



## II. CURRENT ISSUES

### “Wet Affairs”

#### Part II<sup>1</sup>

by Peter C. Oleson

#### Introduction

Vladimir Putin's regime is at war with the West.<sup>2</sup> Irredentist desires to reclaim the Soviet empire, perceived threatening encroachment by Western-oriented regimes onto Russia's borders, Western sanctions for Russia's “hybrid warfare”<sup>3</sup> tactics and the consequent Russian economic hardships have solidified Putin's enmity toward the West, and the US in particular. Some seasoned Russia observers believe Putin's hold on power is more tenuous than generally believed. This helps explain why Putin has returned to Stalinist means of handling dissent.

In my Fall 2016 *Intelligencer* article, “Stalin's Disciple: Vladimir Putin and Russia's Newest ‘Wet Affairs,’” I detailed more than 40 prominent cases of Putin-ordered or inspired murders, suicides, jailing, or other punishments of his opponents or critics. Since that article was written there have been many more cases. This article follows up on its predecessor and, therefore, is Part II.

In her recent book, *Orders to Kill: The Putin Regime and Political Murders*, leading KGB scholar Dr. Amy Knight explains the murderous politics in Russia and details many of the more significant cases of politically motivated assassinations.<sup>4</sup> Knight points out that after

9/11 the Kremlin increasingly labeled political opposition as “terrorism.” A 2006 Russian law authorized the extraterritorial killing of “terrorists.” Evidence is accumulating that Russian agents or contract killers have been actively carrying out politically motivated murders of opponents of the Putin regime not only inside Russia but increasingly beyond its borders.

In June 2017, *BuzzFeed News*, an Internet media company, published a four-part series on Russian assassinations in the United Kingdom. According to *BuzzFeed News*'s investigative journalists, Russian agents have killed at least 14 people in the UK since 2003.<sup>5</sup>

Ukraine also has become a hot spot for Russian-backed killings. Since the Russian annexation of Crimea in 2014 and sub rosa invasion of eastern Ukraine, many opponents of that Kremlin policy have met with violent deaths. Interestingly, pro-Russian leaders in the rebel-controlled areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts have also been killed. Some have speculated that these killings were Russian-inspired to eliminate uncooperative rebels not sufficiently obedient to Moscow.

Russia has had a long history of politically linked murders, going back centuries to the Kievan Rus era in the ninth century.<sup>6</sup> Putin's regime targets have included the political opposition, anti-corruption activists, foreign businessmen, many journalists, and those who embarrass the regime, such as the anti-doping whistleblowers following the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics. Even parliamentarians have not been immune. Several Russian diplomats and military

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the reviews of her book in *The Intelligencer*, Vol. 23, No. 2, Fall 2017, 104-105 and 108-110. Her biography is at <http://amyknight.org/about-amy-knight/>.

5. The original *BuzzFeed News* article, “Part 1. Poison in the System,” is at [https://www.buzzfeed.com/heidiblake/poison-in-the-system?wpi-rc=nL\\_daily202@wpmm=1&utm\\_term=.fn5xXNLOI#.eyw3AzQwK](https://www.buzzfeed.com/heidiblake/poison-in-the-system?wpi-rc=nL_daily202@wpmm=1&utm_term=.fn5xXNLOI#.eyw3AzQwK). Part II, “From Russia with Blood,” is at [https://www.buzzfeed.com/heidiblake/from-russia-with-blood-14-suspected-hits-on-british-soil?utm\\_term=.ld7X1gLVz#.dmWPmIOGj](https://www.buzzfeed.com/heidiblake/from-russia-with-blood-14-suspected-hits-on-british-soil?utm_term=.ld7X1gLVz#.dmWPmIOGj). Part 2, “From Russia with Blood,” is at [https://www.buzzfeed.com/heidiblake/from-russia-with-blood-14-suspected-hits-on-british-soil?utm\\_term=.ld7X1gLVz#.dmWPmIOGj](https://www.buzzfeed.com/heidiblake/from-russia-with-blood-14-suspected-hits-on-british-soil?utm_term=.ld7X1gLVz#.dmWPmIOGj). Part 3, “The Man Who Knew Too Much,” is at [https://www.buzzfeed.com/janebradley/scientist-who-helped-connect-litvinenko-murder-to-the?utm\\_term=.qrL84nNm7#.uy2eKMLE5](https://www.buzzfeed.com/janebradley/scientist-who-helped-connect-litvinenko-murder-to-the?utm_term=.qrL84nNm7#.uy2eKMLE5), and Part 4, “The Secrets of the Spy in the Bag,” is at [https://www.buzzfeed.com/tomwarren/secrets-of-the-spy-in-the-bag?utm\\_term=.ygM4ARNn2#.wxKY36240](https://www.buzzfeed.com/tomwarren/secrets-of-the-spy-in-the-bag?utm_term=.ygM4ARNn2#.wxKY36240). The credited *BuzzFeed* reporters are Heidi Blake (*BuzzFeed News* Investigations Editor, UK), Jason Leopold (*BuzzFeed News* Reporter), Jane Bradley (Investigations Correspondent), Richard Holmes (Investigations Reporter), Tom Warren (Investigations Correspondent), and Alex Campbell (*BuzzFeed News* Deputy Investigations Editor, UK).

6. See Hélène Carrère d'Encausse, *The Russian Syndrome: One Thousand Years of Political Murders*, translated by Caroline Higgitt, New York: Holmes & Meier, 1992, 393, and cited by Knight.

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1. “Wet affairs” are killings. Part I is my article “Stalin's Disciple: Vladimir Putin and Russia's Newest ‘Wet Affairs,’” in *Intelligencer*, Vol. 22, No. 2, Fall 2016. Available at [http://www.afio.com/publications/OLESON\\_on\\_Putin\\_from\\_AFIOINTEL\\_FALL2016\\_Vol22\\_no2.pdf](http://www.afio.com/publications/OLESON_on_Putin_from_AFIOINTEL_FALL2016_Vol22_no2.pdf).

2. See the opinion piece by Max Boot, “Russia's been waging war on the West for years. We just haven't noticed,” *Washington Post*, Mar. 15, 2018.

3. Russian “hybrid warfare,” often referred to as the Gerasimov Doctrine, is well explained in “The ‘Gerasimov Doctrine’ and Russian Non-Linear War — In Moscow's Shadows,” (<https://inmoscowsshadows.wordpress.com/2014/07/06/the-gerasimov-doctrine-and-russian-non-linear-war/>.) See also Molly McKew, “The Gerasimov Doctrine,” *Politico*, September/October 2017 (<http://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2017/09/05/gerasimov-doctrine-russia-foreign-policy-215538>).

4. Amy Knight, *Orders to Kill*, St. Martin's Press, September 2017. See

figures also have died under questionable circumstances. See Table 1 below.<sup>7</sup>

TABLE 1: SIGNIFICANT MURDERS OR ATTACKS RELATED TO PUTIN'S REGIME		
NAME	POSITION	SOURCE
<p><b>Stephen Moss</b> Supposed "heart attack." UK Late 2003</p>	<p>British lawyer, 46, linked to funneling Russian money into the UK. Associate of Stephen Curtis and Scot Young. First of 9 in the UK associated with Boris Berezovsky and Scott Young to die mysteriously.</p>	<p>BuzzFeed News, Part 2. "From Russia with Blood."</p>
<p><b>Stephen Curtis</b> Private helicopter accident. Crash deemed "suspicious." Bournemouth, UK 3 Mar 2004</p>	<p>British tax lawyer linked to funneling money out of Russia. Worked for imprisoned Yukos Oil oligarch, Mikhail Khodorkovsky. Associate of Stephen Moss, Yuri Golubev, Paul Castle and Robbie Curtis. One of 9 in UK associated with Scot Young to die mysteriously.</p>	<p>BuzzFeed News, Part 2. "From Russia with Blood." Nicola Harley and Victoria Ward, "Man who introduced Scot Young and 'Ring of Death' to Russians killed in helicopter crash," <i>The Telegraph</i>, 12 Dec 2014.</p>
<p><b>Igor Ponomarev</b> Supposed "heart attack." Probably poisoned. Body whisked back to Russia; no postmortem done in the UK. London, UK 30 Oct 2006</p>	<p>Russian permanent representative to the International Maritime Organization (IMO) in London. Age 41. Scheduled to meet with Italian parliamentary investigator of KGB links to Italian politicians.</p>	<p>BuzzFeed News, Part 3. "The Man Who Knew Too Much." Wikipedia, The Mitrokin Commission, <a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mitrokhin_Commission">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mitrokhin_Commission</a>.</p>
<p><b>Alexander Litvinenko</b> Given radioactive polonium 210, produced at Russia's Mayak facility, by two Russian KGB visitors, Andrei Lugovoy and Dmitri Kovtun, on 1 Nov 2006 in his tea at the Millennium Hotel. London, UK Died 23 Nov 2006</p>	<p>KGB defector to the UK in 2000. Worked for oligarch Boris Berezovsky. Supported Italian Mitrokin Commission investigation of Russian organized crime and KGB activities. In an article had accused Putin of being a pedophile. One of 9 in the UK associated with Boris Berezovsky to die unnaturally.<sup>8</sup></p>	<p>Amy Knight, <i>Orders to Kill</i>. BuzzFeed News, Part 2. "From Russia with Blood."</p>
<p><b>Igor Gaidar</b> Possibly poisoned, but lived. Ireland 24 Nov 2006</p>	<p>Free market economic reformer and former Russian prime minister under Boris Yeltsin. Publicly criticized the murder of Galina Starovoitova, a Duma member and leader of the Democratic Russia party, in St. Petersburg on 20 Nov 1998.</p>	<p>Amy Knight, <i>Orders to Kill</i>, 57. Obituaries: Yegor Gaidar, <i>The Telegraph</i>, 16 Dec 2009</p>
<p><b>Yuri Golubev</b> Supposed "heart attack" shortly after flying in from Moscow. London, UK 7 Jan 2007</p>	<p>Former Soviet trade official. Helped build up Yukos Oil with oligarch Mikhail Khodorkovsky and fought Kremlin efforts to seize the company. Worked with Stephen Curtis.</p>	<p>BuzzFeed News, Part 2. "From Russia with Blood." Obituaries: Yuri Golubev, <i>Independent</i>, 12 Jan 2007</p>
<p><b>Daniel McGrory</b> Found dead at home, age 54, of apparent "heart attack." Prince Georges County, MD, US 20 Feb 2007</p>	<p>Senior correspondent for the <i>Times of London</i>. His death occurred five days before a scheduled <i>Dateline</i> NBC broadcast in which he was involved linking the Kremlin to Alexander Litvinenko's assassination in London.</p>	<p>Eric Rich. "Analyst Robbed During Shooting," <i>Washington Post</i>, 5 Mar 2007. BuzzFeed News, Part 3. "The Man Who Knew Too Much."</p>
<p><b>Paul Joyal</b> Shot, critically wounded but survived. Adelphi, MD, US 1 Mar 2007</p>	<p>Security consultant, commentator on Russian affairs, former staffer for Senate Select Committee on Intelligence. Shooting took place four days after <i>Dateline</i> NBC broadcast in which Joyal said "A message has been communicated to anyone who wants to speak out against the Kremlin – if you do, no matter who you are, where you are, we will find you and we will silence you – in the most horrible way possible."</p>	<p>Eric Rich. "Analyst Robbed During Shooting," <i>Washington Post</i>, 5 Mar 2007. Paul Joyal biography, <a href="http://nsi.publish-path.com/paul-joyal">http://nsi.publish-path.com/paul-joyal</a>. Retrieved 9 Sep 2016</p>

7. This list largely supplements the list in my earlier article "Stalin's Disciple: Vladimir Putin and Russia's Newest 'Wet Affairs.'"

8. See also my article "Stalin's Disciple: Vladimir Putin and Russia's Newest 'Wet Affairs,'" in *Intelligencer*, Vol. 22, No. 2, Fall 2016, p 23.

TABLE 1: SIGNIFICANT MURDERS OR ATTACKS RELATED TO PUTIN'S REGIME		
NAME	POSITION	SOURCE
<p><b>Badri Patarkatsishvili</b> Supposed "heart attack," but probably poisoned at lunch in London. Surrey, UK 12 Feb 2008</p>	<p>Georgian oligarch and best friend and business associate of Boris Berezovsky. Age 52. Accused of financial crimes in Russia. Exile in London. Embarrassed Putin in interview about the Kursk submarine disaster.<sup>9</sup></p>	<p>Amy Knight, <i>Orders to Kill</i>. <i>BuzzFeed News</i>, Part 2. "From Russia with Blood."</p>
<p><b>Bob Dudley</b> Slowly poisoned to make him ill. Moscow, Russia Summer of 2008</p>	<p>BP executive running joint venture TNK-BP diagnosed as having been poisoned slowly. Alleged purpose was to force him out along with other western managers. Dudley fled Russia in August 2008. TNK-BP later sold to Rosneft, run by Putin friend and oligarch Igor Sechin.</p>	<p>Robert Mendick and Adrian Gatton, "BP chief executive Bob Dudley 'poisoned in Russian plot,'" <i>The Sydney Morning Herald</i>, 30 Apr 2018.</p>
<p><b>Gareth Williams</b> Found in locked gym bag. Unknown cause of death due to decomposed body. Death viewed as "highly suspicious." London, UK 16 Aug 2010</p>	<p>GCHQ officer, age 31, assigned to MI6.<sup>10</sup> Investigating Russian international money laundering. Reportedly cooperating with the US National Security Agency. Reportedly involved in kinky sexual relationships.<sup>11</sup></p>	<p><i>BuzzFeed News</i>, Part 4. "The Secrets of the Spy in the Bag."</p>
<p><b>Oleg Kashin</b> Beaten, skull fractures, left crippled. Moscow 6 Nov 2010</p>	<p>Journalist beaten after "insulting" Pskov region governor, a Putin ally, who was named but never brought to justice.</p>	<p>Andrew Roth, "Journalist Oleg Kashin knows who tried to kill him," <i>Washington Post</i>, 18 Sep 2015</p>
<p><b>Paul Castle</b> Suicide by subway. London, UK 17 Nov 2010</p>	<p>Property dealer associated with Scot Young. Jumped in front of a subway train after being threatened by Russian-linked crime gang members. One of the 9 in the UK associated with Boris Berezovsky to die mysteriously.</p>	<p><i>BuzzFeed News</i>, Part 2. "From Russia with Blood." Martin Evans and Nicola Harley, "Ring of Death – the Scot Young associates who have all died in the past few years," <i>The Telegraph</i>, 12 Dec 2014.</p>
<p><b>Robbie Curtis</b> Suicide by subway. West London, UK Late Nov 2012</p>	<p>London property agent, age 47. Associated with Russian laundered money purchases. One of the 9 in the UK associated with Boris Berezovsky to die mysteriously.</p>	<p><i>BuzzFeed News</i>, Part 2. "From Russia with Blood." John Dunne and Tom Harper, "Property tycoon dies in fall under Tube in haunting echo of royal polo friend's suicide," <i>Evening Standard</i>, 20 Dec 2012.</p>
<p><b>Alexander Perepilichnyy</b> Initial cause of death reported as "heart attack." Later toxicology tests revealed poisoning by gelsemium, a rare Himalayan toxic plant that can induce a heart attack. Surrey, UK 10 Nov 2012</p>	<p>44-year old financier, who after the beating and murder in prison of lawyer Sergei Magnitsky exposed the \$230 million fraud involving Hermitage Capital Investors and widespread corruption by Russian government officials. Fled to the UK in 2010. Died hours after returning from an assignation in Paris with a young Ukrainian woman.</p>	<p><i>BuzzFeed News</i>, Part 1. "Poison in the System."</p>

9. The Russian nuclear submarine, *Kursk*, sank in the Barents Sea on 12 August 2000 with the loss of all of its crew. Poor maintenance and inadequate training were cited in the postmortem evaluation. The public reaction of the Russian government resulted in a domestic public relations disaster. (Amy Knight, *Orders to Kill*, 224).

10. GCHQ (Government Communications Headquarters) is the British signals intelligence organization. MI6 is the designation for the British Secret Intelligence Service. GCHQ and the US National Security Agency are two parts of the "five eyes" international signals intelligence alliance, also comprising Canada, Australia, and New Zealand.

11. According to *The Telegraph*, "the US State Department asked MI6 to ensure that no details of Mr. Williams's work should emerge at the inquest of his death." (<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/crime/9218325/Secret-meeting-between-MI6-and-police-hours-after-discovery-of-spy-Gareth-Williams-death.html>.) There are a number of theories about Williams' death. One reported by *The Independent* is that he refused to become a double agent for the SVR when it attempted to

blackmail him and the SVR killed him to protect the identity of one of its penetration agents. (<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/mi6-spy-gareth-williams-was-killed-by-russia-for-refusing-to-become-double-agent-former-kgb-man-a6670196.html>). KGB defector Boris Karpichkov also told a UK tabloid that Williams was killed to protect a SVR mole within MI6 codenamed ORION about whom Williams had become suspicious. An attempt to recruit Williams failed, so he was killed. Karpichkov defected to the UK in 1998 with two suitcases of documents. He claimed there have been three attempts on his life using poison since 2006. (<https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/former-spy-codenamed-gordon-identified-12404228>; <https://intelnews.org/2018/04/16/01-2307>).

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NAME	POSITION	SOURCE
<p><b>Boris Berezovsky</b>                      Supposed suicide by hanging in his bathroom. Forensic evidence suggests murder.                      Berkshire, UK                      23 Mar 2013</p>	<p>Russian oligarch and media owner, tied to Russian mafia. Viewed himself as “king maker” of Vladimir Putin. Later fell out with Putin and fled to UK in 2000 when accused of financial crimes. Was “linchpin” of Russian exiles in the UK. Used his billions to oppose Putin. Helped fund 2014 “Orange Revolution” in Ukraine, which ousted Putin ally, Viktor Yanoukovych.</p>	<p>BuzzFeed News, Part 2. “From Russia with Blood.”                      Amy Knight, <i>Orders to Kill</i>.</p>
<p><b>Reshat Ametov</b>                      Abducted on 3 Mar and tortured. Body was found in a forest.                      Simferopol, Crimea                      15 Mar 2014</p>	<p>Crimean activist who protested February 2014 seizure of Crimea by Russia.</p>	<p>Sarah Hurst, Oren Dorell &amp; George Petras, “Suspicious Russian Deaths: Sacrificial Pawns or Coincidence?” <i>USA Today</i>, 2 May 2017.</p>
<p><b>Alexander Pochinok</b>                      Reported stroke two days before Moscow ceremony to annex Crimea.                      Moscow                      16 Mar 2014</p>	<p>Former Russian government minister opposed to annexation of the Crimea from Ukraine. Criticized government on Russian TV.</p>	<p>Ibid.</p>
<p><b>Volodymyr Rybak</b>                      Body found with another, both with signs of torture.                      Donetsk, Ukraine                      17 Apr 2014</p>	<p>City council member in eastern Ukraine who protested pro-Russian militia takeover.</p>	<p>Ibid.</p>
<p><b>Valeriya Novodnorskaya</b>                      Toxic shock syndrome. (Possibly natural causes.)                      Moscow                      12 Jul 2014</p>	<p>Soviet era dissident and liberal politician opposed to invasion of Ukraine. Called the “grandmother of the Russian democracy.”</p>	<p>Ibid.  <a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Valeriya_Novodnorskaya">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Valeriya_Novodnorskaya</a>.</p>
<p><b>Johnny Elichaoff</b>                      Suicide by jumping off roof.                      London, UK                      12 Nov 2014</p>	<p>British finance expert and entrepreneur, age 55. One of 9 in the UK associated with Scot Young to die mysteriously.</p>	<p>BuzzFeed News, Part 2. “From Russia with Blood.”                      ---, <i>Express</i>: “Trinity Woodall ‘grief-stricken’ after unexpected death of ex-husband Johnny Elichaoff.”</p>
<p><b>Scot Young</b>                      Defenestration from fourth floor apartment window and impaled on fence spikes.                      London, UK                      8 Dec 2014</p>	<p>Close associate of Boris Berezovsky who helped funnel money out of Russia. Berezovsky’s “fixer.” Caught up in “Project Moscow” scandal.                      One of 9 in the UK associated with Boris Berezovsky to die mysteriously.</p>	<p>BuzzFeed News, Part 2. “From Russia with Blood.”</p>
<p><b>Boris Nemtsov</b>                      Shot four times on a bridge next to the Kremlin.                      Moscow                      27 Feb 2015</p>	<p>Former deputy prime minister. Wrote scathing reports of Putin’s transgressions, human rights violations and rampant corruption.</p>	<p>Amy Knight, <i>Orders to Kill</i>.                      USA Today, “Suspicious Russian Deaths.”</p>
<p><b>Vladimir Kara-Murza</b>                      (1 of 2)                      Poisoned at lunch. Recovered after being in a coma for a week.                      Moscow                      20 May 2015</p>	<p>Head of NGO founded by ousted oligarch Mikhail Khodorkovsky. Advocate for free elections in Russia and US Congress’ passage of the Magnitsky Act<sup>12</sup> in 2012.</p>	<p><a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vladimir_Vladimirovich_Kara-Murza#May-June_2015">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vladimir_Vladimirovich_Kara-Murza#May-June_2015</a>.</p>

12. “The Magnitsky Act, formally known as the Russia and Moldova Jackson–Vanik Repeal and Sergei Magnitsky Rule of Law Accountability Act of 2012, is a [2012 US law]... intending to punish Russian officials responsible for the death of Russian tax accountant Sergei Magnitsky in a Moscow prison in 2009” (Wikipedia, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Magnitsky\\_Act](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Magnitsky_Act)).

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<p><b>Mikhail Lesin</b> Died of blunt force trauma to the head, neck and upper torso. Despite findings of the Washington Metropolitan Police, Lesin was likely beaten by thugs hired by an unnamed Russian oligarch, according to a secret report provided by former British intelligence officer Christopher Steele. Washington, DC 5 Nov 2015</p>	<p>Putin's former press minister. Later head of <i>Gazprom-Media</i>. Moved to Switzerland and the US after falling out with Yuri Kovalchuk, Putin's personal money manager and close friend. "He was one of the legendary Kremlin officials who helped Russian President Vladimir Putin consolidate power... charged with handling the state's takeover of Russia's media assets. He set up much of the Kremlin's modern propaganda machine, including the <i>Russia Today</i> channel." Under suspicion for his large real estate assets, he was scheduled to talk with the US Department of Justice to avoid corruption charges. Had "insight on Putin's personal banker [that] would be of great interest to the United States and a serious threat to the Kremlin."</p>	<p>"A Mysterious Death in Washington," <i>Analysis, Stratfor</i>, 11 Mar 2016. Steven Lee Myers, "Mikhail Lesin's Strange Death in US Follows a Fall From Russia's Elite," <i>New York Times</i>, 2 Apr 2016. Joe Fitsanakis, "Mystery death of Putin's ex-adviser in DC was accident, say US authorities," <i>IntelNews.org</i>, 31 Oct 2016. BuzzFeedNews FOIA request (<a href="https://www.buzzfeed.com/jasonleopold/christopher-steele-mikhail-lesin-murder-putin-fbi?utm_term=plxpM3kjg#.kmzOPK7YR">https://www.buzzfeed.com/jasonleopold/christopher-steele-mikhail-lesin-murder-putin-fbi?utm_term=plxpM3kjg#.kmzOPK7YR</a>)</p>
<p><b>Alesya Malakyan</b> Unknown cause. Moscow 25 Jan 2016</p>	<p>Daughter of opposition activist Irina Kalmykova, who had fled Russia to avoid trial for protesting against the government.</p>	<p>USA Today, "Suspicious Russian Deaths."</p>
<p><b>Vyacheslav Sinev</b> Unknown cause. Location unknown 3 Feb 2016</p>	<p>Chairman of Russian Anti-Doping Agency that was found complicit in widespread doping of Russian athletes in the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics.<sup>13</sup></p>	<p>Ibid.</p>
<p><b>Nikita Kamaev</b> "Heart attack" after cross-country skiing. Outside Moscow 14 Feb 2016</p>	<p>Resigned as executive director of Russian Anti-Doping Agency two months prior to his death at age 52.</p>	<p>Ibid.</p>
<p><b>Denis Voronenkov</b> Shot dead on street in central Kiev. Kiev, Ukraine 23 Mar 2016</p>	<p>Former Russian Communist Party lawmaker. Putin critic and opposed to invasion of Ukraine. Fled to Ukraine in 2016.</p>	<p>Scott Stewart, "The Dirty Work of Russian Assassins," <i>Stratfor Worldview</i>, 14 Sep 2017. ---, <i>Stratfor Snapshot</i>, "Ukraine: Assassination will worsen already strained relationship with Russia," 23 Mar 2017.</p>
<p><b>Dr Matthew Punter</b> Supposedly fatally stabbed himself multiple times using two kitchen knives. Oxfordshire, UK 4 May 2016</p>	<p>UK Health Protection Agency scientist who identified radioactive Polonium 210 as the poison used to kill Alexander Litvinenko in 2006. Demonstrated severe personality disorder after returning from US Department of Energy-sponsored work at Russia's Mayak nuclear facility to measure the levels of polonium inside Mayak workers.</p>	<p>BuzzFeed News, Part 3. "The Man Who Knew Too Much." Imogen Robinson, "Top scientist who discovered Litvinenko poison 'stabbed himself to death with two knives' after trip to Russia," <i>Mirror</i>, 24 Nov 2016. Joseph Curtis, "Radiation expert, 46, who investigated the 'assassination' of KGB spy Alexander Litvinenko 'killed himself by stabbing his arms and chest repeatedly five months after a trip to Russia,'" <i>DailyMail</i>, 24 Nov 2016.</p>
<p><b>Pavel Sheremet</b> Sticky bomb placed on his car. Kiev, Ukraine 20 Jul 2016</p>	<p>Outspoken Belorussian journalist and critic of Russia, Belarus, and Ukrainian elements.</p>	<p>Stewart, <i>Stratfor Worldview</i>. "Identifying a mundane but deadly threat," <i>Stratfor Assessments</i>, 15 Aug 2016.</p>
<p><b>Alexander Schetinin</b> Shot in the head on his balcony at home. Kiev, Ukraine 27 Aug 2016</p>	<p>Russian journalist, founder of the <i>Novy Region</i> website, who called Putin a "personal enemy" and fascist dictator.</p>	<p>Stewart, <i>Stratfor Worldview</i>. ---, "Journalist found dead in Kiev," <i>The Telegraph</i>, 29 Aug 2016.</p>

13. Others associated with whistleblowing about the widespread doping at the Sochi Olympics have fled Russia, including athlete Yulia Stepanova, whose World Anti-Doping Agency file was cyber-hacked, and Dr. Grigori Rodchenkov, the former director of the Russian anti-doping laboratory, who has been threatened with death for his revelations. (Rebecca Ruiz and Michael Schwartz, "Russian Insider Says State-Run Doping Fueled Olympic Gold," *New York Times*, May 12, 2016.

[https://www.nytimes.com/2016/05/13/sports/russia-doping-sochi-olympics-2014.html?\\_r=0](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/05/13/sports/russia-doping-sochi-olympics-2014.html?_r=0)

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NAME	POSITION	SOURCE
<p><b>Adam Osmayev</b> Shot in leg and survived; wife shot in head. Previously shot twice in chest and survived. In previous attempt on 1 Jun. Chechen assassin was wounded by Osmayev's wife. Kiev, Ukraine 31 Oct 2016</p>	<p>Critic of the government of Chechen president Ramzan Kadyrov, a close Putin ally and reported "enforcer."</p>	<p>BBC News, 31 Oct 2016. Stewart, <i>Stratfor Worldview</i>.</p>
<p><b>Sergei Krivov</b> Dead of head injuries. Russia claims "heart attack." New York City 8 Nov 2016</p>	<p>Diplomat in Russian consulate in New York City. Believed to be a security/counterintelligence official.</p>	<p>USA Today, "Suspicious Russian Deaths." Ali Watkins, "The Strange Case Of The Russian Diplomat Who Got His Head Smashed In On Election Day," <i>BuzzFeed News</i>, 15 Feb 2017.</p>
<p><b>Vladimir Shreydler</b> Reported "heart attack" at age 48. Moscow 8 Nov 2016</p>	<p>Pro-Ukrainian activist on Russian talk shows.</p>	<p>USA Today, "Suspicious Russian Deaths."</p>
<p><b>Oleg Erovinin</b> Found dead in back of his car. Body sent to FSB morgue. No cause of death reported initially. Later officials claimed he died of a "heart attack." Moscow 26 Dec 2016</p>	<p>Former general in the FSB and chief of staff to Russian oligarch Igor Sechin, a close Putin ally. As the go-between between the oligarch and Putin, Erovinin had been rumored to be a source of information in the "Trump Dossier," compiled by former British intelligence officer Christopher Steele.<sup>14</sup></p>	<p>Ibid. Robert Mendick &amp; Robert Verkaik, "Mystery death of ex-KGB chief linked to M16 spy's dossier on Donald Trump," <i>The Telegraph</i>, 27 Jan 2017. ---, "Top Rosneft Exec Found Dead in Moscow," <i>The Moscow Times</i>, 26 Dec 2016.</p>
<p><b>Vladimir Kara-Murza</b> (2 of 2) Second poisoning. Russian authorities refused to investigate either of his poisonings. Moscow 2 Feb 2017</p>	<p>35-year-old democracy campaigner and close associate of assassinated Boris Nemtsov. Promoted film about Nemtsov throughout Russia.</p>	<p>Amy Knight, <i>Orders to Kill</i>. Also <a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vladimir_Vladimirovich_Kara-Murza#May-June_2015">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vladimir_Vladimirovich_Kara-Murza#May-June_2015</a>.</p>
<p><b>Viktor Parshutkin</b> Died suddenly of unknown cause. Moscow 27 Feb 2017</p>	<p>Russian lawyer who forced Russia to withdraw false charges against a Ukrainian political prisoner, Serhiy Lytvynov, who was abducted and tortured after Russia invaded eastern Ukraine.</p>	<p>USA Today, "Suspicious Russian Deaths." Halya Coynash, "A loss for Ukraine and one tortured Ukrainian political prisoner," <i>Human Rights in Ukraine</i>, 1 Mar 2017.</p>
<p><b>Alex Oronov</b> Cause of death is unknown. New York City 2 Mar 2017</p>	<p>Ukrainian émigré and US citizen who organized a meeting with Trump's lawyer, Michael Cohen, concerning a peace plan that would give Putin control of Ukraine.</p>	<p>USA Today, "Suspicious Russian Deaths" Rachel Roberts, "Ukrainian businessman with links to Donald Trump and Russia dies in unexplained circumstances," <i>Independent</i>, 6 Mar 2017.</p>
<p><b>Yevgeny Khamaganov</b> Reports differ: either died of a beating or complications from diabetes. Ulan-Ude, Siberia, Russia 16 Mar 2017</p>	<p>35-year-old Russian journalist known for articles critical of the Russian government.</p>	<p>USA Today, "Suspicious Russian Deaths" ---, "Russian Journalist Dies In Unexplained Circumstances," <i>Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty</i>, 17 Mar 2017.</p>
<p><b>Vladimir Evdokimov</b> Stabbed to death in a Moscow prison while awaiting trial on embezzlement charges. Moscow 18 Mar 2017</p>	<p>Former executive director of Roskosmos space agency. Accused of being involved in fraud scheme.</p>	<p>USA Today, "Suspicious Russian Deaths" Matthew Bodner, "Death of a Rocketman," <i>The Moscow Times</i>, 20 Mar 2017.</p>

14. Christopher Steele is a former British M16 officer. He ran the Russia desk for M16 from 2006 to 2009 and was active in Moscow from 1990 to 1993. He was in charge of M16's investigation into the 2006 poisoning of Alexander Litvinenko with polonium 210. After leaving M16 Steele revealed to the FBI bribery of FIFA officials by Igor Sechin to obtain for Russia hosting of the 2018 World Cup. Steele is most famous for compiling 17 memos from his sources about Donald Trump,

known as the "Trump Dossier," published by *BuzzFeed* in 2016. (Jane Mayer, "Christopher Steele, the Man Behind the Trump Dossier," *The New Yorker*, Mar. 12, 2018) Steele went into hiding for a period after the "Trump Dossier" leak to the press, apparently concerned about potential Russian retribution and press hounding.

TABLE 1: SIGNIFICANT MURDERS OR ATTACKS RELATED TO PUTIN'S REGIME		
NAME	POSITION	SOURCE
<p><b>Nikolai Volkov</b> Shot near his home after reporting \$170 million embezzlement. Moscow 18 Mar 2017</p>	Head of construction department of Russian Interior Ministry.	USA Today, "Suspicious Russian Deaths."
<p><b>Denis Voronenkov</b> Shot in front of a hotel. Kiev, Ukraine 23 Mar 2017</p>	Former member of the Russian Duma. Fled to Ukraine in 2016 after criticizing Putin and Kremlin policies. Voronenkov had given testimony that implicated former Ukrainian president Yanukovich, a Putin ally, in providing cover for the Russian military intervention in Ukraine.	USA Today, "Suspicious Russian Deaths" Shaun Walker, "Denis Voronenkov: ex-Russian MP who fled to Ukraine killed in Kiev," <i>The Guardian</i> , 23 Mar 2017.
<p><b>Vadim Tyulpanov</b> Reportedly "slipped in the bathhouse and hit his head" in a fitness center. St. Petersburg, Russia 4 Apr 2017</p>	Russian senator overseeing 2018 FIFA World Cup preparations. <sup>15</sup>	USA Today, "Suspicious Russian Deaths."
<p><b>Nikolai Andrushchenko</b> Attacked leaving newspaper office. St. Petersburg, Russia 19 Apr 2017</p>	Editor of opposition newspaper <i>Novy Peterburg</i> that published articles attacking corruption in the city.	Ibid. John Sharman, "Russian journalist and Putin critic dies after being beaten up by strangers," <i>Independent</i> , 19 Apr 2017.
<p><b>Alexei Navalny</b> "Brilliant Green," a Soviet era antiseptic chemical, thrown in Navalny's face partially blinding him. Moscow 27 Apr 2017</p>	Anti-corruption lawyer and Russian opposition leader. Has posted exposés on YouTube of Russian leaders' corruption. Was barred from running against Putin in the March 2018 elections.	Andrew Kramer, "Kremlin Critic Aleksei Navalny Says Attack Left Him Mostly Blind in an Eye," <i>New York Times</i> , 2 May 2017. Julia Ioffe, "What Putin Really Wants," <i>The Atlantic</i> , January/February 2018 edition.
<p><b>Col Maxim Shapoval</b> Command detonated car bomb. Kiev, Ukraine 27 Jun 2017</p>	Ukrainian military intelligence officer who headed a special forces unit fighting pro-Russian separatists.	Stewart, <i>Stratfor Worldview</i> Alec Luhn, "Ukrainian military intelligence officer killed by car bomb in Kiev," <i>The Guardian</i> , 27 Jun 2017.
<p><b>Timor Mahauri</b> Car bomb. Probable shaped charge explosive. Survived three previous assassination attempts. Kiev, Ukraine 8 Sep 2017</p>	A Chechen fighting with Ukrainian troops. Previously fought in Georgia against 2008 Russian invasion. Opponent of Chechen president Ramzan Kadyrov.	Stewart, <i>Stratfor Worldview</i> .
<p><b>Yulia Latynina</b> Fled Russia after receiving threats and having her car set on fire. Moscow Sep 2017</p>	Veteran political analyst for the radio station <i>Ekho Moskvy</i> ( <i>Echo of Moscow</i> ) and reporter for opposition paper <i>Novaya Gazeta</i> .	Andrew Roth, "Assailant stabs top journalist at leading Moscow radio station," <i>Washington Post</i> , 23 Oct 2017.
<p><b>Igor Mosiychuk</b> Wounded by motorbike bomb that killed two others also when leaving a live TV broadcast. Kiev, Ukraine 25 Oct 2017</p>	Journalist and member of the nationalist opposition Radical Party in the Ukrainian parliament.	Anna Nemtsova, "Car Bomb Murders Terrify Ukraine's Capital, and Many Suspect the Kremlin's Behind Them," <i>The Daily Beast</i> , 27 Oct 2017.

15. See footnote 14.

TABLE 1: SIGNIFICANT MURDERS OR ATTACKS RELATED TO PUTIN'S REGIME

NAME	POSITION	SOURCE
<p><b>Mikus Alps</b> Skeletal remains found in the driver's seat of a burned out car. British island of Guernsey 8 Jan 2018</p>	<p>Alps, a Latvian, had fought against Russian "volunteers" in eastern Ukraine and, despite threats against him, was supplying anti-Russian Ukrainian militia with vehicles.</p>	<p><a href="http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/it-appears-russia-just-assassinated-someone-in-a-british-crown-territory/article/2645958">http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/it-appears-russia-just-assassinated-someone-in-a-british-crown-territory/article/2645958</a>. <a href="http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-guernsey-42610497">www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-guernsey-42610497</a>.</p>
<p><b>Sergei Skripal &amp; Yulia Skripal</b> Former GRU colonel and daughter poisoned with rare Russian nerve agent, Novichok<sup>16</sup> but survived. Nerve agent also affected 130 others. Salisbury, UK 4 Mar 2018</p>	<p>Skripal, who reportedly spied for MI6 from 1995 to 2003, unmasked more than 300 Russian agents, according to Izvestiya. Arrested in 2004 and sentenced to 13 years, he was one of four held by Russia traded in 2010 for ten Russian agents arrested in the US.<sup>17</sup></p>	<p><a href="http://time.com/5187104/russian-spy-sergei-skripal-unknown-substance/">http://time.com/5187104/russian-spy-sergei-skripal-unknown-substance/</a>, <a href="http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-43291394">http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-43291394</a>, <a href="https://intelnews.org/2018/03/08/01-2283/">https://intelnews.org/2018/03/08/01-2283/</a>. Neil Buckley, David Bond, Henry Foy, "The unanswered questions over the attack on a Russian double agent," <i>Financial Times</i>, 10 Mar 2018 Jennifer Bray, "Ireland set to join biggest mass expulsion of Russian agents," <i>The Times</i>, 27 Mar 2018</p>
<p><b>Nikolai Glushkov</b> Died from "compression of the neck." Murder inquiry is continuing. London, UK 12 Mar 2018</p>	<p>Former deputy director of Aeroflot, finance manager of AvtoVAZ, and close to Boris Berezovsky. Served 5 years in jail before obtaining political asylum in the UK in 2010. Claimed Aeroflot was a "cash cow to support international spying operations." Tried in absentia in Russia in 2017 for stealing \$123m from Aeroflot. Was defending himself in London court at time of his death.</p>	<p>Luke Harding &amp; Owen Bowcott. <a href="https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/mar/13/russian-exile-nikolai-glushkov-found-dead-at-his-london-home">https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/mar/13/russian-exile-nikolai-glushkov-found-dead-at-his-london-home</a>. <a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nikolai_Glushkov">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nikolai_Glushkov</a>.</p>
<p><b>Maxim Borodin</b> "Accidentally" fell from 5th floor apartment balcony and died three days later. Yekaterinburg, Western Siberia, Russia 15 Apr 2018</p>	<p>Russian journalist who wrote about Russian mercenaries killed in Syria for <i>Novy Den</i>. Exposed tie to billionaire oligarch Yevgeny Prigozhin, head of the Wagner Group, and close to Putin. Borodin called friends prior to his fall concerned about masked men around his apartment.<sup>18</sup></p>	<p><a href="https://intelnews.org/2018/04/17/01-2308">https://intelnews.org/2018/04/17/01-2308</a> Matthew Luxmore, <i>New York Times</i>, 16 Apr 2018 <a href="http://www.nyt.com/2018/04/16/world/maksim-borodin-journalist-dead-russia.html?wpm=1&amp;wpi=rc-nl_daily202">www.nyt.com/2018/04/16/world/maksim-borodin-journalist-dead-russia.html?wpm=1&amp;wpi=rc-nl_daily202</a>.</p>

16. Novichok is an organophosphorus compound with nerve paralyzing effects developed by GOSNIIOKHT (Russia's State Scientific-Research Institute for Organic Chemistry and Technology). It was developed as an alternative to VX. Novichok was used in the assassination of Ivan Kivelidi and his secretary in 1995 by contaminating his telephone. "The doctor who dissected his highly toxic liver during an autopsy died seven weeks afterwards, it was reported." (<https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/world-news/banker-secretary-murdered-same-nerve-12176829>; <https://thebell.io/en/the-scientist-who-developed-novichok-doses-range-from-20-grams-to-several-kilos/20.03.2018>).

17. The attack on Skripal and his daughter has raised questions about the previous deaths of his older brother and his 43-year-old son, who supposedly died of "liver failure" in St. Petersburg in 2017 (<http://time.com/5187104/russian-spy-sergei-skripal-unknown-substance/>, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-43291394>, <https://intelnews.org/2018/03/08/01-2283/>).

18. Yevgeny Prigozhin, known as "Putin's chef," is under indictment in the US for the Internet Research Agency's troll factory activities related to interference in the 2016 US elections. (<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/02/16/world/europe/prigozhin-russia-indictment-mueller.html>).

## Observations

The 54 cases in Table 1 are by no means comprehensive. Various sources list many others, who may have died unnaturally, but details are scarce and the reliability of reports can be uncertain. It is challenging from open sources to determine with high confidence the cause of death in some cases or the related circumstances or motives. Given the secrecy of the authorities in most Russian investigations, reporting of the cause of death is unreliable and inevitably slanted to preclude criticism of the regime and, therefore, cannot be taken at face value. While readers might question the inclusion of some of the entries in Table 1 and might wonder whether a listed "heart attack" was natural or induced, the sheer number of suspicious deaths of opponents of the Putin regime has to give pause and leads to the conclusion that "wet affairs" have become a much used instrument of the Russian state once again.

While some of the deaths are undisguised murders (shooting, bombing, or obvious poisoning), others are subtle (automobile "accidents," untraceable "heart attack" inducing poisons, or mind-altering



chemicals that can lead one to commit suicide). Overt murders send a message. Given political consequences, overseas “wet affairs” are generally more discrete.<sup>19</sup>

In Russia, Boris Nemtsov was a potent political threat to Putin. In her book, Amy Knight writes “Nemtsov’s revelations about Russian corruption were directed specifically at Putin and his close cronies, which is why he was killed.”<sup>20</sup> The Panama Papers investigative “records show... a clandestine network operated by Putin associates that has shuffled at least \$2 billion through banks and offshore companies.” A central conduit was “St. Petersburg-based Bank Rossiya, which the US government has identified as Putin’s personal cashbox.”<sup>21</sup> But Knight notes that Stalin’s successors rarely turned to assassinations, as they did not need to. What is the difference with the Putin regime? Knight notes that it is threatened by the rise of democracy surrounding Russia (e.g., the Baltic states, Poland, Georgia, and especially Ukraine) and its stagnating economy.<sup>22</sup>

What would cause someone to kill himself? The deaths in the UK of Paul Castle, Robbie Curtis, Johnny Elichaoff, Scot Young, and Matthew Puncher were all believed to be “suicides.” As one British investigator noted there are drugs that can affect adversely one’s mental health. Since the 1930s the FSB and its predecessors have maintained a specialized poisons laboratory. It does not take much imagination to assume that this lab has produced mind-affecting compounds as well as lethal ones. This could explain the rapid change in mental health noted in several of the reported deaths. The deaths that were undisguised were meant to send a message to Putin’s opponents. Some may have been motivated by revenge, such as Dr. Puncher’s as he uncovered the polonium 210 poisoning of Litvinenko, or of those associated with the embarrassment of the Sochi Olympics doping scandal.

How could there be so many suspicious cases in the UK? *BuzzFeed* has claimed that the UK government has suppressed information despite being alerted by US intelligence that these killings are linked to orders

from Vladimir Putin. The case of Perepilichnyy is unsettling. The UK Government refused cooperation with French authorities about the case and withheld documents from the initial 2013 inquest due to national security concerns, outraging some officials. “It’s so obvious that it’s an assassination,” said Chris Phillips, the former head of Britain’s National Counter Terrorism Security Office. “There’s no way it wasn’t a hit.”<sup>23</sup> A new inquest was convened in mid-2016 but has dragged on. At the time of this writing the coroner’s inquest on 13 April 2018 was adjourned awaiting further evidence from the government.<sup>24</sup> According to *BuzzFeed*, US intelligence provided the UK highly classified intelligence indicating Perepilichnyy was “assassinated on direct orders of Putin or people close to him.”<sup>25</sup> In other cases in the UK the police investigations of deaths were perfunctory and questionable.<sup>26</sup>

*BuzzFeed* observed

Russian assassins are being allowed to operate in Britain with impunity, 17 current and former high-ranking intelligence officials on both sides of the Atlantic told *BuzzFeed*. Litvinenko’s assassination was a blatant act of provocation that could not be ignored. But many other less glaring cases have gone unpunished, sources said, out of a desire to avoid antagonising Russia and to protect the flow of Russian money into British banks and properties.<sup>27</sup>

*BuzzFeed* concluded that the UK government had been unwilling to risk politically confronting the Russian government “because the Kremlin could inflict massive harm on Britain by unleashing cyber-attacks, destabilizing the economy, or mobilizing elements of Britain’s large Russian population to cause disruption.”<sup>28</sup> In her article “Why does Putin treat Britain with disdain? He thinks he’s bought it,” Anne Applebaum notes “[for] two decades the British establishment has agreed not to think too hard about where the Russians got their money...” “In return, the Russians spent a lot of that money on Britain, to the benefit of the British.” “The relationship has, at times, been extraordinarily complicit.” Russia uses London’s financial markets. In March 2018 Gazprom issued a

19. Scott Stewart, “The Dirty Work of Russian Assassins,” *Stratfor Worldview*, September 14, 2017. ([https://worldview.stratfor.com/article/dirty-work-russian-assassin...7179e919a-e6c6e1d714-53611541@mc\\_cid=e6c6e1d714@mc\\_eid=5e759b4174](https://worldview.stratfor.com/article/dirty-work-russian-assassin...7179e919a-e6c6e1d714-53611541@mc_cid=e6c6e1d714@mc_eid=5e759b4174)).

20. Knight, *Orders to Kill*, 2.

21. Jake Bernstein, Petra Blum, Oliver Zihlmann, David Thompson, Frederik Obermaier, and Bastian Obermayor, “All Putin’s Men: Secret Reports Reveal Money Network Tied to Russian Leader,” *The International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ)*, *The Panama Papers: Politicians, Criminals and the Rogue Industry That Hides Their Cash*, April 3, 2016. (<https://panamapapers.icij.org>)

22. Knight, *Orders to Kill*, 3-4.

23. *BuzzFeed*, Part 1. “Poison in the System.”

24. <https://www.judiciary.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/13-April-2018.pdf>.

25. *BuzzFeed*, Part 1. “Poison in the System.”

26. *BuzzFeed*, Parts 2, “From Russia with Blood,” and 3. “The Man who Knew Too Much.”

27. *BuzzFeed* Part 3. “The Man Who Knew Too Much.”

28. *BuzzFeed*, Part 2. “From Russia with Blood.” There are more than 400,000 Russians in the UK, one-third in London, which is why some refer to London as “Londongrad” or “Moscow on the Thames” ([www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/from-posh-oligarchs-to-taxi-drivers-Russians-in-London-feel-a-chill.html?utm\\_term=.c7d5d4fc0a23@wpisrc=nL\\_headlines@wpmm=1](http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/from-posh-oligarchs-to-taxi-drivers-Russians-in-London-feel-a-chill.html?utm_term=.c7d5d4fc0a23@wpisrc=nL_headlines@wpmm=1)).

€1 billion Eurobond and the Russian government sold €7 billion in Eurobonds.<sup>29</sup>

The poisoning of Sergei Skripal and his daughter on 4 March 2018 with a highly toxic nerve agent may have changed British government attitudes. Outraged, the British quickly built an international coalition by sharing to an extraordinary degree detailed intelligence with many Western nations. Thirty countries expelled 151 Russian “diplomats,” including 23 from Britain and 60 from the US.<sup>30</sup> Russian intelligence scholar Mark Galeotti notes “[w]ith the Skripal hit, it looks as if Putin may have finally overreached.”<sup>31</sup>

Assassinations of anti-Russian elements in Ukraine can be ascribed as part of Russian “hybrid warfare,” along with the employment of open and covert propaganda, unidentified “volunteers,” and cyber-attacks.

Russian hybrid warfare has been directed at many of its neighbors. “Boris Johnson, the British foreign secretary, has said in an interview that Russian spies may have orchestrated [2016’s] failed attempt to kill the then-prime minister of Montenegro, Milo Đukanović,” who had proposed joining NATO, in order to spark a pro-Russian coup.<sup>32</sup>

## Conclusions

Vladimir Putin fears the West. The “color revolutions” (Rose in Georgia, Orange in Ukraine, Tulip in Kyrgyzstan), upheaval in Armenia, and Western economic sanctions are perceived as a threat. The revelations of the Panama Papers were a “personal slight to Putin,” according to former CIA officer John Sipher.<sup>33</sup> They also are a threat to his oligarch supporters, which have stashed billions of dollars in overseas safe havens. Putin assists his supporters partly by using the security instruments of the state for

29. Anne Applebaum, “Why does Putin treat Britain with disdain? He thinks he’s bought it,” *Washington Post*, 16 Mar 2018.

30. [www.intelnews.org/2018/03/29/01-2297](http://www.intelnews.org/2018/03/29/01-2297). Estimates are that the expulsions include two-thirds of Russia’s official cover agents from the SVR and GRU in Europe and North America. ([www.intelnews.org/2018/03/29/01-22976](http://www.intelnews.org/2018/03/29/01-22976)).

31. Galeotti is a senior researcher at the Institute of International Relations Prague and former professor at New York University. He has stated that Russian foreign covert operations are now as “aggressive as they were at the height of the Cold War.” (<https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2018/03/putin-skripal-expulsion-russia-poisoning-trump/556556/>).

32. Ian Allen, “Russia possibly tried to kill Montenegro PM, says British foreign secretary,” *IntelNews.org*, 2 Jan 2018.

33. The Panama Papers consist of over 11 million documents that identify more than 214,000 offshore entities leaked in 2015 from the Panamanian law firm Mossack Fonseca. (International Consortium of Investigative Journalists, “The Panama Papers: Exposing the Rogue Offshore Finance Industry.” (<https://www.icij.org/investigations/panama-papers/>). See Julia Ioffe, “What Putin Really Wants,” *The Atlantic*, January/February 2018, pp 68-75.

their benefit. For example, Mikhail Lesin’s murderers in Washington, DC are believed to be former state security agents hired by an oligarch.<sup>34</sup> “The Russian president is outspoken in his criticism of Russians who spy for foreign governments and issues threats in unobvious terms, making statements such as ‘traitors will kick the bucket.’”<sup>35</sup>

US intelligence believes some of the expelled “diplomats” were trying to track Russian defectors resettled in the US.<sup>36</sup> Given the demonstrated international reach of Putin’s assassins and the cases within the US of journalists McGrory and Joyal, and Russian exile Lesin, US investigators always need to explore the hypothesis that any Russian-associated death has ties to the Kremlin.

Why have these killings continued for so long? Because, with the exception of the blatant Litvinenko case, there had been no consequences for Russia. As I wrote before, “What can we expect? Given history and no blowback or effective constraints on Putin, more of the same.”<sup>37</sup> Time will tell whether the blowback from the Skripals’ poisonings in the UK will constrain Putin’s serial “wet affairs” abroad.

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34. See “Lesin” in Table 1.

35. Scott Stewart, “Russia Sends A Chilling Message With Its Latest Chemical Attack.” *On Security, Stratfor*, ([https://worldview.stratfor.com/article/russia-spy-attack-message...9e919a-85a10e2504-53611541@mc\\_cid=85a10e2504@mc\\_eid=%5BUNIQID%5D](https://worldview.stratfor.com/article/russia-spy-attack-message...9e919a-85a10e2504-53611541@mc_cid=85a10e2504@mc_eid=%5BUNIQID%5D)).

36. Evan Perez and Shimon Prokupez, “Russians suspected of tracking compatriots who resettled in US, CNN, 26 Apr 2018 <https://www.cnn.com/2018/04/25/politics/expelled-spies>.

37. Oleson, “Stalin’s Disciple.”