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~~(S//OC/NF)~~ **SUBJ: COMMENTS ON THE DEMISE OF FORMER
RUSSIAN PREMIER STEPASHIN**

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~~(S//OC/NF)~~ 1. [Redacted]
[Redacted] RUSSIAN MASS MEDIA MINISTER
MIKHAIL ((LESIN)) STATED THAT STEPASHIN NEVER ESTABLISHED HIMSELF AS AN
INDEPENDENT FORCE TO LEAD THE COUNTRY. LESIN FURTHER COMPLAINED THAT

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STEPASHIN'S INEFFECTIVE PUBLIC RELATIONS TEAM HAD FAILED TO MAKE HIM APPEALING TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC. LESIN ALSO FAULTED STEPASHIN FOR NOT ALLYING HIMSELF WITH ANY STRONG GROUPS IN MOSCOW AND NOT USING HIS POSITION TO COLLECT COMPROMISING INFORMATION (KOMPROMAT) ON HIS ENEMIES IN THE PRESIDENTIAL ADMINISTRATION (PA). BECAUSE OF HIS LACKLUSTER LEADERSHIP, LESIN SAID, STEPASHIN HAD ALREADY ANGERED THE KREMLIN AND WOULD SOON BE REPLACED.

(S//OC/NF) 2. LESIN ESTIMATED THAT STEPASHIN HAD BEEN UNABLE TO ANTICIPATE THE WHIMS OF AILING PRESIDENT BORIS ((YEL'TSIN)). LESIN DESCRIBED YEL'TSIN AS OUT OF TOUCH AND INADEQUATE FOR HIS JOB. IN ADDITION, LESIN SAID THAT IT DID NOT TAKE MUCH FOR STEPASHIN TO UNWITTINGLY SLIGHT YEL'TSIN'S DAUGHTER AND IMAGE ADVISER TAT'YANA ((D'YACHENKO)) AND PRESIDENTIAL CHIEF OF STAFF ALEKSANDR ((VOLOSHIN)). LESIN OPINED THAT STEPASHIN'S FAILURE TO FIGHT BACK AGAINST THE KREMLIN'S UNREASONABLE DICTATES BACKFIRED ON HIM AND MADE THE PA MORE SUSPICIOUS OF HIM IN A SHORTER AMOUNT OF TIME. LESIN COMPARED THIS WITH FORMER PREMIER YEVGENIY ((PRIMAKOV)), WHO OPENLY DEFIED THE PA AND YET LASTED LONGER IN HIS JOB THAN THE MALLEABLE STEPASHIN. LESIN SAID THAT D'YACHENKO AND VOLOSHIN HAD BECOME SOURED ON STEPASHIN BY LATE JULY. THUS, BY THAT TIME, LESIN SAID, PA ADVISORS LIKE VOLOSHIN AND ANDREY ((VAVRA)) WERE ALREADY LEAKING STORIES TO THE MEDIA REGARDING STEPASHIN'S EARLY DEPARTURE.

(S//OC/NF) 3. LESIN CONTENDED THAT VOLOSHIN'S AND VAVRA'S LEAKS TO THE MEDIA WERE JUST ONE EXAMPLE OF A SERIES OF RASH ACTS COMMITTED BY THE PA RECENTLY. ACCORDING TO LESIN, PEOPLE IN THE PA SUCH AS VOLOSHIN AND D'YACHENKO ACT OUT EMOTIONALLY BECAUSE OF THEIR OWN FEAR THAT THEIR DAYS IN POWER MAY BE NUMBERED. LESIN ESTIMATED THAT THE PARANOID PA CULTURE MIGHT LEAD TO EVEN GREATER MISTAKES THAN THE FIRING OF STEPASHIN. FOR EXAMPLE, LESIN SAID THAT HE FEARED THE PA MIGHT IMPOSE MARTIAL LAW. IN LESIN'S OPINION, THIS WOULD ONLY PROPEL MOSCOW MAYOR YURIY ((LUZHKOV)) INTO POWER. LESIN NOTED THAT LUZHKOV HAD ALREADY TRIED TO CO-OPT STEPASHIN BY OFFERING HIM THE NUMBER SIX PLACE ON THE FATHERLAND-ALL RUSSIA ELECTION LIST.

(S//OC/NF) 4. [REDACTED] (b)(1)
[REDACTED] THE PA HAD ORIGINALLY INTENDED TO USE (b)(3)
STEPASHIN TO HEAD A CENTER-RIGHT VOTING BLOCK ALLIED WITH YEL'TSIN AND THE KREMLIN. [REDACTED] THE PA HAD EXPECTED STEPASHIN'S BLOC TO ALLY ITSELF (b)(1)
WITH THE "RUSSIA'S VOICE," "THE NEW FORCE," "THE RIGHT CAUSE" AND THE "RUSSIA IS OUR HOME" PARTIES. [REDACTED] THE KREMLIN EVEN EXPECTED THE "ALL (b)(3)
RUSSIA" PARTY REGIONAL LEADERS TO JOIN STEPASHIN'S ALLIANCE. [REDACTED] (b)(1)
[REDACTED] THE PA'S UNREALISTIC GOAL OF FORMING SUCH AN ELECTORAL (b)(3)
COALITION AS INDICATIVE OF HOW OUT OF TOUCH THE PA REALLY WAS. (b)(1)

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