

## **Russian Intelligence**

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2/3/2007

This paper discusses the current status of the three main intelligence agencies of the Russian Federation (RF). They are the Main Intelligence Directorate of the General Staff (GRU), the Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR), and the Federal Security Service (FSB).

### **GRU**

The purpose of the Main Intelligence Directorate of the General Staff (GRU) is to provide intelligence support to the Defense Ministry, the General Staff, and the Armed Forces. The GRU is the military intelligence agency of the Russian Federation. It analyzes and summarizes information about the military and political situation around Russia, and makes forecasts for its development. The GRU informs the top state and military leadership about actual and potential threats to Russia's national security and interests. It gathers human intelligence (HUMINT) through military attaches and foreign agents. It also gathers not insignificant signals intelligence (SIGINT), and maintains imagery reconnaissance and satellite imagery (IMINT) capabilities. Head of the GRU, General Valentin Vladimirovich Korabelnikov, said the GRU's goal was to create a security cordon around Russia's borders and attempt to neutralize conflict zones. His November 3<sup>rd</sup> interview received much attention due to his provocative statement regarding GRU capabilities and influence. "We are ready to act anywhere in the world should the need arise."

The geographic scope of the GRU is international; including sub-state actors such as terrorists, and information on outer space. The GRU's spheres of interest include regional and local armed conflicts, foreign armies (their hardware and armaments), equipping of possible war theatres, and economic operations in the interest of the Armed Forces. "Everything that happened, happens, and will happen in the world and close to our borders will be scrutinized by military intelligence and be of interest to it."<sup>1</sup>

The current official stated focus of the GRU is to address threats related to destabilizing weapons (including low-yield nuclear weapons), the possible use of strategic ballistic missiles with non-nuclear warheads, and deployment of weapons (including nuclear ones) in outer space. The GRU is also focused on maintaining cooperation with the other military intelligence services of other countries in areas where there is an "identical understanding of the international security problems."<sup>2</sup> These areas include the fight against terrorism, illegal arms trade, and the proliferation of missile and nuclear technology. Korabelnikov also stated that the GRU's main goal is the RF's national interest, and that cooperating with foreign colleagues "is not a goal in itself."

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<sup>1</sup> Korabelnikov, Valentin. In an interview November 3, 2006. Izvesta Daily, p.4.

<sup>2</sup> Korabelnikov.

## **SVR**

The Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR) is led by former KGB officer Lebedev Sergey Nikolayevich. The SVR evolved from the dissolution of the KGB as the RF's external intelligence agency. The main geographic scope of the SVR includes the Middle East, South Asia, Western Europe and the United States. The purpose of the SVR is to collect information about real and potential possibilities, actions, plans, and intentions of foreign states, organizations, and persons affecting the vital interest of the RF.

During the late 1990s, the focus of SVR operations shifted from military-related foreign intelligence to industrial, scientific, and technological espionage. Several divisions within the SVR use extensive and remote intelligence networks to collect information on rival economies. Russian intelligence agencies are believed to be placing a high priority on economic espionage.

The SVR cooperates with foreign intelligence agencies in the areas of combating terrorism and information sharing. It conducts counterproliferation operations, environmental intelligence gathering, and counternarcotics intelligence operations.

The SVR budget is classified. According to Russian media, recruitment has picked up since 2002, and the SVR is operating at full capacity. This allows them to hire the best and the brightest. The minimum requirements include being between the ages of 21 and 35, have Russian citizenship, no prior criminal record, good physical and mental health, and a bachelor's degree. Graduate degrees are preferred, especially in the fields of law, international relations, foreign languages, public administration, economics, criminal justice, business, geographic studies, engineering, computer science and history. The SVR also looks for prior military and overseas experience.

## **FSB**

The Federal Security Service (FSB) is the domestic successor to the KGB. The current head is Nikolai Platonovich Patrushev. Patrushev's son, Andrei, is a former FSB official, and was recently named advisor to the chairman of the state oil company OAO Rosneft, Igor Sechin. Sechin is also President Putin's deputy chief of staff.<sup>3</sup> Prior to becoming President of the RF, Putin led the FSB from July 1998 to August 1999. Putin is also a former KGB officer. Since Putin's ascendancy to Presidency, many former KGB and FSB officials hold influential or lucrative positions.

The purpose of the FSB is counterintelligence activity and criminality control. It is also responsible for providing the personality, society, and state security. The geographic scope includes the inland, Caucasus, CIS countries and Central Asia. Patrushev has stated that Russia thinks it necessary to solve terrorism problems on the basis of international justice and a strengthening of the United Nations consolidator role.

As of 2000, the total FSB personnel was estimated at 92,000 (operatives and support staff).<sup>4</sup> Application levels had fallen between 1997 and 2001. In 1997 for every opening there were ten applicants, and in 2001 there were only six. The FSB budget (whose amount is classified) however has been rising.

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<sup>3</sup> Associated Press. Section-Business, Dateline-Moscow. "Russian intelligence chief's son named advisor to oil company chairman." September 13, 2006.

<sup>4</sup> Bennett, Gordon. *Vladimir Putin and Russia's Special Services*. pp 15-16.

On January 22, 2001, Putin transferred responsibilities for operations in Chechnya from the Ministry of Defense to the FSB. This was the first time in Russian or Soviet history that security services have been given control of a military operation. Konstantin Preobrazhensky, a former KGB official said, “The transfer of control...is clearly a political, rather than strategic move.”<sup>5</sup>

On January 31, 2007 Russian President Vladimir Putin addressed the FSB at an annual meeting of the Collegium.<sup>6</sup> He commended the agency on its achievements, while acknowledging that the task of ensuring the security of the RF requires the FSB to constantly improve its work. His main points included counterterrorism, border control, anti-corruption policies, counterintelligence, and an increase in the FSB budget and personnel wages.

Counterterrorism is a significant part of the FSB mandate. Putin said that first among priorities was the need for the agency to step up efforts to prevent terrorist attacks. A recent terrorist alert dictated checks of all the main components of the RF’s counterterrorism system. On January 16 the AntiTerrorism Committee said it had received a foreign report of a possible terrorist plot aimed at ground transportation and the metro system.<sup>7</sup> After this “live” test, Putin concluded the counterterrorism system could be improved. A new counterterrorism database will soon be implemented. Fingerprint data on people accused and convicted of terrorism will be included, as well as other “useful information for carrying out day to day operations.” He also said that increased interagency cooperation and coordination in counterterrorist work is directly related to the 2006 creation of the National AntiTerrorist Committee headed by the director of the FSB, Nikolai Patrushev. Putin especially noted the successful operations in Chechnya where armed groups and their leaders have been “neutralized.” In December 2006 Patrushev said that the FSB had exposed 27 foreign intelligence officers, 89 Russian nationals working for foreign handlers, foiled more than 300 terrorist attacks and eliminated more than 100 terrorists.<sup>8</sup>

It is well known that porous borders facilitate terrorist entry and smuggling schemes. Putin said that it is crucial to “close the loopholes that allow international terrorists to enter Russian territory.” He called upon the implementation of the State Border program to put in place a modern border protection infrastructure. He particularly highlighted the need to equip the most complex sections of the border in the North Caucasus. Putin also said that border security will not only keep the RF more secure, but that it will “inject new vigour” into the economies of border regions. He said that new technology and equipment can be used to prevent smuggling that is detrimental to Russia’s marine and natural resources.

The economy was the next item on the agenda. Recently, Russia has enjoyed steady economic growth, and Putin said that the people should not forget that Russia has ratified international anti-corruption conventions and agreements. He said, “We must ensure that the business environment in Russia is reliably protected from corruption and economic crime.” Putin said that Russia’s reputation as a country with a civilized economic environment would be “dealt a serious blow” if these types of crimes goes unpunished. He also mentioned the negative societal consequences of corruption, which include a culture of lying, cheating and stealing. According to Transparency International, Russia is one of the most corrupt countries in the

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<sup>5</sup> Preobrazhensky. “FSB in Charge.” *Moscow Times*. March 20, 2001.

<sup>6</sup> Putin’s speech at [http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2007/01/31/1743\\_type82913\\_117575.shtml](http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2007/01/31/1743_type82913_117575.shtml)

<sup>7</sup> “Anti-Terrorism Committee Warns of Transport Terror in Russia.” *RIA Novosti*. January 16, 2007 at <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20070116/59186121.html>

<sup>8</sup> “Russian President Sets Task for FSB at Collegium Meeting.” *RIA Novosti*. January 31, 2007

world.<sup>9</sup> In addition, investors are wary of what they see as an unstable business climate due to the perceived gangster rule of law in Russia.

Within his speech there was a gentle chide to FSB employees not to bloat their numbers through insignificant criminal cases. He said that it is important to focus on thorough investigations of crimes that represent a direct threat to the RF's national security. Boosting numbers was common during the Soviet Era when quality was sacrificed for quantity.

Security of state secrets through vigorous counterintelligence operations is another priority for the FSB. Putin said that as Russia is becoming increasingly integrated into the world economy, it is important to prevent leaks of protected political and economic information, and to ensure reliable protection for scientific developments and technology. He said, "Russia's foreign policy positions and its competitiveness on world markets depend to a great extent on this work."

In 2004 it was discovered that one of their own, Sergei Skripal, had been supplying MI6 with classified information in exchange for cash. Skripal was arrested for being a double agent, and sentenced in 2006 to thirteen years in a prison camp. He had been supplying MI6 with the names, addresses, and code –names of numerous Russian agents over a period of ten years. Another widely publicized case was that of an arms researcher at the foreign policy department of the Russian Academy of Sciences Institute, Igor Sutyagin, passing classified information to the Alternative Futures Consulting firm in the United Kingdom. Sutyagin was sentenced to fifteen years in prison in 2004.<sup>10</sup>

Putin addressed the importance of law and order during the upcoming elections to the regional legislative assemblies and to the State Duma. He said the FSB must help protect society against those who attempt to manipulate the public through ideological extremism and intolerance, be it ethnic or religious. In his own words, "Elections are a most important democratic mechanism for the formation of state power, state power that is accountable and elected through a process of healthy political competition." The international community has questioned Russia's political climate, and the ability of opposing views to be voiced unharmed and compete in elections. The spread of hate crimes and xenophobic attitudes have elicited concern from both Russian and human rights groups.

Putin felt it necessary to add that the FSB must work within the law while protecting society, and that any action must be based on the Constitution and Russian legislation. The FSB has been accused of using torture to fabricate its ideological needs, and of manipulating the courts and the prosecutor's office to its own ends.<sup>11</sup> The FSB has also been accused of staging terrorist bombings against Russian civilians to incite support for the war in Chechnya, and promote loyalty to the Kremlin.<sup>12</sup>

Putin also spoke about budget increases and arms procurement. In 2006 the FSB budget increased by 27 percent. It will increase by a similar amount in 2007. In addition, arms purchases will increase by 20 percent this year, and spending on major construction work will increase by 73 percent. It is in the hopes that the FSB will be able to considerably reinforce and modernize its equipment that these robust budgetary increases are being implemented.

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<sup>9</sup> See Transparency International CPI index at [http://www.transparency.org/policy\\_research/surveys\\_indices/cpi/2006](http://www.transparency.org/policy_research/surveys_indices/cpi/2006)

<sup>10</sup> "Russian President Sets Tasks for FSB at Collegiate Meeting." *RIA Novosti*. January 31, 2006. at <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20070131/59981300.html>

<sup>11</sup> Politkovskaya, Anna. *Putin's Russia: Life in a Failing Democracy*. Henry Holt and Company. New York, 2004. p 41.

<sup>12</sup> Satter, David. *Darkness at Dawn*. Yale University Press. New Haven. 2003. p 33.

Putin ended his speech by telling his FSB comrades that their wages would increase by almost a quarter, which is more than double the national average. He added that special attention would be paid to resolving housing problems faced by current and retired personnel. Putin said these incentive based measures are being implemented to raise FSB effectiveness and to ensure the professional growth of its personnel.

## **Increasing Capabilities**

The rhetoric from Moscow is increasingly focused on two tasks-increasing the power of the RF's security and intelligence agencies and preparing for global conflict. In 2005 the funding of Russian special services increased by 25 percent. Putin's address to the Federal Assembly on May 10, 2006 included key points of his strategy for the RF.<sup>13</sup> These points highlight the emphasis that is, and increasingly will be, placed on the Russian Intelligence Community to achieve the desired ends. According to Putin, the RF must assure competence of the foreign intelligence authority. The RF must achieve scientific and technological superiority in the sphere of the economy, and the state should provide assistance in the purchase of modern technologies abroad. Modernization of the Russian Army is also high on Putin's agenda, as well as ensuring the readiness of the army. The readiness of the army depends on the operative capabilities of the GRU. There is planned substantial growth of the divisions of radio-electronic intelligence and electronic combat. Putin also stressed the importance of achieving intellectual superiority in the military arena. The GRU has a tradition of stealing analogous kinds of armaments at the same time in different countries, and then studying them to select the best.<sup>14</sup>

During his November 8, 2006 visit to the new GRU headquarters in Moscow, Putin reiterated that GRU military intelligence should continue to build up its operational capabilities to be prepared to fight in local, regional and global conflicts, and that the state would continue to pay heightened attention to strengthening the service and providing decent social guarantees for its personnel. He also claimed that the new facility is the "most modern and best equipped complex of any country's intelligence services."<sup>15</sup> In his speech to the GRU Putin cautioned that the potential for conflict in the world is on the increase, and that stability is seriously undermined by the practice of a country taking unilateral action, action he deemed illegal according to international law, and by attempts by some countries to impose their views without taking into account the legitimate interests of other partners. Such states, according to Putin, use the economy, political and diplomatic means, and a monopoly on the world media to achieve these goals. He also told the GRU to pay close attention to the leading countries who are not giving up arsenals that are well above what is needed for their defense, but are constantly modernizing them, including offensive weapons. There is no doubt as to which country Putin was alluding to.

In his November 3, 2006 interview, Korabelnikov boasted that the GRU has proven its effectiveness during the wars in Vietnam, Cambodia, the Arab-Israeli conflict, in Angola, Ethiopia, Yugoslavia, Afghanistan and Iraq; as well as various other regions of the world. He

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<sup>13</sup> Putin, Vladimir. Annual Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation. Moscow. May 10, 2006. at [http://kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2006/05/10/1823\\_type70029type82912\\_105566.shtml](http://kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2006/05/10/1823_type70029type82912_105566.shtml)

<sup>14</sup> Suvorov, Viktor. *Soviet Military Intelligence*. 1984. p 17.

<sup>15</sup> Putin, Vladimir. "Speech at the New Headquarters of the Chief Intelligence Directorate of the Russian Armed Forces General Staff." November 8, 2006. at [http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2006/11/08/0000\\_type84779\\_113593.shtml](http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2006/11/08/0000_type84779_113593.shtml)

also claims that intelligence units have destroyed more than 3,000 militants and detained more than 1,500 suspected members of illegal armed groups in Chechnya since 1999. Chechnya is a Muslim southern republic that has experienced two wars since 1994. As to the recent Georgia incident (September 2006) where four suspected members of the GRU were arrested under espionage charges, Korabelnikov claims, “...we knew long before the Georgian authorities embarked on a path of unprecedented aggravation of relations with Russia what goals they were pursuing.” In the beginning of November, Russia’s state controlled gas firm, Gazprom, announced a plan to increase the price for Georgia from \$110 per 1,000 cubic square feet to \$230. They have also applied economic and trade sanctions against Georgia since the espionage allegation.<sup>16</sup> At the same time Gazprom agreed to charge Ukraine, whose prime minister is seen as friendly to Russia, only \$135 per 1,000 square feet.

During a July 10, 2006 meeting between President Putin and Patrushev, (leader of the FSB), discussed a special operation that was carried out in Ingushetia on July 9<sup>th</sup> in which Shamil Basayev, and others were killed.<sup>17</sup> Putin commended the FSB on its work and stated that those who carried out the operations would receive state decorations. He also stated that counterterrorism work must be intensified. Patrushev stated that the successful operation was made possible by the fact that the FSB had established operational positions abroad, including in countries where arms were being collected and transferred to Russian for the purpose of carrying out terrorist activities.<sup>18</sup> Much of the “terrorist” activity in Russia is homegrown and linked to the Chechen separatist movement. Chechen rebel websites have been closed down in Russia, although the ultranationalist websites operate openly.<sup>19</sup>

There is no widespread internet censorship in Russia, although the government attempts to limit the freedoms of speech and access to information (provided for in the Russian Constitution-Article 29) under the aegis of protecting the people from extremists and terrorists. The 1995 Communications Law protects privacy of communications and contains details on the regulation of ISPs and telecommunications. Interference or restrictions such as tapping telephone conversations, inspecting electronic communications, delaying, inspecting, or seizing postal mail or documenting correspondence, or receiving the information therein are allowed only through a court order. The Law on Operational Investigation Activity that regulates surveillance methods used by secret services also requires a court-issued warrant.

The FSB has conducted phone tapping using the System of Operative Investigative Activities (SORM) system. SORM -2, the next version, required Internet Service Providers (ISPs) to install surveillance devices and high speed links to local FSB departments which, on issuance of a warrant, would allow the FSB direct access to the communications of Internet users.<sup>20</sup>

In early July of 2006, the Russian Parliament passed amendments giving the FSB authority to dispatch commandos for the purposing of striking at terrorist groups and bases

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<sup>16</sup> Myers, Steven Lee. “Russia Gas Company Plans Steep Increase for Georgia.” *New York Times*. Sec. A, Col. 1, p 12. November 3, 2006.

<sup>17</sup> Read more on Basayev at The Irish Times. “Ruthless Adventurer, Most Feared and Desperate Chechen Warlords.” July 15, 2006. p 12.

<sup>18</sup> Beginning of Working Meeting with Director of the Federal Security Service Nikolai Patrushev. The Kremlin, Moscow. July 10, 2006. at [http://kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2006/07/10/1859\\_type82912type82913\\_108468.shtml](http://kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2006/07/10/1859_type82912type82913_108468.shtml)

<sup>19</sup> Bigg, Claire. “Russia: Authorities Warn of Cybercrime Epidemic.” *Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty*. April 20, 2006 at <http://www.rferl.org/featuresarticle/2006/4/7D821779-4411-43D1-BF7B-D19743879DF6.html>

<sup>20</sup> “Silenced –Russia.” Privacy International. September 9, 2003. at <http://www.privacyinternational.org/article.shtml?cmd%5B347%5D=x-347-103776>

abroad.<sup>21</sup> Putin was the initiative's main sponsor. Prior to the new amendments, Russian law dictated FSB operations abroad limited to preventing foreign intelligence services from recruiting Russian diplomats. Putin also charged the FSB with the task of finding and destroying the criminals who kidnapped and executed four Russian diplomats working at Russia's Baghdad embassy.

Patrushev argues that foreign governments are establishing and using NGOs in Russia for the purpose of intelligence gathering. Addressing the State Duma in 2005 he warned that "Under the cover of various humanitarian and educational programs, foreign states pursue their interests and collect data on various matters."<sup>22</sup> The RF has since made NGO licensing more restrictive and cumbersome.

## Cooperation

On September 14, 2006, the US-Russian Working Group on Counterterrorism (CTWG) met for its fifteenth session since its 2000 inception. In a joint statement released on the 15<sup>th</sup> it was stated that the two countries are working together to combat terrorism on an operational basis in key areas including intelligence sharing, law enforcement, weapons of mass destruction (WMD), Man Portable Air Defense Systems (MANPADS), terrorist financing, counternarcotics, and transportation security.<sup>23</sup> Recent achievements include collaboration in Afghanistan, terrorist financing, law enforcement, transportations, and counternarcotics.

Russia has also spearheaded efforts to make counterterrorism cooperation a key component in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and the Collective Security Treaty organization (CSTO). Also, Russian is an increasingly active member of the Financial Task Force on Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing (FAFT).

The FBI and FSB have signed a Memorandum of Cooperation, pledging to join their efforts in the fight against international terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The memorandum allows for the exchange of information on a number of issues. Patrushev said that the FSB and FBI had organized "concrete events" before, which were quite successful, and that they planned more. The head of the FSB also stated that the signing of the memorandum will allow "our officers and experts to work more efficiently." Director of the FBI, Robert Mueller, stated that it was a step forward in cooperative efforts against new challenges.

Throughout the 1990s Russia worked on relations between its secret services and those of the former Soviet Republics. In March of 1995, the first joint meeting of the heads of the CIS security services took place. The Council of the Heads of Security Services and Special Services of the CIS, a coordination secretariat, was set up. A number of treaties were signed during the following years in the struggles against weapons smuggling, organized crime, and terrorism. In 1997, a CIS Special Services Data Bank was set up, allowing access to confidential operational information.

In April 2000, a CIS Anti-Terrorist Center was created. The Center's operational headquarters are located in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. It is involved in the struggle against Central Asian radical Islamic groups.

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<sup>21</sup> Paul, Anthony. "Resurgence of Russian Spies." *The Straits Times*. July 12, 2006.

<sup>22</sup> Interfax, Moscow Times. May 13, 2005. at <http://www.agentura.ru/english/Right?id=20050513133000>

<sup>23</sup> Joint Statement by U.S.-Russian Counterterrorism Working Group. Office of the Spokesman. *U.S. Department of State*. September 15, 2006.

## Concerns

Russian security and intelligence services may be trying to reclaim their global reach attained during the KGB years. In her article, *Return of the Chekists*, Julie Anderson argues that Putin is using the war on terror and cooperation with the West as a means to accessing the U.S. intelligence and military communities.<sup>24</sup> As of February 2005, it was estimated that 100 Russian intelligence officers, under official cover were operating in the United States. She also argues that the RF is increasing its intelligence capabilities through lucrative oil and arms deals around the world, and that Russia plans to speed development by stealing Western technologies through the use of HUMINT. “From the Baltics to the new NATO member Eastern European countries to Latin America, the number of Russian foreign intelligence officers active today exceeds any period in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.”<sup>25</sup>

Stephen Twig, Director of the Foreign Policy Centre based in London, said “In the six years he pledged to uphold democracy as a ‘dictatorship of the law’, President Vladimir Putin has increased the role of the police and security services in governing Russian, and wielded the power of the courts for political ends.” According to a 2005 study, conducted for the Swedish Ministry of Defense, Russia’s capacity to use energy policy as a political weapon is continuously strengthened, and is derived from a strategy of acquisitions and hostile takeovers of various energy infrastructures.<sup>26</sup> Russia explicitly states that it intends to use energy as a security tool, and energy blackmail in the CIS states is already occurring.

Russian intelligence services are targeting U.S. military and technical secrets, partly due to the U.S. efforts to build space-based weapons and a ballistic missile defense program, according to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). They are also pursuing information on stealth technologies (used to conceal submarines and warplanes).

On March 30, 2006, while addressing the Federal Military –Technical Cooperative Service (VTS) President Putin boasted that arms sales have increased in geographic scope. In 2005 Russia surpassed the U.S. as the leader in weapons deals in the developing world. High oil prices and increased arms sales have allowed Russia to rejuvenate intelligence services. Russian arms sales show that it is building on its former influence, especially in the Middle East and Latin America. Russia provides weapons and provides intelligence training to such actors as Iran, Syria, Hezbollah and Hamas. During the recent Israeli-Lebanon conflict, Hezbollah was supplied with Russian made Metis and RPG-29 anti-tank missiles; which were responsible for the destruction of an entire Israeli Merkava tank unit. Russia also engages in oil and arms deals with Latin America, particularly of concern are the recent deals with Venezuela. Russia is also thought to be partnering with Arab intelligence agencies to counter U.S. influence in the region. According to a recent report by the Congressional Research Service entitled “Conventional Arms Transfers to Developing Countries”, Russia has agreed to sell \$700 million dollars worth of

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<sup>24</sup> Julie Anderson is a professor at the Centre for Counterintelligence and Security Studies. See article “Return of the Chekists” at <http://www.c4isrjournal.com/story.php?F=2033937>

<sup>25</sup> Anderson, Julie.

<sup>26</sup> Leijonhielm, Jan et al. “Russian Military Capability in a Ten-Year Perspective.” Summary and Conclusion from a study for the Swedish Ministry of Defense. 2005.



surface to air missiles to Iran. Elevating Iran's defense capabilities would significantly alter any U.S. military engagement.

Other goals of the RF may include reducing Western influence in their region, including the near abroad, and subverting American political-economic goals, while stealing military-technical and political-economic information. The use of intelligence liaisons to exploit privatization processes in Central and Eastern Europe is another interest. A recent report by the Czech Security Information Service (BIS) alleges Russian economic espionage in the Czech Republic, claiming that half of the known sixty Russian diplomats working there are intelligence members of the GRU and SVR and that their work focuses on promoting Russian economic interests.<sup>27</sup> Other methods known to be used by the Russian Intelligence agencies include the co-opting of scientists, businessmen, students, and others. Russian émigrés are also targeted for recruitment.<sup>28</sup>

Recently murdered journalist and human rights activist, Anna Politkovskaya, argued that Putin was stifling civil liberties as he moved the country back to a Soviet style dictatorship. She said that "Nobody in his or her right mind seeks protection from the institutions entrusting with maintaining law and order because they are totally corrupt."<sup>29</sup> Politkovskaya was murdered, contract style, on October 7, 2006. She is one of the thirteenth murdered journalists since Putin's ascendancy to Presidency. All thirteen cases remain unsolved.

Russian intelligence services are accused of poisoning dissidents, both abroad and at home. The FSB is alleged to have poisoned Politkovskaya back in 2004 on her first flight to Rostov after the Beslan school siege.<sup>30</sup> In 2004, Ukraine's then oppositional presidential candidate, Victor Yushchenko, was poisoned; also allegedly by Russian intelligence services. And more recently, former FSB and KGB agent Alexander Litvinenko, was fatally poisoned; also allegedly at the behest of the Kremlin. Litvinenko was investigating the Politkovskaya murder at the time of the poisoning, though his antagonistic relationship with Moscow began earlier. In 2003 he published a book entitled *The FSB Blows up Russia* in which he accuses Russian secret service agencies of staging apartment house bombings in 1999 that killed more than 300 people, and led to the second Chechen war.<sup>31</sup> While the FSB has been widely implicated in the Litvinenko poisoning, the SVR denies any involvement. Sergei Ivanov, spokesman of the SVR, said "Litvinenko is not the kind of person for whose sake we would spoil bilateral relations. It is absolutely not in our interests to be engaged in such activity."<sup>32</sup>

President Vladimir Putin's main support derives from Russia's intelligence services, stemming from his own former intelligence career. At all levels, former and current officers dominate government and strategic resource controlling enterprises. In a 2005 interview with FAKT, a Polish newspaper, Litvinenko accused the heads of Russian special services – Vladimir Putin, Yuri Andropov (former head, deceased-1984), Nikolai Patrushev, and others of supporting

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<sup>27</sup> BBC Monitoring International Reports. "Czech Intelligence Says Half of Russian Diplomats Probably Agents." October 25, 2006.

<sup>28</sup> "Moscow denies reports of stepped up intelligence work. September 9, 2003. at <http://www.borrull.org/e/noticia.php?id=21128&PHPSESSID=b1064bb557a42eeae4b0b2c7dcb09b0f>

<sup>29</sup> Politkovskaya, Anna. *Putin's Russia: Life in a Failing Democracy*. 2004. p 245.

<sup>30</sup> Hearst, David. "Anna Politkovskaya: Crusading Russian Journalist." *The Guardian*. London. October 9, 2006. p 36.

<sup>31</sup> "Russian Denies Poisoned Spy Claims. *BBC News*. November 20, 2006. at [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk\\_news/6165836.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/6165836.stm)

<sup>32</sup> Panja, Traiq. *Associated Press*. November 23, 2006.

terrorists (including six months of training on Russian soil).<sup>33</sup> Litvinenko also claimed that in 1998 Ayman al-Zawahiri received one such six month special training session at one of the educational bases of the FSB in Dagestan. In his book *Aquarium*, Viktor Suvorov also claimed that the GRU was involved in training foreign fighters on Russian soil. The following excerpt is instructive:

It was not easy to train foreign fighters for Spetsnaz. They went fearlessly to their deaths for their glorious ideals, never suspecting they were actually fighting for Spetsnaz. They were amazing people! We trained them, spent millions on their upkeep, and risked the reputation of our state for them, yet they continued to believe they were independent. It was very difficult to deal with such people...They were naïve as children and magnanimous as heroes of a novel...It was said that some of them reckoned you shouldn't kill people during a wedding, others that you shouldn't kill during a funeral. Extraordinary people. That's what cemeteries were for-to have corpses in them! The Spetsnaz Training Centre knocked it out of them...They were taught not to fear heights, the sight of blood, high speeds, and above all, death. These men demonstrate to the world their contempt for death-and for other people's lives-when they make a lightning raid to seize an aircraft or embassy. It is the Spetsnaz Centre that has taught them to kill-skillfully, calmly, and with relish.<sup>34</sup>

Suvorov's account is sobering, and credible. He was a Spetsnaz officer (special forces of the GRU).

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<sup>33</sup> Nyquist, J.R. "Is Al Qaeda a Kremlin Proxy." August 13, 2005 at [http://www.jrnyquist.com/nyquist\\_2005\\_0813.htm](http://www.jrnyquist.com/nyquist_2005_0813.htm)

<sup>34</sup> Suvorov, Viktor. *Aquarium*. 1985. p 53-53.

## Appendix

Alexander Litvinenko is died on November 23, 2006 from the radioactive substance polonium-210 in a London hospital. His death has been officially classified as a murder. Scotland Yard is currently investigating his death. The Russian Prosecutor General's Office has also opened a criminal case over the murder, and Timur Lakhonin, head of the Russian Interpol Central Bureau, acknowledged that Interpol has joined the investigation.<sup>35</sup>The major players, thus far, in the investigation are Dmitri Kovtun, Andrei Lugovoi, Boris Berezovsky, Yuri Shvets, Mario Scaramella, and the FSB.

### **Boris Berezovsky**

Boris Berezovsky was born in Russia in 1946, received a doctorate in applied mathematics in 1983, and later became an extremely wealthy businessman. He made his money during the Yeltsin years by using his political connections to acquire stakes in state companies, paying far below the companies' market values. Berezovsky also acquired several news media holdings, and founded a bank to finance his operations. He used his media holdings to support Yeltsin's 1996 re-election campaign. He invested in liberal media and financed liberal candidates. From 1998-1999 he was secretary-general of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and in 1999 he became a member of the Duma. He was one the "oligarchs" during the Yeltsin years. In 2000 Berezovsky fled Russia fearing arrest. He has been charged with fraud and political corruption, but the Russian government has been unsuccessful in extraditing him. Upon his 2000 presidential election, Putin was not pleased with either Berezovsky's political clout or his views on Chechnya. (Berezovsky is believed to have strong ties to Chechens) In 2003 he was granted political asylum in the United Kingdom. Since 2003, he has been a business partner in Neil Bush's Ignite! Learning educational software corporation.

Berezovsky became acquainted with Litvinenko in 1994 when Litvinenko was working for the FSB and investigating a car bombing that decapitated Berezovsky's driver.<sup>36</sup> On November 17, 1998, during the time that Putin was at the helm of the FSB, five officers of the FSB's Directorate for the Analysis of Criminal Organizations appeared at a press conference. The five officers, Lieutenant-Colonel Alexander Gusyk, *Lieutenant-Colonel Alexander Litvinenko*, Major Andrey Ponkin, Colonel V. V. Shebalin, Lieutenant Constanyin Latyshonok, and German Scheglov accused the director of the Directorate for the Analysis of Criminal Organizations Evgenii Khokholkov and his deputy, Alexander Kamishnikov, of ordering them in November 1997 to assassinate Berezovsky. At that point, Berezovsky was Secretary of the Security Council and close to President Yeltsin. Berezovsky and Litvinenko had remained in touch since their 1994 meeting. Upon Litvinenko's death, Berezovsky issued a statement in which he said, "I am deeply saddened at the loss of my friend Alexander Litvinenko. I credit him with saving my life

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<sup>35</sup> Interpol Joins Investigation of Litvinenko Death. *ITAR-TASS News Agency*. December 12, 2006 at <http://www.itar-tass.com/eng/level2.html?NewsID=11074833&PageNum=1>

<sup>36</sup> Parfitt, Tom. "Don't Rush to Judgement." *The Guardian*. November 27, 2006. at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/russia/article/0,,1957705,00.html>

and he remained a close friend and ally ever since. I will remember him for his bravery, his determination and his honour."<sup>37</sup>

Berezovsky is critical of the current Russian administration. He supported Putin's 2000 presidential campaign, but Putin's decision to cut off Berezovsky's political influence and to support criminal charges against him obviously undermined the previously known quid pro quo Berezovsky enjoyed with Putin's predecessor. Berezovsky currently lives in London under his legally changed name, Platon Elenin. Berezovsky's provocative history prompted American journalist Paul Klebnikov to write a book, entitled *Godfather of the Kremlin* (published in 2000). In it Berezovsky is portrayed as a mafia boss who has his rivals murdered. Klebnikov, the author, was murdered in Moscow on July 9, 2004 while working as the Russian editor of *Forbes*.

Berezovsky and Litvinenko were close friends within the London based Russian émigré community. Berezovsky employed Litvinenko as an advisor, and helped finance his 2003 book, *The FSB Blows up Russia*. Berezovsky accuses Putin of ordering the Litvinenko poisoning. Traces of polonium-210 were found in an office belonging to Berezovsky, which are attributed to a visit Litvinenko made to the office November 1.

## **Yuri Shvets**

Yuri Shvets, born in 1952, was a KGB officer from 1980 until 1990. Currently he advises businesses and individuals on legal and security issues in the Russian Federation. In 1994 he immigrated to America and currently lives in the Washington DC area. Shvets says that Litvinenko was employed by Western companies to provide information on potential Russian clients before they committed to investment deals in the former Soviet Union.<sup>38</sup> He claims that Litvinenko had compiled an incriminating dossier on a powerful Russian figure for a British company. Shvets also claims that he gave Litvinenko information for the dossier back in September.

Shvets believes that Litvinenko showed the dossier to Andrei Lugovoi, also a former Russian spy, to show him the proper way of presenting information on Russian companies and individuals to Western clients. But Shvets believes that Lugovoi works as an FSB informer, and that he passed the documents on to other FSB officials, triggering the assassination. Shvets has been interviewed by the Scotland Yard and FBI.<sup>39</sup> He claims to have spoken to Litvinenko while he was hospitalized, and that Litvinenko believed he was poisoned during his meeting with three Russians (Andrei Lugovoi, Dmitri Kovtun and Vyacheslav Sokolenko) at the Millennium Hotel in London on November 1. Shvets said "He had drunk the tea that was not prepared in his presence. He suffered as he understood he had made a professional mistake."<sup>40</sup> Alpha particles emitted by polonium-210 will damage organic tissue if polonium is ingested, inhaled, or absorbed, as is believed to be the case with Litvinenko. British detectives now have the dossier compiled by Litvinenko.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Vasagar, Jeevan. "Berezovsky tribute to Brave and Honorable Friend Litvinenko. *The Guardian*. November 29, 2006.

<sup>38</sup> "Ex-spy said poisoned over dossier on Russian." *Reuters*. December 16, 2006. at <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/16236884/>

<sup>39</sup> "Who's who in the Spy Poisoning Mystery." *CNN International*. December 11, 2006.

<sup>40</sup> Eurasian Secret Services Daily Review. *Axis Information and Analysis*. December 16, 2006 at <http://www.axisglobe.com/article.asp?article=1167>

<sup>41</sup> "Litvinenko Killed Over Dossier." *BBC News*. December 16, 2006 at [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk\\_news/6184919.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/6184919.stm)

## **Andrei Lugovoi**

Andrei Lugovoi, born 1965, worked for the KGB from 1987 until 1992. Then he was transferred to the Federal Protection Service guarding politicians and state officials until 1996. He is now a wealthy businessman. His company, Pershin, is involved in private security among other things. Upon entering the private sector he became head of security at the private Russian television company ORT. Boris Berezovsky was part owner of ORT during Lugovoi's employment there.

Lugovoi met with Litvinenko on November 1, the day Litvinenko is believed to have been poisoned. Lugovoi claims that Litvinenko was going to put him in touch with prominent British companies. When British detectives arrived in Moscow they were told they were not going to be able to interview Lugovoi, who is both a key witness and possible suspect in the actual poisoning.<sup>42</sup> Lugovoi is seen as a suspect, not only because he was one of the few who had close contact with Litvinenko during the suspected time of poisoning, but also because there is a trail of polonium-210 following Lugovoi's recent travels( in his hotel room, on the airplane, and on his person). December 4 Russian officials stated that he had been hospitalized with signs of radiation poisoning. Lugovoi professes his innocence and stated, "Someone is trying to set me up. But I can't understand who. Or why."<sup>43</sup>

## **Dmitri Kovtun**

Dimitri Kovtun is also a former KGB agent, and an acquaintance of Litvinenko. Currently he works as a Russian businessman in the private security field. He also met with Litvinenko on November 1, and is both a key witness and suspect in the poisoning. Currently he is hospitalized in Moscow for radiation poisoning. Both British and Russian authorities have questioned him.

Kovtun also has a trail of polonium-210 behind him. On December 9 German authorities claimed they had found traces of polonium-210 in the Hamburg apartment at which Kovtun slept. There have also been traces in his Hamburg car, and on the planes between Moscow and London on which he traveled. Kovtun denies German suspicions that he was involved in polonium smuggling. He says that there is only one explanation. "It is that I brought it back from London, where I met Alexander Litvinenko on October 16, 17 and 18."<sup>44</sup> British investigators, though, believe Litvinenko was poisoned on November 1, not prior as Kovtun suggests.

## **Mario Scaramella**

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<sup>42</sup> Sciutto, Jim. Russia bars British From Prime Poison Suspect. *ABC News International*. December 6, 2006 at <http://www.abcnews.go.com/WNT/International/story?id=2703332&page=1>

<sup>43</sup> Cobain, Ian. "Prime Suspect or Key witness?" *The Guardian*. December 8, 2006.

<sup>44</sup> Kovtun, Dmitri quote pulled from "Interpol Joins Litvinenko Inquiry." *BBC News*. December 13, 2006. at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/6172765.stm>

Mario Scaramella, born 1970, is an Italian security consultant. Since 2001, he has been both a friend and professional contact of Litvinenko. He met with Litvinenko on November 1 to show him emails from a source warning that both their lives might be in danger. Scaramella allegedly warned Litvinenko that both their names were on a new hit list that had been put together by Russian secret service agents and a veterans group called Dignity and Honor.

Scaramella was most recently an investigator and advisor to the Mitrokhin Commission. The Mitrokhin Commission was a government inquiry (established 2002) into links between Russian secret services and Italian politicians. It was initiated by Silvio Berlusconi's party, and Romano Prodi was one of the politicians alleged to have RF ties. The Commission was shut down this year due to lack of hard evidence. Scaramella has been accused of agreeing to fabricate evidence to prove Russian influence in Italian politics. This is important because it provides doubt as to Scaramella's character credibility and the credibility of his "sources."

It is alleged that Litvinenko was suspicious of Scaramella. Of their November 1<sup>st</sup> meeting he said, "Mario didn't want anything, he gave me the email printouts ... I said to myself, he could have sent these emails by computer. But instead he wanted to come and give them to me in person: why, and why in such a hurry? He was very nervous."<sup>45</sup> Thus far British investigators do not see Scaramella as a suspect, and he has been voluntarily cooperating with the investigation.

## **In Conclusion**

There have been widespread allegations and speculation as to who carried out the actual poisoning, and where the orders came from. Litvinenko accused Putin on his deathbed. Obviously the Kremlin denies any involvement. Berezovsky says it was the Kremlin. The Kremlin said it was Berezovsky. Just as Britain has chosen not to extradite to Russia wanted characters such as Berezovsky, nor will Russia extradite persons to Britain if the British investigators find the perpetrator on Russian soil. Fortunately though, the Brits are unable to just let this go. Litvinenko was not only a Russian dissident, but he was a full fledged British citizen. This means that if Litvinenko's murder is found to have been a state sponsored house cleaning on British soil, there are bound to be serious diplomatic consequences. As of yet, though, Scotland Yard has refrained from making a public announcement as to how successful their investigation is proving to be. Unfortunately the world may never know the complete truth, but certain facts may be gleaned intuitively.

Intelligence agents take an oath, no matter what country they are from. An oath in the intelligence community consists of a formally declared allegiance and loyalty to one's state. This allows agents access to classified information; information that is extremely valuable on the international market, not only for military, political and economic reasons, but for moral ones as well. The agent is never released from this oath, even when their service is complete. When this oath is broken, and a "rogue" agent (or agents) writes a tell-all or engages foreign media, the honor, and thus legitimacy, of the intelligence agency is at stake. There are no positive

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<sup>45</sup> Litvinenko quote pulled from "Litvinenko Murder: Scaramella-The Italian Connection." *The Independent*. December 3, 2006 at <http://news.independent.co.uk/uk/crime/article2035184.ece>

connotations associated with the word *turncoat*. The FSB is charged with the security of the Russian state. Litvinenko's actions, post-FSB employment, have largely consisted of denouncing the Russian state, the tactics used by the Russian intelligence community, and he attacked the honor and integrity of his former employer. For one of their own to turn on them is far worse than accusations from an outsider, because 1) the defector had access to legitimate intelligence sources and is therefore able to provide foreign entities with interesting information they would otherwise be unable to attain, 2) it may provide a kernel of doubt in operative agents as to the legitimacy and morality of their tasks and 3) it may encourage them to defect upon completion of their employment with the hopes of receiving monetary award for their knowledge of Russian state secrets. So, even without encouragement from President Putin, the FSB had motive to poison Litvinenko-not only to silence him, but to use him as an example to other agents entertaining defection ideas and to prove their "honor." Executing such an operation on foreign soil establishes credence that the agency does indeed have a long arm, and is willing to use it. After all, their job is to protect the state and last year's new law allows them to engage the enemy on foreign soil. And, if Putin had no personal knowledge of the activities, it is even more worrisome to imagine that the Putin administration does not have full control or awareness of the actions of the security agencies of the RF. Litvinenko's unsolved murder, Anna Politkovskaya's unsolved murder, as well as the not insignificant number of other unsolved murders of notable people (as well as the murders of lesser known, and hence unpublicized, people) since Putin's ascendancy to power legitimate the argument that Russia is not a free democracy with an independent judiciary, but it is in actual practice a police state with selective prosecution.