

~~TOP SECRET~~//HCS//ORCON/NOFORN

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~~(TS//HCS//OC/NF)~~ **SUBJ: PUTIN'S PREFERENCE THAT OLIGARCHS GUSINSKIY AND BEREZOVSKIY REMAIN IN EXILE; DETAILS ON THE GAZPROM - MEDIA-MOST DEAL**

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Warnings: ~~(TS//HCS//OC/NF)~~ ----- CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY INFORMATION REPORT, NOT FINALLY EVALUATED INTELLIGENCE -----

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[Redacted] ALL PORTIONS CARRY CLASSIFICATION AND CONTROLS OF OVERALL DOCUMENT. END OF MESSAGE ~~TOP SECRET~~.

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~~(TS//HCS//OC/NF)~~ 1. [Redacted]

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[Redacted] AS OF MID-NOVEMBER 2000, PRESIDENT VLADIMIR ((PUTIN)) AND SOME SENIOR MEMBERS OF THE PA PREFERRED THAT OLIGARCHS

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VLADIMIR ((GUSINSKIY)) AND BORIS ((BEREZOVSKIY)) REMAIN OUTSIDE RUSSIA IN THEIR SELF-IMPOSED EXILE, AND AGREED THAT IT WAS BEST IF THEY NEVER RETURNED AT ALL. [REDACTED] COMMENT: BOTH GUSINSKIY AND BEREZOVSKIY, WHO HAVE BEEN UNDER INTENSE KREMLIN PRESSURE FOR SEVERAL MONTHS TO SELL THEIR RESPECTIVE MEDIA HOLDINGS, ARE CURRENTLY UNDER INVESTIGATION IN RUSSIA FOR FRAUD; AN INTERNATIONAL ARREST WARRANT HAS BEEN ISSUED FOR GUSINSKIY, ACCORDING TO THE RUSSIAN PRESS. BOTH REMAIN ABROAD, AS OF EARLY DECEMBER.) (b)(1)
(b)(3)

(TS//HCS//OC/NF) 2. [REDACTED] NEGOTIATIONS IN NOVEMBER WITH GUSINSKIY OVER THE MOST-MEDIA DEBTS HELD BY GAZPROM WERE PROBLEMATIC. THE SECURITY SERVICES DISLIKED THE ORIGINAL DEAL BECAUSE IT LEFT NTV'S CURRENT MANAGEMENT IN PLACE UNTIL SUMMER 2001. ADDITIONALLY, AN UNSPECIFIED MEMBER OF PUTIN'S INNER CIRCLE CONVINCED PUTIN THAT THE ORIGINAL GAZPROM MOST-MEDIA DEAL NEGOTIATED BY MEDIA MINISTER MIKHAIL ((LESIN)) AND GAZPROM OFFICIAL ALFRED ((KOKH)) DID NOT EXACT ENOUGH CONCESSIONS FROM MOST-MEDIA. THIS ADVISOR ALSO TOLD PUTIN THAT LESIN AND KOKH HAD NOT NEGOTIATED IN GOOD FAITH AND STOOD TO REAP PERSONAL FINANCIAL BENEFITS FROM THE ARRANGEMENT. AFTER LEARNING THIS, PUTIN SEVERELY REPRIMANDED LESIN AND HAD KOKH'S SIGNATURE ON THE ORIGINAL DEAL REVOKED. LESIN IN TURN SCREAMED AT KOKH, AND KOKH THEN HELD ADDITIONAL TALKS WITH MOST-MEDIA, WHICH RESULTED IN THE SECOND AGREEMENT. LESIN CONVINCED PUTIN THE SECOND AGREEMENT HAD ENOUGH CLAUSES AFFORDING THE PA SUFFICIENT INFLUENCE OVER THE NTV PROGRAMMING, WHICH ALLOWED THE REVISED AGREEMENT TO BE SIGNED. [REDACTED] COMMENT: NEGOTIATIONS INVOLVING A DEBT-FOR-EQUITY DEAL BETWEEN GUSINSKIY'S MEDIA-MOST COMPANY AND ITS MAIN CREDITOR, THE STATE-CONTROLLED GAZPROM, HAVE BEEN ONGOING SINCE THIS PAST SUMMER. THE ORIGINAL DEAL REFERRED TO HERE IS PROBABLY THE AGREEMENT ANNOUNCED IN THE RUSSIAN PRESS AS HAVING BEEN SIGNED ON 11 NOVEMBER BUT SUBSEQUENTLY REVOKED BY KOKH ON 14 NOVEMBER. THE SECOND AGREEMENT MENTIONED HERE IS PROBABLY THE ONE ANNOUNCED AS A "PEACE AGREEMENT" ON 17 NOVEMBER, WHICH RAISED GAZPROM'S CONTROL OF NTV SHARES FROM 30 TO 46 PERCENT, WITH GAZPROM HOLDING ANOTHER 19 PERCENT OF NON-VOTING SHARES AS COLLATERAL FOR LOANS DUE IN SUMMER 2001, ACCORDING TO PRESS ACCOUNTS.) (b)(1)
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(TS//HCS//OC/NF) 3. [REDACTED] COMMENT: IF NTV FALTERS, THEN LESIN'S "VIDEO INTERNATIONAL" (VI) PUBLIC RELATIONS AGENCY WOULD BECOME THE LEADING RUSSIAN TELEVISION ADVERTISING AGENCY. LESIN TYPICALLY IGNORES STATE INTERESTS AND WOULD DO ANYTHING TO SUPPORT VI, HIS OWN PERSONAL CASH COW. THEREFORE, IT IS NOT SURPRISING THAT LESIN AND HIS VI AGENCY BENEFITED FROM THE ORIGINAL NEGOTIATED DEAL.) (b)(1)
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