyson said.

Not only has the possibility of Shabazz's entrapment been voiced by important black leaders, but many have seen this as a conspiracy against the black community as a whole and have had problems with the timing of the events.

"I'm not a conspiracy theorist by nature, but it seems conspiratorial to me by the U.S. government," Dyson said. "It reinforces the complicity of our government in its moral practices to degrade and devalue the black leaders."

In a press release from the Nation of Islam, conspiracy was also a concern.

According to the release, "The question that must be raised by the black community today is whether or not, in the face of our 440 years of suffering at the hands of our oppressors, we can reasonably believe that the U.S. Department of Justice desires to protect Minister Louis Farrakhan's life."

Bronwen Clark contributed to this article.

Laurillard, a counselor at SHS.

This employee would serve as a substance abuse officer who works for campuswide educational and prevention programs, much like the sexual harassment and racial harassment officers already at UNC, said Edith Wiggins, interim vice chancellor for student affairs.

Reynolds said the first issue of the new Phoenix would be published in February, with two or three more issues to follow before the semester's end.

The Phoenix receives student funding, but none of that money was used last semester when the magazine was not published, Conway said. "All fees are still in the Phoenix's account," he said. "The money appropriated will be used for whatever magazine comes out."

## DRUGS

FROM PAGE 3

received grants from the Fund for the Improvement of Post-Secondary Education. The Student Health Service at UNC received grant funds from the N.C. Department of Human Resources to train

## PHOENIX

FROM PAGE 3

to get started. Now we are ready to publish our newsmagazine."

Another reason the Phoenix was not published last semester was that the staff was trying to change its format, said John Conway, the magazine's faculty adviser.

"The magazine is going through an overhaul," he said. "There may be a possible name change, and there have already been some content and design changes."

Conway said he thought the changes would be beneficial. "It was a wise move to disassociate the new magazine with the reputation of the old magazine, which was unfavorable in many circles," he said. "Last

## prevention specialists.

In October, SHS announced that it planned to create an office that would coordinate the services offered to combat substance abuse. The office would provide a full-time employee who could coordinate all of the treatment and prevention programs available at UNC, said Deirdre

semester, we took the time to plan, which will help the Phoenix become better."

Reynolds also said the past semester had been used as a planning period to change the magazine's image.

"In the past, the Phoenix was in financial trouble with student government, which happened before I got here," she said. "The magazine had a bad reputation. We wanted to change that reputation, and we felt the best way to do that was to get organized before we got published."

Reynolds said the staff hoped that the new Phoenix would be more appealing than the old one. "We wanted the Phoenix to be something everyone can read and find something interesting in. Our first issue, for example, will cover student re-

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