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In an excerpt from a forthcoming book, *The lonely tsar in the Kremlin: Yel'tsin and his team* (by Aleksandr Chernyak and Victor Andronov), Mikhail Poltoranin, an editor of *Moscow Pravda*, member of the Interregional Group of Deputies and formerly a close associate of Boris Yel'tsin, discusses his presentation to a government meeting in February 1992:

"I put the matter bluntly. Let's be more harsh with the West, because later they will use us to wipe their feet. Since we have agreed to their doctrines about entering the market, we should be able to have our say to the West. We should freeze Gorbachev's agreement on removing our military forces from Germany. The agreement to remove military forces from the Baltic states, that can be frozen too. (...) We can freeze this for 2 to 3 years and in the meantime let the countries of the Baltics and Germany build up the foundation for our construction industry. (...)"

"Before I could finish my thought, Kozyrev took up the issue and said, 'That is the politics of blackmail. We cannot act like that.' Well, he and I got into an argument about this. At first Yel'tsin was interested in my proposals but when he saw that it would be necessary to argue with some people, he took their side. (...) [Yel'tsin] did not like him, but the USA stood on Kozyrev's side."

The full text of the interview was published in *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, 14 November 1998, p. 15.