

Part One

This is the first of a two-part series, zeroing in on events that led up to the attempted assassinations of Mr Sergei Viktorovich Skripal and his daughter, Yulia.

TARGET () has noted that there are striking similarities in the modus operandi that had been adopted in respect of the successful assassinations of former, very prominent Russian citizens, all of whom were known to have held high positions at Governmental agencies of The Russian Federation, all of these agencies, engaged in security matters.

All of the successful assassinations took place in Great Britain.

Scotland Yard still seeks to extradite the alleged Russian murderer of at least one of the former Russian citizens, who was a British citizen at the time of his assassination, but to no avail because The Russian Federation has denied the British Government's request.

TENSIONS, CONDEMNATIONS, AND

WORSENING POLITICAL RELATIONS

FAN THE FLAMES OF POTENTIAL CONFRONTATIONS

A person, who is seen in the water, may not swim, but it is presumed that a person, who is seen in the act of swimming, is, indeed, performing that act in the water.

Similarly, the person, who receives a blow of materiality, does so passively and must, therefore, be considered inferior to that which caused the blow.

A tyrant may be at the root cause of a mortal mischief upon another person, but the recipient of that mortal mischief received naught.

Poison, secretly administered to another with the intent to take a life, though the poison be insufficient to cause excessive mischief, nevertheless, the mischief-maker is as much a murderer as though he had taken another's life.

For it must be held that it is the intention, not the effect, that is deemed as being the root cause of wickedness.

The Attempted Assassinations Of Mr Sergei Viktorovich Skripal And His Daughter, Yulia

The attempted assassinations of Mr Sergei Viktorovich Skripal and his daughter, Yulia, in Salisbury, England, led to the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Island to expel 23 Russian diplomats, labelling them as having been undeclared, London-based spies in the pay of The Russian Federation.

Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs Alexander Boris de Pfeffel Johnson, more commonly known as, simply, Mr Boris Johnson, has not hesitated in placing the blame for the felonious action, perpetrated upon Mr Sergei Viktorovich Skripal, aged 66 years, and his daughter, aged 33 years, on the President of The Russian Federation: Mr Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin.

Mr Boris Johnson is not the only person to hold this belief although, as at today's date, only circumstantial evidence has come to light, suggesting, only obliquely, that President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin was the éminence grise, directing the '*black hand*' in the perpetration of this heinous act.

That which has been determined beyond any doubt, whatsoever, is that the poison, passively administered to Mr Sergei Skripal and his daughter, Yulia, was a weapons-grade, nerve agent, identified as being A-234.

Samples of the nerve agent tested positive at the United Kingdom's Defence Science and Technology Laboratory at Porton Down as that of the Novichok Family, first developed in The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (**USSR**) (as The Russian Federation was formerly named up to 1991).

<Weapons-grade, nerve agent A-234 span lang=EN-GB style='mso-bidi-font-size:12.0pt;mso-bidi-font-family:"Times New Roman"; mso-ansi-language:EN-GB'>has but one function: To kill the enemies of The Russian Federation.

According to initial investigations, carried out by British Intelligence, the nerve agent was thought to have been secreted in one or more of the personal items in Ms Yulia Skripal's luggage before she boarded an aeroplane that left Moscow for London on Saturday, March 3, 2018.

Ms Yulia Skripal is a Russian citizen while her father, Sergei, is a British citizen.

In the 1990s, Mr Sergei Skripal was a trusted officer in the Main Intelligence Directorate – **Glavnoye Razvedyvatel'noye Upravleniye (GRU)** – but, during that time, he, also, worked as a double agent for the Secret Intelligence Service of the United Kingdom from 1995 until his arrest in Russia in December of 2004.

The GRU is well known as being the main, military foreign-intelligence service of The Russian Federation and, as such, Mr Sergei Skripal, then a Russian citizen, must have been held in high regard by the British Government, during the time that he served as an active double agent.

Mr Sergei Skripal's arrest in Russia led to his conviction on the charge of treason in a Moscow Court. He was sentenced to 13 years in a penal colony for crimes against the country of his birth.

A spy swap between the United Kingdom and The Russian Federation saw Mr Sergei Skripal freed from detention from the penal colony in which he was serving out his conviction and he, then, emigrated to the United Kingdom.

Upon application, he was awarded British citizenship and, since 2010, he had been living in near obscurity – or so he thought – in Salisbury, England.

Clearly, however, as history has now made it very apparent, the GRU had not closed the book on this former double agent in the employ of the United Kingdom.

Primary logic appeared to indicate that a determination was made by somebody in the employ of The Russian Federation that the key to Mr Sergei Skripal's (almost) guaranteed demise was seen in employing the unwitting accomplice in the conduit of Ms Yulia Skripal, the loving daughter of this former, British double agent.

On Sunday, March 4, 2018, Mr Sergei Skripal and his daughter, at 4:15 pm, were found unconscious, on a bench at the Maltings Shopping Centre in Salisbury.

Ms Yulia Skripal was said to have been foaming at the mouth with her eyes wide open, but being completely white, according to persons that discovered the unconscious pair and reported their findings.

At 5:10 pm, the pair was taken separately to Salisbury District Hospital by an ambulance and an air ambulance.

About 11 days later, father and daughter remained critically ill as they lay in their respective hospital beds.

On Wednesday, March 29, it was reported by the Salisbury District Hospital that Ms Yulia Skripal's condition was improving rapidly and was no longer in a critical condition.

She was conscious and was talking, it was reported by independent sources.

As for Mr Sergei Skripal, however, he remained in a critical but stable condition, the Salisbury District hospital announced.

Also, on Wednesday, March 29, it was reported that forensic tests had revealed that the highest concentrations of nerve agent A-234 were found on the front door of Mr Sergei Skripal's home in Salisbury.

Nerve agent A-234 had been discovered in other locations of Salisbury, but only in much-lower concentrations.

The theoretical determination in respect of the primary logic into the method by which the nerve agent had been transported to Great Britain and how it was administered, surreptitiously, to Mr Sergei Skripal and his daughter, Yulia, were being questioned.

The Murder Of Nikolay Alekseevich Glushhov

On March 13, 2018, nine days after the attempted assassinations of Mr Sergei Skripal and his daughter, Yulia, Mr Nikolay Alekseevich Glushhov was discovered to have been strangled at his home at New Malden, London.

Mr Nikolay Alekseevich Glushhov, aged 69 years, had been a very vocal critic of the activities of President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin.

He made no bones about his disenchantment and disillusionment of President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin, formerly a high-ranking officer of **KGB** (**K**omitet **G**osudarstvennoy **B**ezopasnosti) now renamed as The **FSB** (**F**ederal'naya sluzhba bezopasnosti Rossiyskoy Federatsii, The federal security service of The Russian Federation).

On March 16, the (London) Metropolitan Police stated that the case of the death of Mr Nikolay Alekseevich Glushhov was being treated as a murder.

The Metropolitan Police, however, stated that there appeared to be no direct link to the attempted assassinations of Mr Sergei Skripal and his daughter, Yulia, and the murder of Mr Nikolay Alekseevich Glushhov.

What is known about Mr Nikolay Alekseevich Glushhov was that he had been the Deputy Director of PJSC Aeroflot, the flag carrier and pride of The Russian Federation, being the largest airline of the country.

Mr Nikolay Alekseevich Glushhov had gone on record as stating the Aeroflot was '*the cash cow to support international spying operations*' for and on behalf of The Russian Federation.

To support his claim, Mr Nikolay Alekseevich Glushhov pointed out that, during the time that he held a senior post at Aeroflot, some 3,000 employees of the airline's headcount of 21,000 employees, were either officers of The FSB, The SVR (The Foreign Intelligence Service of The Russian Federation) or the GRU.

That tranche of 3,000 Russian agents, receiving monies, directly and/or indirectly, from Aeroflot over an extended period of time, represented about 21 percent of the total number of employees of the airline in 1996.

In 1999, Mr Nikolay Alekseevich Glushhov was arrested in Russia and charged with illegally siphoning off Aeroflot's money.

He was convicted and, after serving three years in prison, was released in 2004, having been told that he had been cleared of the charge of fraud and money laundering, but having been found guilty of '*Abuse of Authority*'.

He, as with Mr Sergei Skripal, emigrated to the United Kingdom, and in 2010, he applied to the British Government to stay in the country, claiming political asylum.

In 2017, once again he was accused in a Russian court of stealing money that rightfully belonged to Aeroflot.

He was convicted in absentia and was sentenced to eight years in prison for allegedly stealing \$US123 million from the airline's coffers.

The United Kingdom rejected the request to extradite Mr Nikolay Alekseevich Glushhov to The Russian Federation.

The Death By Hanging Of Mr Boris Abramovich Berezovsky

Boris Abramovich Berezovsky was discovered at his home at Titness Park, at Sunninghill, Berkshire, England, on March 23, 2013.

Prima facie, his death had all the suggestions of the result of the deceased, having hanged himself.

He was discovered by a bodyguard in a locked bathroom, a ligature, still around the neck of the deceased.

There were no signs of a violent struggle, a post-mortem examination determined.

Mr Peter J. Bedford, Senior Coroner, sitting at the Inquest into Mr Boris Abramovich Berezovsky's death, recorded an open verdict.

(An open verdict of a coroner's jury affirms the occurrence of a suspicious death, but not specifying the cause.)

Mr Peter J. Bedford, at the conclusion of the Inquest, said, among other things:

'I am not saying Mr. Berezovsky took his own life. I am not saying Mr. Berezovsky was unlawfully killed. What I am saying is that the burden of proof sets such a high standard (that) it is impossible for me to say.'

The Thames Valley Police classified the death of Mr Boris Abramovich Berezovsky as being '*unexplained*' and launched a formal investigation into the circumstances, leading up to the death of this former Russian citizen.

Specialists in the fields of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear materials scoured Mr Boris Abramovich Berezovsky's home, but '*found nothing of concern*', it was reported.

At the March 2014 Inquest into the death of Mr Boris Abramovich Berezovsky, his daughter, Elizaveta, introduced a report, signed by Mr Bern Brinkmann, a German pathologist.

Ms Elizaveta Berezovsky had given copies of the autopsy photographs of her deceased father to Mr Bern Brinkmann for his perusal.

The pathologist noted that ligature mark on the neck of Mr Boris Abramovich Berezovsky was circular rather than V-shaped as is common in the case of victims who had been hanged.

Also, at the March 2014 Inquest, a statement by one of the responding paramedics was brought to the attention of the coroner.

This statement said, inter alia, that the face of the deceased was purple.

Usually, doctors, attending the public executions of felons, who had been hanged in accordance with the law, noted that the faces of the deceased were pale, the coroner was informed.

Also, it was pointed out at the Inquest that the body of Mr Boris Abramovich Berezovsky bore fresh wounds

to the back of the head as well as a fractured rib.

Other anomalous findings, brought out at the Inquest, included an unidentified fingerprint in the shower of the locked bathroom where Mr Boris Abramovich Berezovsky had been found, hanged.

Perhaps, disturbing to some people, attending the Inquest, was when one of the attending paramedics said that his radiation alarm sounded as he entered the house of the deceased.

A Short Background Of Mr Boris Abramovich Berezovsky

Mr Boris Abramovich Berezovsky was politically opposed to President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin since the Russian Presidential Election of 2000.

In late 2000, the Deputy Prosecutor General demanded that Mr Boris Abramovich Berezovsky appear for questioning.

Mr Boris Abramovich Berezovsky was, at that time, travelling abroad and, being told of the '*request*' of his presence at the office of the Deputy Prosecutor General in Moscow, determined not to return to his home in The Russian Federation.

Instead, Mr Boris Abramovich Berezovsky went to the United Kingdom and there applied for Refugee Status and Political Asylum, both of which were granted by the British Home Office on September 9, 2003.

Back in Russia, in absentia, a court found Mr Boris Abramovich Berezovsky guilty of fraud and embezzlement.

The United Kingdom rejected a request for the extradition of Mr Boris Abramovich Berezovsky to The Russian Federation, despite an Interpol Red Notice of the arrest of this gentleman.

In 1997, it was reported that Mr Boris Abramovich Berezovsky had an estimated wealth of about \$US3 billion.

At the height of his political power in The Russian Federation, he was Deputy Secretary of Russia's Security Council.

He was elected to the Duma, the prestigious legislative body in the ruling Assembly of The Russian Federation.

After moving to the United Kingdom, President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin ordered the confiscation of all the assets of Mr Boris Abramovich Berezovsky in the country.

In 1995, Mr Boris Abramovich Berezovsky had assisted in the reshuffle of the management of Aeroflot and he, also, helped in the corporatisation of the airline.

At that time, the **Chief Financial Officer (CFO)** of Aeroflot was Mr Nikolay Alekseevich Glushhov.

In November 1998, in a televised Press Conference, five officers of the FSB, led by Lieutenant Colonel Alexander Valterovich Litvinenko, revealed that there had been a plot to assassinate Mr Boris Abramovich Berezovsky.

The assassination plot had been hatched by the superiors of these FSB officers, it was alleged.

On July 17, 2000, Mr Boris Abramovich Berezovsky resigned from the Duma, stating, inter alia:

‘I do not want to be involved in the country’s ruin and the restoration of an authoritarian regime ...’.

The above declaration was, clearly, aimed at President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin – and most people understood this as being the main reason for his resignation from the Duma.

In October of that year, President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin, in an interview with the Paris-based newspaper, Le Figaro, was quoted as stating that he would, no longer, tolerate criticisms of his Government by the media, especially those controlled by certain oligarchs (obviously pointing directly to Mr Boris Abramovich Berezovsky’s interest in the Russian media).

President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin is quoted as stating:

‘If necessary, we will destroy those instruments that allow this blackmail.’

Responding to a question from the reporter of Le Figaro about Mr Boris Abramovich Berezovsky, President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin said that he had a '*cudgel*' in store for him.

He said:

'The state has a cudgel in its hands that you use to hit just once, but on the head. We haven't used this cudgel yet. We've just brandished it... (But) the day we get really angry, we won't hesitate to use it.'

The London Circle Of Mr Boris Abramovich Berezovsky

From his home in the United Kingdom, Mr Boris Abramovich Berezovsky and close associates, which included Messrs Akhem Zakayev, Alexander Litvinenko and Alex Goldfarb, all being Russian exiles, Mr Boris Abramovich Berezovsky publicly stated that he was on a mission to bring down President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin '*by force*' or, alternatively, in a bloodless revolution.

The London Circle, as it came to be known, established The International Foundation for Civil Liberties in order '*to support the abused and the vulnerable in society*' in The Russian Federation, be they prisoners, national minorities or business people.

Many of the activities of The International Foundation for Civil Liberties were funded through the New York-based offices of the Foundation, directed by Mr Alex Goldfarb who was said, at that time, to be a close friend of Mr Boris Abramovich Berezovsky.

In early February of 2006, Mr Boris Abramovich Berezovsky told Reuters that his intention was to overthrow President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin.

Obviously shocked on reading the Reuter's report, Mr Jack Straw, at that time, being the British Foreign Minister, called upon Mr Boris Abramovich Berezovsky to restrain himself while living in Great Britain and not to plot, openly, the overthrow of the Russian President lest his status in the country could, by necessity, be reviewed should he (Mr Boris Abramovich Berezovsky) continue to make such inflammatory remarks.

Undaunted by the tongue-lashing, received from Mr Jack Straw, however, Mr Boris Abramovich Berezovsky continued with his tirades against President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin.

In an interview with The Guardian, on April 13, 2007, Mr Boris Abramovich Berezovsky declared, openly and unapologetically, that he was plotting the violent overthrow of the Russian President.

He stated that he, personally, was financing and encouraging a coup d'état in Moscow.

Some of his remarks to the reporter of The Guardian included:

'We need to use force to change this regime (in Russia). It isn't possible to change this regime through democratic means. There can be no change without force ... pressure.'

Mr Boris Abramovich Berezovsky went on to state that, during the previous six years, he had struggled 'to destroy the positive image of (President Vladimir Vladimirovich) Putin', stating, among other things, that 'Putin has created an authoritarian regime against the Russian Constitution ... I don't know how it will happen, but authoritarian regimes only collapse by force ...'.

According to Mr Alexander Valterovich Litvinenko, the London Office of the FSB had, in September of 2003, been preparing to assassinate Mr Boris Abramovich Berezovsky by the use of a binary weapon.

Definition of a Binary Weapon

Binary chemical weapons, or munitions, are chemical weapons that contain a toxic agent in its active state as chemical precursors which are significantly less toxic than the agent. This improves the safety of storing, transporting, and disposing of the weapon. Commonly, firing the munition removes a barrier between two precursors. These react to form the intended agent which is then aerosolised and distributed by a bursting charge.

Mr Alexander Valterovich Litvinenko, one of the close associates of Mr Boris Abramovich Berezovsky, was murdered in London in November 2006 by the use of the radioactive poison, polonium 210.

Authorities in Great Britain laid the charge of murder against a former FSB officer, Mr Andrey Konstantinovich Lugovoy, aged 52 years.

He is a Deputy of the State Duma, the Lower House of the Russian Parliament.

He had worked as a KGB bodyguard and as operational head of ‘*Ninth Wave*’, a security firm.

He is, still, wanted by the British police.

A request to The Russian Federation for his extradition to London had been lodged.

The Russian Federation rejected the request.

* **To Be Continued Next Tuesday** *

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