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[Russian lawmakers, state-controlled TV point finger at tycoon in ex-spy's death](#)

The Associated Press

Published: November 24, 2006

MOSCOW: Poisoned former spy Alexander Litvinenko's deathbed message may have accused Russian President Vladimir Putin, but pro-Kremlin lawmakers and state-controlled television networks pointed the finger Friday at a prominent Putin enemy in Britain — tycoon Boris Berezovsky.

Legislators seconded a top Putin aide's suggestion that Litvinenko's death in a London hospital Thursday was part of a plot against Russia and claimed that Berezovsky, a major critic whose asylum in Britain has enraged the Kremlin, was involved in the killing.

"The death of Litvinenko — for Russia, for the security services — means nothing," Valery Dyatlenko, said on state-run Channel One television, contending that neither the Kremlin nor Russia's intelligence agencies would have reason to kill him. "I think this is another game of some kind by Berezovsky."

Berezovsky amassed a fortune in dubious privatization deals after the 1991 Soviet collapse and became an influential Kremlin insider under President Boris Yeltsin, but fell out of favor with Putin and fled for Britain in 2000 to avoid a money laundering probe which he said was politically motivated.

He has been a thorn in Putin's side for years, assailing him for backtracking on democracy and accusing Russian security services of organizing 1999 apartment-building bombings that helped stoke support for the Chechen war.

That claim can be seen as aimed personally against Putin, a former Federal Security Service chief who ascended to the presidency in part on the strength of the popularity of his hard-line stance on Chechnya as prime minister at the time.

Berezovsky provided financing for a book Litvinenko co-authored detailing the alleged bombing conspiracy, but their names have been linked since 1998, when Litvinenko publicly accused his superiors at the Federal Security Service, known by its Russian acronym FSB, of ordering him to kill Berezovsky.

Both men lived in Britain and Berezovsky, who spent time by Litvinenko's hospital bedside, has said he suspected Russia's intelligence services were behind the alleged assassination attempt. But in Russia on Friday, pro-Kremlin lawmakers suggested Berezovsky was behind the poisoning.

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"Possibly there was a conflict," Nikolai Kovalyov, a lawmaker and former FSB director, said on state-run Channel One television. "In untying this knot called the relationship between Berezovsky and Litvinenko, it was necessary to receive the maximum benefit — and the benefit here for Boris Abramovich (Berezovsky) is ... the accusation of Russia's involvement in the killing."

Litvinenko had close ties with "certain oligarchs, including Mr. Berezovsky, who in recent years have been deprived of the chance to buy corrupt power with stolen money and apparently cannot accept this," said Konstanin Kosachev, head of the foreign affairs committee in the State Duma, the lower parliament house.

"It's clear we may be talking about a targeted action aimed against modern Russia," Kosachev, a member of the dominant Kremlin-controlled United Russia party whose comments often reflect the governments' stance. said on Channel One.

The remarks echoed Sergei Yastrzhembsky, Putin's chief envoy to the European Union, who named no names but suggested to reporters in Helsinki that someone was killing government critics to discredit the Kremlin. "I am far from being a champion of conspiracy theory. But it looks like we are facing a well-orchestrated campaign or a plan to consistently discredit Russia and its leader," he said.

Putin and other top Russian officials have repeatedly hinted of forces in the West that are out to undermine Russia. After the slaying last month of Russian journalist Anna Politkovskaya, a fierce critic of the war in Chechnya, Putin said that "people who are hiding from Russian law enforcement have been hatching plans to sacrifice someone and create an anti-Russian wave in the world" — a possible reference to Berezovsky.

Russian prosecutors said earlier this year that they had filed a new request for Berezovsky's extradition from Britain after charging him with planning a violent seizure of power.

[Boris Berezovsky: The first oligarch](#)

A film based on his adventurous life drew gasps from Russian audiences for the opulence showed

By Mary Dejevsky

Published: 25 November 2006

As Alexander Litvinenko, the former Russian spy, lay dying in a London hospital, regular bulletins on his condition were supplied not by his family and only rarely by the hospital. The head messenger was the energetic and voluble Alex Goldfarb, who described himself as a close friend of the stricken agent. He could also have been described, no less accurately, as the right-hand man of Boris Berezovsky, the fugitive oligarch exiled in Britain who heads the list of Russia's "most wanted".

Wherever and whenever Alex Goldfarb turns up, you can be pretty certain that Berezovsky is pulling the strings. And in this case, the Berezovsky link was more transparent than it often is: the oligarch enjoyed a uniquely symbiotic relationship with Litvinenko, which began when the spy saved his life. Litvinenko, so the story goes, refused orders from his then employer, Russia's internal security service (FSB), to have Berezovsky murdered. Berezovsky returned the favour by assisting Litvinenko to defect to Britain when he was charged by the Russian authorities with treason.

This was six years ago. Berezovsky's subsequent role in Litvinenko's life - as

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Litvinenko's in his - is shrouded in the mystery that obscures so many exiled Russian plutocrats. But there is evidence that they kept up at very least what might be called a business relationship. Berezovsky sponsored a book that Litvinenko published in 2003, supposedly lifting the lid on the murkier doings of the FSB. If, as has been said, Litvinenko was investigating the contract-killing of the Russian journalist Anna Politkovskaya at the time he fell ill, this is likely to have been at Berezovsky's instigation, too. Berezovsky is reliably reported to have been at Litvinenko's bedside on the day the media were first made aware of his illness.

While a personal friendship may have grown up between the two men, Litvinenko had contacts and information that could have been of great help to Berezovsky. As an agent through the years of Vladimir Putin's rise to the Russian presidency, he claimed to know where many bodies were buried. And anything that besmirched Putin was grist to the mill of Berezovsky, who aspired to lead an organised opposition to Putin from abroad.

The origins of Berezovsky's venom against Putin go back a decade. Then in their 40s, the two men were highly competitive Kremlin wannabes, vying for influence at President Boris Yeltsin's court. Berezovsky had a head start, ingratiating himself into Yeltsin's inner circle - the so-called "family" - by dint of his money and connections. Seen as the original oligarch, he was already the richest and most influential of Russia's new tycoons, a compulsive networker with fingers in many pies.

His influence was at its most valuable to Yeltsin in 1996. Six months before the scheduled presidential election, Yeltsin's popularity ratings stood at a catastrophic 30 per cent. His chief rival was the far-right nationalist Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, who was well placed to beat him. Berezovsky deployed his money and influence lavishly, forming a group of oligarchs, the "Big Seven", to underwrite Yeltsin's campaign. They media outlets they then owned were dedicated to a schedule of "all Yeltsin all the time".

The voters gave their President another four years. The West breathed a sigh of relief, and Berezovsky reaped his reward. Initially it was the mostly honorific post of deputy secretary of the National Security Council, then secretary of a Kremlin group co-ordinating the so-called Commonwealth of Independent States - the body trying to maintain economic and political links between the states of the former Soviet Union.

As Berezovsky tells it, it was during this time that he conducted peace negotiations - often secretly - with rebellious Chechnya. His first-hand dealings with Chechen leaders left him with an enduring sympathy for this mountain people and their seemingly doomed quest for autonomy. Until recently, he claimed still to be involved in efforts to forge a settlement.

By 1998, Berezovsky's star at the Kremlin was fading, just as Vladimir Putin's started to shine bright. With Yeltsin not standing for election again, Berezovsky's services as media Svengali and chief financier were less in demand. The currency crash of that year prompted public questions about the oligarchs' fortunes. Berezovsky left Yeltsin's entourage the following year.

He decided to try his luck as a front-line politician, and was duly elected the member of parliament for Karachayevo-Cherkessiya, a region not only close to Chechnya, but also one where money talks. An additional advantage of this move was the immunity from prosecution a Duma seat afforded. He may have calculated that for four years he would be safe.

At the same time, Berezovsky had to watch as the ailing Yeltsin relied more and more on Putin. Berezovsky had become seriously disenchanted with Putin, a man with whom five years before he had been on skiing terms. He now saw Putin as a sporty little upstart from St Petersburg who was applying his second-rate secret agent's brain to keeping

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the precarious Russian government functioning.

At the end of 1999, it was Putin who was anointed by Yeltsin as his successor. Berezovsky was cast aside. All his hard work trying to solve the Chechen problem had been negated by a war he believed Putin had begun as an election ploy. Threatened with prosecution for fraud in connection with his holdings in the state airline Aeroflot and the privatised state car company, Logovaz, he made one of his many visits to London permanent.

That this stubborn and scheming tycoon chose exile was perhaps a less unlikely outcome than the fact that he had come so close to power at all. A congenital outsider, Berezovsky was able to turn to his benefit the brief period of extreme social and political mobility that followed the break-up of the Soviet Union. Born in Moscow into a modest Jewish family, he was academically ambitious, but thwarted in his first choice of study - space science - by the restrictions on the numbers of Jewish students in certain faculties. After a series of junior research positions, he finally obtained a doctorate in computer science at the age of 37.

He was 40 when Mikhail Gorbachev came to power and the political landscape began to change. In 1989 - ahead of most - he sensed the way the wind was blowing and made the leap into business. And questionable business some of it was, too. As he tells it, he built his fortune on a couple of second-hand Mercedes cars he bought in what was then East Germany, which he resold at a large profit in Russia.

But the myth that has grown up around him is replete with hair-raising stories of hijacked trains, nocturnal visits to car assembly lines in southern Russia, secret cash deals, all liberally spiced with armed thugs and unexplained disappearances. A risk-taker par excellence, Berezovsky thrived in the volatility of those years, amassing a fortune that took him from cars into oil, aluminium and property and - as his weapon in what he anticipated would be the battles ahead - into television and newspapers.

His lifestyle - with its fast cars, servants, a palatial residence outside Moscow and vicious guard dogs - was the stuff of legend. His renown was such that a Russian director made a film, *Oligarch*, apparently based on his adventurous life. It was released in 2002, and drew gasps from Russian audiences for the private opulence it showed.

Before leaving Moscow for what he hoped in 2000 would be temporary exile, Berezovsky formed an opposition party, Liberal Russia, intended to unite leading businessmen and other devotees of a free market who felt that their interests were threatened by Putin. The party was plagued with splits and petered out. But politics - or more correctly, perhaps, politicking - remains Berezovsky's passion. He may be sustained financially in London by his extensive property portfolio and his oil interests, but it is opposition politics that is his true lifeblood.

He works out of an office in Mayfair that is imbued with a faint air of menace. A slight man, with features somewhat reminiscent - ironically - of Lenin, he employs large, surly bodyguards, a fleet of black-glassed 4x4s, reputedly armour plated, and commutes into town from his country estate in Surrey. He claims that the Russian authorities have tried to kill him at least three times and he is careful about public appearances. He travels mostly in convoy, altering his route and his drivers and speeding with apparent impunity.

He has been progressively shorn of his media interests in Russia. He sold his controlling stake in the *Kommersant* newspaper earlier this year, prompting speculation that he might need the money. His official political vehicle in Britain is a group curiously called the Civil Rights Foundation, which he seems to do little publicly to promote, but may channel money to opposition groups in the former USSR. Berezovsky boasted that he had funded Ukraine's Orange revolution.

If his attempts to foment revolution in and around Russia have so far failed, however, Berezovsky was hugely successful in insinuating himself into the clubs and salons of London. Suave and charming, he was lionised as a successful and wealthy opponent of the present regime in Russia. Always ready with flashy quotes, always game to appear on platforms to denounce his arch-foe, Vladimir Putin, he has proved almost as masterly an image-maker in his adopted country as he was in Russia. A Channel 4 documentary this year suggested he was singlehandedly responsible for the negative image of Putin's Russia that prevails among Britain's chattering classes.

There are signs, though, that his power is waning. His ability to mesmerise the great and good went into decline after the Chechen attack on Beslan. He is not confident enough in English to dominate a platform alone. And earlier this

year, the then foreign secretary Jack Straw took the unusual step of warning him publicly that he must cease to advocate the violent overthrow of Putin or risk forfeiting his refugee status.

Russia would dearly love to get its hands on Berezovsky. Even after six years away, in Russia his name is still synonymous to many with the great privatisation swindle of the 1990s. And Putin would surely see his downfall as a personal triumph. Berezovsky, though, for all his scheming is a shrewd and cautious survivor. He keeps at arm's length from the action - a puppeteer invisibly pulling fewer and fewer strings.

A Life in Brief

BORN 23 January 1946, in Moscow.

FAMILY Six children by four marriages.

EDUCATION 1968: graduated from Moscow forestry engineering institute; 1983: doctorate in computer science, Moscow State University.

CAREER 1969-87: research fellow, Russian Academy of Sciences; 1989: used car business; 1992: buys into oil company Sibneft; 1995: buys into ORT; 1996: joins Yeltsin's re-election campaign; 1999: elected to Duma; 2000: sets up Liberal Russia party but, facing charges of embezzlement, flees to London; 2003: granted political asylum in Britain.

HE SAYS "I am very bad at understanding people. I don't know who is a traitor, who is good, who is bad. But I'm good at understanding process."

THEY SAY "He is not an easy person to work with because of his impulsive character and short attention span... But he is a phenomenon." - Alex Goldfarb

[**Russian-born businessman: I met poisoned ex-spy Litvinenko in Israel**](#)

Last update - 00:12 25/11/2006

Russian-born businessman: I met poisoned ex-spy Litvinenko in Israel

By Yossi Melman, Haaretz Correspondent, and Agencies

Russian-born businessman Leonid Nevzlin, former CEO of the Yukos oil company and current chairman of the Diaspora Museum in Tel Aviv, said Friday that he had met in Israel with former Russian spy Alexander Litvinenko, who died Thursday in London from poisoning.

During the meeting, Litvinenko allegedly passed Nevzlin documents containing classified information possibly damaging to the current leadership in Russia.

In Nevzlin's estimation, Litvinenko's murder was tied to the information relating to Yukos contained in the documents. Nevzlin has turned the documents over to the London Metropolitan Police, who are investigating the murder.

British police announced Friday that traces of a radioactive substance, Polonium 210, were found in Litvinenko's urine. Polonium 210 is known to be highly lethal and very difficult to detect.

Litvinenko served until 1998 as a colonel in the Federal Security Services of Russia as part of a special unit that carried out investigations and special operations against businessmen. A few months before his murder, Litvinenko arrived in Israel in order to pass the documents to Nevzlin.

The Government of Russia has issued an arrest warrant for Nevzlin, arguing that he is wanted for tax evasion, budget irregularities, and for connection to the murder of the mayor a Siberian town where Yukos was operating.

It appears at this time that Litvinenko was murdered because of his association with Anna Politkovskaya, the Russian journalist who was shot to death in her apartment on October 7. Politkovskaya had also been a harsh critic of Putin's

Nevzlin and his business partner Michael Hodrokovsky, who is incarcerated in a Russian prison, were formerly large shareholders in Yukos, once one of the largest holding companies in Russia, as well as one of the largest oil companies in the world.

After the struggle of the company's owners against Putin's administration, and their support of opposition parties hostile to the Russian president, the government opened a series of investigations against the company, eventually resulting in the company's bankruptcy, and the imprisonment of Hodrokovsky and Platon Levedev, an additional business partner in Yukos.

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1. To: **All, *russia* (#0)**

[Litvinenko poisoning: the main players](#)

Friday November 24, 2006 The Guardian

Alexander Goldfarb Alex Goldfarb and Alexander Litvinenko met in a Russian prison. In the late 1990s, Mr Goldfarb was director of a George Soros-funded project to tackle TB in the Russian penal system. They met in Lefortovo prison, where Mr Litvinenko was awaiting trial on charges of abuse of office.

Mr Litvinenko had been charged after going public with a claim that he had been ordered to assassinate Boris Berezovsky by his FSB superiors.

The pair became friends, and the FSB agent rang Mr Goldfarb in 2000 when he wanted to defect. Mr Goldfarb, then working for Mr Berezovsky in the US, flew to Russia and arranged his escape via Turkey to Britain, where the defector requested asylum. Mr Goldfarb is executive director of the International Foundation for Civil Liberties, set up by the exiled Russian oligarch Mr Berezovsky in 2000 as an umbrella group for human rights activists. It is based in New York. According to its website, the foundation seeks to create "a network of social support among citizens faced with coercive authority". It was set up after Mr Berezovsky fell out with Vladimir Putin and became one of the Russian president's fiercest critics.

In a speech launching the foundation at the National Press Club in Washington, the tycoon remarked: "Under authoritarian rule, everyone's rights are under threat; a businessman's by an extortionist bureaucrat; a simple man's by any authority." He has been accused of using the foundation to bankroll widespread opposition to Mr Putin, and some Russian activists have refused money. Yelena Bonner, widow of the dissident scientist Andrei Sakharov, accepted a \$3m (£1.56m) grant, saying: "Money does not smell."

On Sunday, Mr Goldfarb emerged as press spokesman for the Litvinenko affair.

Boris Berezovsky

Since arriving in the UK six years ago, Mr Litvinenko had been close to the man who was once one of the wealthiest entrepreneurs in Russia, Boris Berezovsky. Mr Berezovsky, 60, is thought to own the north London house where Mr Litvinenko lived, and is said to have employed him as an adviser in the past.

Mr Berezovsky was Russia's first billionaire, a former mathematician who made a fortune during the country's rush to privatisation in the 90s. At one time he was also the primus inter pares of the Russian oligarchy, until Vladimir Putin turned upon him shortly after his election as president in March 2000.

He fled to London a few months later, and now divides his time between his Mayfair penthouse and his Surrey estate, where he is always surrounded by bodyguards.

The British courts have turned down a number of extradition requests, the latest over allegations that he was plotting a coup. Mr Berezovsky has always denied wrongdoing, saying that all charges against him are politically motivated.

Lord Bell

Another figure whose hand could be detected as the strange poisoning story unfolded was Lord Bell of Belgravia, the man who, as Tim Bell, came to be synonymous with the advertising campaigns that helped usher the Tories to power in 1979.

Today, as chairman of Bell Pottinger Communications, his clients include Mr Berezovsky with the result that his firm has been fielding media inquiries about Mr Litvinenko, and distributed the photograph that showed the former spy in hospital.

John Henry

John Henry's first foray into international politics came in the aftermath of the Ukrainian elections two years ago, when he was the first to point out that opposition candidate Viktor Yushchenko may have been poisoned with dioxins. Though he had not been involved in the politician's treatment, he suggested that the disfiguring of Mr Yushchenko's face was associated with dioxin poisoning, which causes a severe form of acne, a diagnosis confirmed by doctors a month later.

His second brush with post-Soviet intrigue came last week, when he was contacted by Alex Goldfarb, an associate of the businessman Boris Berezovsky, who asked him for his advice on the suspected poisoning of the former FSB agent Alexander Litvinenko.

Told some of the symptoms, Mr Henry, a clinical toxicologist at St Mary's hospital in London, suggested thallium poisoning might be to blame. It was a diagnosis he has now come to regret, believing he may have been misguided about aspects of the case.

Mr Henry, a former head of the national poisons unit at Guy's hospital, worked alongside Mr Goldfarb free of charge, and because he was interested in thallium, a now-rare poison.

Media inquiries about the defector's health were referred to Mr Henry, and on Tuesday morning he took part in a press conference outside the hospital in which he suggested that radioactive thallium might be to blame for the alleged poisoning.

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2. To: All, ***russia*** (#0)

[Who killed Litvinenko?](#)

By Cahal Milmo

Published: 25 November 2006

Alexander Litvinenko was a man who could be taught little about the seamy side of modern Russia. A KGB agent for 18 years, he occupied a world where intrigue, betrayal and ruthless trickery were the tools of working life.

But even a man whose job was to fight organised crime and counter subversion in the name of the Kremlin would have been surprised at an event as mired in low chicanery, high drama and cold-blooded cunning as his own passing. The spy novel saga of the life and death of the 43-year-old secret agent turned vehement critic of Vladimir Putin entered its most extraordinary phase yesterday when it was revealed that he died from exposure to a radioactive poison.

Last night, the Government was dealing with a public health alert and diplomatic crisis after traces of polonium 210, a by-product of uranium, were found at Mr Litvinenko's home as well as a sushi restaurant and London hotel he visited on 1 November.

The Health Protection Agency (HPA) confirmed that traces of the heavy metal, which is lethal if ingested in tiny quantities, were found in Mr Litvinenko's urine.

Until he died from heart failure on Thursday night, doctors had failed to pinpoint the cause of symptoms that reduced a man who ran five miles every day to a "ghost" with a crippled immune system and a useless liver. A post-mortem will not be carried out until it is deemed safe for hospital staff to do so.

Scotland Yard, whose anti-terrorist branch is leading the investigation, said it had closed the Itsu sushi restaurant and part of the hotel in Mayfair after HPA experts found traces of the chemical element polonium.

In a sign of the potential damage to relations between London and Moscow, the Foreign Office said it had asked the Russian government to provide "any information" that would help Scotland Yard's investigations. A spokesman said: "We've obviously raised it and it is a serious matter."

It is believed that Mr Litvinenko somehow ingested a small amount of polonium 210 on or around 1 November. Although harmless to the outer skin, the heavy metal, in quantities no larger than a pinch of salt, destroys internal organs by causing severe radiation poisoning.

The HPA described the risk of contamination to others who had come into contact with Mr Litvinenko on 1 November and subsequently as "minimal".

But the agency confirmed it was drawing up lists of staff at the two London hospitals where the Russian, who recently gained British citizenship, was treated and "tens" of staff would have to undergo screening for exposure to radioactivity. Staff at the sushi restaurant would also be assessed, the agency said.

Professor Pat Troop, chief executive of the HPA, said: "What we know is that this man had a high dose of radiation and our responsibility is to say: 'Has that caused a risk to others?'"

"For somebody to have this level of radiation they would have to have eaten it, inhaled it or taken it in through a wound. It is not yet clear how this entered his body."

The answers to that question lie in the events of 1 November and Mr Litvinenko's 18-year career in the KGB and its successor, the FSB. It brought Mr Litvinenko into contact or opposition with some of the most powerful figures in Russia during the break-up of the Soviet Union and the emergence of Mr Putin as a political leader admired and feared in equal measure.

It ended after encounters with a set of characters who could have been drawn from a James Bond film, ranging from an Italian academic and KGB expert once targeted by the mafia to a football-mad businessman who once guarded the Russian Prime Minister. But it was Mr Putin whom Mr Litvinenko chose to blame for his demise. Aware that the substance in his body was killing him, the former spy, along with his supporters, had the presence of mind to dictate a statement four days ago in which he made clear who he blamed for his condition.

In a statement released yesterday, Mr Litvinenko wrote: "As I lie here, I can distinctly hear the beating wings of the angel of death. I may be able to give him the slip, but I have to say my legs do not run as fast as I would like."

He continued: "You have shown yourself to be as barbaric and ruthless as your most hostile critics have claimed. You

may succeed in silencing one man but the howl of protest from around the world will reverberate, Mr Putin, in your ears for the rest of your life."

The response of the Russian President, attending a European Union summit in Finland, was blunt: "There is no ground for speculation of this kind. A death of a man is always a tragedy and I deplore this and send my condolences to the family."

Last night, legislators in Moscow suggested Mr Litvinenko's death was part of a plot against Russia. "The death of Litvinenko for Russia, for the security services means nothing," Valery Dyatlenko, a former head of the FSB, said on state-run Channel One television, contending that neither the Kremlin nor Russia's intelligence agencies would have had reason to kill him.

Police are now investigating the contacts which Mr Litvinenko made in London as he established a reputation as a strident critic of the Kremlin, in particular its policy in Chechnya.

Known as Sasha to his friends, he had come to Britain in 2000 after turning whistleblower on the FSB, claiming he had been ordered to assassinate the virulently anti-Putin oligarch and his subsequent patron Boris Berezovsky. He was quickly submerged into Berezovsky's circle of influential emigrés.

The exiled agent settled in Muswell Hill, a respectable corner of north London, in a large modern house owned by Mr Berezovsky. Shortly afterwards he was joined by his wife, Marina, 41, and their 12-year-old son, Anatole. Across the road lived Akhmed Zakayev, the foreign minister of the exiled Chechen government.

All this came to an abrupt halt on 1 November. Mr Litvinenko held two meetings on that Wednesday. It was the sixth anniversary of his arrival in Britain as a political refugee, having been an agent in the FSB unit tasked with countering organised crime gangs in the 1990s.

The first, at 10am, was at the Millennium Mayfair Hotel in central London with Sergei Lugovoy, a former KGB bodyguard and businessman who runs a security company in Moscow. Mr Lugovoy said he had been in London to watch a football match between Arsenal and CSKA Moscow. Also at the meeting were two other people unknown to Mr Litvinenko Dmitry Kovtun, the business partner of Mr Lugovoy, and another friend and partner named as Vyacheslav Sokolenko. Friends of Mr Litvinenko insist that he drank tea during the meeting.

Mr Lugovoy, former bodyguard to a Russian Prime Minister, Yegor Gaidar, who claimed to have renewed his 10-year relationship with Mr Litvinenko only recently, said last night that his business contact had taken no food or drink.

He said they had held a "very constructive" meeting, but Mr Litvinenko had cancelled a second breakfast meeting the next day after falling ill. The businessman denied any involvement in the death. He said: "I'm surprised by how hysterically some are trying to tie me to this." By 3pm, Mr Litvinenko had moved from Mayfair to the elegant façades of Piccadilly, where he met Mario Scaramella, another long-standing contact who had called him out of the blue saying he wanted to bring forward a meeting planned for 10 November to discuss important documents. The Italian examining magistrate who, among his many job descriptions, includes the titles of environmental campaigner and law professor, told Mr Litvinenko that he had received a death threat aimed at both of them. They met for 35 minutes in the basement of a branch of Itsu, a sushi restaurant chain. Mr Scaramella said last week that, while he himself drank only water, Mr Litvinenko bought food and drink from a chiller cabinet.

The documents they discussed, seen by The Independent, accused both men of being part of a conspiracy to besmirch the name of the FSB and there was a "necessity to use force" to silence them. The papers also purported to name a retired KGB agent who was responsible for planning the murder of the dissident journalist Anna Politkovskaya at her Moscow apartment in October.

Mr Litvinenko, a friend of the reporter, had been very public perhaps dangerously so about whom he believed to have been responsible for the murder. Thirteen days earlier he had stood up in front of an audience of journalists and campaigners at London's Frontline Club and accused Mr Putin of being involved.

The motivation of those who may have somehow slipped polonium 210 into Mr Litvinenko's food or drink remains

unknown. Theories abound, from an officially sanctioned "hit" by the FSB against a man seen as a traitor in Moscow, to an attempt to besmirch Mr Putin and his administration by rogue opponents, or a macabre suicide by Mr Litvinenko himself. The last scenario was described by one friend last night as "utter rubbish".

But what happened to the Russian agent following those meetings on 1 November is not in dispute a ghastly slide by a former pentathlete from rude health into a man with the appearance and demeanour of a cancer patient.

Initially, Mr Litvinenko spent 10 days at Barnet Hospital in north London. Staff put his extreme vomiting down to a violent stomach bug before moving him to a cancer ward when his white blood cell count dropped to zero. Poisoning was only investigated when he was transferred to University College London Hospital on 17 November and toxicology tests revealed small traces of thallium, known as the "secret agent's poison" it is odourless, tasteless and lethal in small quantities.

What had thus far been only reported on a single pro-Chechen website suddenly became worldwide news. Alex Goldfarb, the eloquent human rights campaigner who had arranged Mr Litvinenko's escape from Moscow in 2000, emerged as the official spokesman for his friend.

Behind the scenes, the exiled oligarch and arch-critic of Mr Putin, Boris Berezovsky, called in his PR agency, Bell Pottinger, to handle media inquiries. It was Bell Pottinger which distributed what will become the defining image of Alexander Litvinenko a photograph of his shrunken and yellowed features taken in his hospital bed with wires to a bank of medical machines trailing from his chest.

Such pictures of high political drama were a long way from the provincial backwater of Nalchik, the town in the far south of Russia where Mr Litvinenko was born in 1963, the son of a doctor. Described as "bright and principled", a 20-year-old Alexander joined the KGB in 1983 and rose through the ranks to become a lieutenant-colonel in the section dealing with organised crime.

It is understood that he had special responsibility for countering attempts by the Russian mafia to infiltrate the security services. In 1998, he declared his failure at this task. At a press conference he accused the FSB, then headed by Mr Putin, of ordering him to assassinate Mr Berezovsky. In turn charged with corruption by Moscow, Mr Litvinenko fled to London and continued his onslaught with a book, *The FSB Blows Up Russia*, in which he accused his former employers of murdering 300 people in 1999 by demolishing apartment blocks with explosives and blaming the attacks on Chechen rebels.

A series of further allegations were made, some of which such as the claim that the Kremlin had ordered the Beslan massacre were seen as undermining his credibility.

Amid reports of a tape recording which supposedly implicates senior Kremlin figures in a sex scandal, it is clear that Mr Litvinenko made enough enemies in enough places who could now make it on to the list of suspects for what the Yard was last night calling his "unexplained death".

But, yesterday, it fell to his father, Walter, to summarise a life and death far out of the ordinary. Dressed in a leather jacket and an orange scarf, Mr Litvinenko choked back tears and anger as he spoke to reporters outside University College London Hospital. He said: "My son died yesterday and he was killed by a little, tiny nuclear bomb.

"He faced his last hours with dignity. He was very courageous when he met death and I am proud of my son."

The leading players in an espionage drama

Vladimir Putin

The Russian president was accused by Mr Litvinenko of sanctioning his murder. The Kremlin has rejected the claims, but the death of the former agent will add to the perception that the FSB security service is running an assassination policy.

Mario Scaramella

The Italian academic and KGB expert met Mr Litvinenko at a sushi restaurant on the day he fell ill. There is no suggestion that Mr Scaramella was involved in the poisoning. He said he had met his friend to discuss a death threat aimed at them.

Andrei Lugovoy

The Moscow-based businessman and former KGB bodyguard held a meeting with Mr Litvinenko at a hotel on 1 November. Mr Lugovoy had tea with Mr Litvinenko and two other men. Mr Lugovoy said the meeting had been to discuss business and he had been in London to see a football match.

Boris Berezovsky

The exiled Russian oligarch had become an ally of Mr Litvinenko. Mr Berezovsky, a critic of Mr Putin, is thought to own the house in north London where Mr Litvinenko was living and financed his book, which levelled corruption and murder allegations against the FSB and Kremlin.

Akhmed Zakayev

The former actor and foreign minister of the Chechen government in exile was a visitor to Mr Litvinenko's bedside. The two men were neighbours. He accused the Kremlin of exporting "gangster politics" to London.

Lord Tim Bell

Bell Pottinger Communications, of which Lord Bell is chairman, includes Mr Berezovsky among its clients. The company handled media calls about Mr Litvinenko and arranged for the distribution of photographs taken of him in hospital.

Alex Goldfarb

The biochemist is director of a human rights group set up by Mr Berezovsky in 2000. Mr Goldfarb has put forward the allegation that the Kremlin is responsible for Mr Litvinenko's death.

John Henry

The leading toxicologist claimed that thallium was to blame for Mr Litvinenko's condition. But the hospital said he had made his remarks without seeing test results. The professor said he has withdrawn from the case.

Countdown to tragedy

7 October

Russian journalist Anna Politkovskaya is shot dead in Moscow. Litvinenko begins to investigate her murder.

1 November

Litvinenko meets former KGB officer at Millennium Hotel, London, then meets Italian academic Mario Scaramella at Itsu sushi bar in Leicester Square. Later admitted to Barnet General hospital.

17 November

His condition worsens and he is transferred to University College London Hospital.

19 November

Reports emerge that he has been poisoned with thallium.

20 November

Litvinenko moved to intensive care. Scotland Yard say they are treating it as a suspected deliberate poisoning. Kremlin dismisses allegations of involvement.

22 November

As his condition worsens, doctors rule out thallium and radiation poisoning.

23 November

After suffering a heart-attack overnight, doctors say he is critically ill. Later that night, statement is issued saying he is dead.

24 November

It emerges that radioactive material is found at hotel and restaurant which Litvinenko visited. His family release statement from former spy in which he tells Vladimir Putin "may god forgive you for what you have done".

Destro posted on 2006-11-24 20:15:18 ET [Reply](#) [Trace](#)

3. To: All, *russia* (#2)

Alex Goldfarb

The biochemist is director of a human rights group set up by Mr Berezovsky in 2000. Mr Goldfarb has put forward the allegation that the Kremlin is responsible for Mr Litvinenko's death.

Destro posted on 2006-11-24 20:25:35 ET [Reply](#) [Trace](#)

4. To: All, *russia* (#3)

John Henry

The leading toxicologist claimed that thallium was to blame for Mr Litvinenko's condition. But the hospital said he had made his remarks without seeing test results. The professor said he has withdrawn from the case.

Berezovsky minion John Henry was also involved in the Yushchenko poison case. How is that for a coincidence?

Destro posted on 2006-11-24 20:28:26 ET [Reply](#) [Trace](#)

5. To: Destro, *russia* (#4)

How about this article?

[**US Department of State seriously interested in Russian oligarch in disgrace, Boris Berezovsky \(Assassination of Paul Klebnikov, Forbes Russia Editor\)**](#)

The former Russian oligarch, who currently resides in England, is suspected to be involved in the assassination of Forbes Russia editor

Russian oligarch in disgrace, Boris Berezovsky, may soon face severe problems. The US State Department is interested

in Mr. Berezovsky's activities: the oligarch found himself involved in the case of Paul Klebnikov, a journalist of the US origin, editor of Forbes Russia. Mr. Berezovsky did not even expect that events would take such a turn for him.

Boris Berezovsky and Paul Klebnikov used to have something in common. Paul Klebnikov wrote an article about Berezovsky in the original English version of the magazine, in which he accused the erstwhile Kremlin favorite of many sins, including the implication in the murder of a well-known Russian journalist, Vlad Listyev. Boris Berezovsky sued Forbes in response – he decided to take a legal action against the world-known magazine in England. The magazine eventually had to publish apologies.

This is an excerpt. Please read the rest of the article.

GarySpFc posted on 2006-11-24 21:11:49 ET [Reply](#) [Trace](#)

6. To: All (#5)

Additionally.

1. Russia and the UK were very close to coming to an extradition treaty agreement. This would put the entire Berezovsky gang under and increased risk of deportation to Russia, or having to relocate to another country at the very least.
2. Letvineko just happened to live right next door to Chechen terrorist Zakayev, who like Letvineko is on the payroll of Team Berezovsky. Even the Dr. who came out earlier in the week and claimed Thallium poisoning works directly for Berezovsky.
3. Russian officials seem to have finally noticed the pattern of these things happening when Putin is having meetings at overseas events. Almost every one of these relates to EU meetings. This goes back to the terrorist attacks on the Moscow subway and two aircraft a few years back as well as the Klebnikov, Politskaya and now Letvineko.

Linked?

GarySpFc posted on 2006-11-24 21:56:07 ET [Reply](#) [Trace](#)

7. To: Destro (#0)

[A GoogleNews search on Berezovsky](#).. Certainly enough here to worry Boris.

JohnA posted on 2006-11-24 23:01:30 ET [Reply](#) [Trace](#)

8. To: GarySpFc, Itzlzha, Happy2BMe-OnLP, r-u-n-n o-f-t, AuntB, Sweetjustusnow, KineTIK, Travis McGee, The Gillman, liberator, samegwire, fitz, out damned spot, seen2much, Joe Hadenuf, fallujah nuker, Scrivener, indalay, add925, Serenissima Venezia, QBC, kstews, (#5)

Least we forget that Paul Klebnikov soon turned up dead after he published a book detailing Berezovsky's and other oligarch's sins....oops, must be Putin...never mind that he and Berezovsky are enemies and Klebnikov was supportive of Putin's policies...to the One World, Free Trade, Trotskyite neowhores, it's always Putin.

Slavik_Avenger posted on 2006-11-24 23:08:25 ET [Reply](#) [Trace](#)

9. To: Slavik_Avenger (#8)

[Berezovsky announces campaign for Russian Presidency](#)

JohnA posted on 2006-11-24 23:11:02 ET [Reply](#) [Trace](#)

10. To: Slavik_Avenger (#8)

Yeah, why take a dying man's last words at face value when there's an opportunity to play Blame the Jew?

thoughtomator posted on 2006-11-24 23:11:18 ET [Reply](#) [Trace](#)

11. To: thoughtomator, Slavik_Avenger (#10)

why take a dying man's last words at face value

Sorry, but I find that to be one of the most compelling. I've seen a man dying, knowing he's dying.

He summoned family members to his hospital bedside, for days before he was finally unable to speak, shortly before he became unconscious (leukemia).

Men who know their time is limited don't waste their time on things other than what is urgent to them.

This man I saw dying loved politics; but that was the last thing on his mind in his final hours.

Scrivener posted on 2006-11-24 23:15:05 ET [Reply](#) [Trace](#)

12. To: Slavik_Avenger, r-u-n-n o-f-t, AuntB, Sweetjustusnow, KineTIK, Itzlzha, The Gillman, liberator, samegwire, fitz, out damned spot, seen2much, Joe Hadenuf, fallujah nuker, Scrivener, indalay, add925, Serenissima Venezia, QBC, kstews, GarySpFc, (#8)

There was world-coverage about six or seven years ago when a Russian reporter in Moscow was mowed down in broad daylight for uncovering Russian Mafia.

I believe it is still a true saying that Russia has more billionaires than any other country with most of those of course in the mafia.

Happy2BMe-OnLP posted on 2006-11-24 23:29:04 ET [Reply](#) [Trace](#)

13. To: thoughtomator (#10)

Yeah, why take a dying man's last words at face value when there's an opportunity to play Blame the Jew?

Very well said. That is exactly what's involved here. Putin and his Iranian friends must be working hard on this.

freedomcat posted on 2006-11-24 23:33:19 ET [Reply](#) [Trace](#)

14. To: freedomcat (#13)

Who benefits from accusations against Russia/Putin?

JohnA posted on 2006-11-24 23:37:27 ET [Reply](#) [Trace](#)

15. To: freedomcat (#13)

Who benefits from getting rid of Litvinenko?

JohnA posted on 2006-11-24 23:38:55 ET [Reply](#) [Trace](#)

16. To: Happy2BMe-OnLP (#12)

I believe it is still a true saying that Russia has more billionaires than any other country with most of those of course in the mafia.

You're likely right.

Scrivener posted on 2006-11-24 23:57:54 ET [Reply](#) [Trace](#)

17. To: Scrivener (#16)

Did you prefer Russia as communist and part of the USSR or are you now re-directing your attack against Russia's rich, regretting, of course, that you didn't get to choose them?

JohnA posted on 2006-11-25 00:01:29 ET [Reply](#) [Trace](#)

18. To: JohnA (#17)

Did you prefer Russia as communist and part of the USSR or are you now re-directing your attack against Russia's rich,

I presume, then, you must believe that a tiger can change its stripes.

Scrivener posted on 2006-11-25 00:03:19 ET [Reply](#) [Trace](#)

19. To: Scrivener (#18)

What? Are you angry that Putin called your put-up war on Iraq a *political mistake*, which it was?

JohnA posted on 2006-11-25 00:06:37 ET [Reply](#) [Trace](#)

20. To: Scrivener (#18)

Who benefits from getting rid of Litvinenko?

Nobody has answered this. You seem a clever fellow. Give it a shot, whydoncha?

JohnA posted on 2006-11-25 00:09:14 ET [Reply](#) [Trace](#)

21. To: JohnA (#19)

lol. As I thought; you won't address the point of your comment to me.

I assure you, tigers cannot change their stripes; merely because Russia claims to no longer be a communistic country, or hold onto its long-held ideologies means nothing. There has long been evidence now that Putin, once in the KGB, has been redirecting the country *back* to what it once was, and he has taken heat for it.

Or have you also, looked in his eyes and claim to know his heart?

Scrivener posted on 2006-11-25 00:11:27 ET [Reply](#) [Trace](#)

22. To: Scrivener (#21)

Just because the US holds an astounding 5.9% of Russian foreign investment doesn't make Russia an unsound bet.

JohnA posted on 2006-11-25 00:14:44 ET [Reply](#) [Trace](#)

23. To: Scrivener (#21)

have you also, looked in his eyes and claim to know his heart?



JoeSnuffy posted on 2006-11-25 00:19:15 ET (1 image) [Reply](#) [Trace](#)

24. To: Scrivener (#21)

In 2005, the United States accounted for only 2.6% of Russian exports (11th place)

...and 4.6% of imports (5th)

The question then remains: *In view of the to-be-DEM-opposed Russia-US bilateral WTO trade deal*, of what value is your opinion in this matter? 2.6%?

JohnA posted on 2006-11-25 00:25:16 ET [Reply](#) [Trace](#)

25. To: JohnA, Scrivener (#20)

Who benefits from getting rid of Litvinenko?

Litvinenko was a severe critic of Putin to the point that he had to flee Russia and take refuge in Britain. In the past year or so, several critics of Putin and his administration have also been murdered.

The most certain evidence until they find the killer is Litvinenko's own deathbed statement (see thread "Last Angry Words of a Dying Man") in which he straightforwardly accuses Putin of ordering his murder.

I think your attempt to place the blame on Berezovsky, also an enemy of Putin, is totally lame.

Magician posted on 2006-11-25 00:45:02 ET [Reply](#) [Trace](#)

26. To: JoeSnuffy (#23)

The following is an excerpt. [Notorious Oligarch Berezovsky Reveals Plans for Coup in Russia](#)

Wanted Russian tycoon Boris Berezovsky has gone public with his plans to seize power in Russia by force. The London-based oligarch said in an interview with the Ekho Moskvyy radio station Wednesday that he had been working on the coup plan for 18 months.

Berezovsky, a notorious critic of Putin's regime, said he aimed to replace the "anti-constitutional regime" in Russia.

::snip::

Today's regime would never allow a fair election, Berezovsky added, so the only way out is a coup.

"There is only one way out — a coup, a forced seizure of power," he said.

The oligarch said he had plenty of supporters.

Continued

GarySpFc posted on 2006-11-25 00:47:28 ET [Reply](#) [Trace](#)

27. To: JohnA (#24)

of what value is your opinion in this matter?

Typical of someone who dislikes the truth being stated.

Truth always has value, regardless of how much you dislike that fact.

Scrivener posted on 2006-11-25 00:54:09 ET [Reply](#) [Trace](#)

28. To: thoughtomator, Slavik_Avenger (#10)

Yeah, why take a dying man's last words at face value when there's an opportunity to play Blame the Jew?

And he had some special insight how? Think the world works like an episode of 'Matlock'?

Destro posted on 2006-11-25 00:55:07 ET [Reply](#) [Trace](#)

29. To: Magician (#25)

I think your attempt to place the blame on Berezovsky, also an enemy of Putin, is totally lame.

Then why was our state department interested in Berezovsky for the murder of Paul Klebnikov? There are many connections to the present case if you do a little THINKING.

GarySpFc posted on 2006-11-25 02:13:21 ET [Reply](#) [Trace](#)

30. To: thoughtomator, *russia* (#10)

Yeah, why take a dying man's last words at face value when there's an opportunity to play Blame the Jew?

A dieing man who never knew who poisoned him but pointed a finger.

As for your little comment at the end, show's your level of thinking. Guess because Berezovsky is a Jew he can't be a criminal? Wow, guess you think Soros is a swell guy too, since he's a Jew. Never mind that while mascarding as a Christian in WW2 Budapest, he helped the Nazis ship off other Jews. But by your comment, well since he's Jewish he can't be wrong. Or how about the father of the Gulags, yup, was a Jew....imagine that, amongst Jews there is scum, just like in every ethnic group.

Oh, wait, silly me...you're throwing down the race card....the last defense of anyone without a clue or morals.

Slavik_Avenger posted on 2006-11-25 02:48:42 ET [Reply](#) [Trace](#)

31. To: Scrivener (#11)

Sorry, but I find that to be one of the most compelling.

Wow, you should be a prosecutor...I'm sure you'll win lots of cases on the dieing words of men who don't know who their killers are and have ZERO proof to link them to their claims.

Go for it. And while you're at it, show us the proof.

Slavik_Avenger posted on 2006-11-25 02:50:19 ET [Reply](#) [Trace](#)

32. To: Happy2BMe-OnLP (#12)

There was world-coverage about six or seven years agon done when a Russian reporter in Moscow was mowed down in broad daylight for uncovering Russian Mafia.

That reporter was a Forbes Senior Editor, a US citizen and had just published a book exposing the Oligarchs and Berezovsky in particular for their crimes. Paul also supported Putin's policies against them, to include against Khadorkovsky. But the idjits in the US still jumped on the blame Putin for the killing bandwagon...since their brains...aka US bought and paid for media told them whom to hate.

Slavik_Avenger posted on 2006-11-25 02:52:23 ET [Reply](#) [Trace](#)

33. To: freedomcat, liberator, *russia* (#13)

Very well said. That is exactly what's involved here. Putin and his Iranian friends must be working hard on this.

Imagine that, a Neocon (Trotskytes) throwing down the race card...what a surprise. Guess Jews can't be criminals, right? They're the only people in the world who can't have criminals and scum as part of their population? Best go to the Israeli jails and tell them they're wrong for locking up Jews.





And by the way, Berezovsky converted to Orthodoxy some 10 years ago. But then I don't expect you to know those kinds of details.

Slavik_Avenger posted on 2006-11-25 02:57:19 ET (2 images) [Reply](#) [Trace](#)

34. To: JoeSnuffy (#23)

have you also, looked in his eyes and claim to know his heart?

No but I read your writings and know you to be a Neocon...enough said.

Slavik_Avenger posted on 2006-11-25 02:58:53 ET [Reply](#) [Trace](#)

35. To: Magician (#25)

In the past year or so, several critics of Putin and his administration have also been murdered.

Several? Except for Politovskaya, who else? Name some names....

We'll wait.

Slavik_Avenger posted on 2006-11-25 02:59:45 ET [Reply](#) [Trace](#)

36. To: Magician, *russia* (#25)

The most certain evidence until they find the killer is Litvinenko's own deathbed statement (see thread "Last Angry Words of a Dying Man") in which he straightforwardly accuses Putin of ordering his murder.

Wow Dick Tracy, now go try and build an actual law case on those words without any evidence or proof.

You guys are such a joke. The Palies make the same statements against all of Israel's heads, should they then all be tried as murderers? A bunch of hypocrits and nothing more.

Slavik_Avenger posted on 2006-11-25 03:01:22 ET [Reply](#) [Trace](#)

37. To: Scrivener (#27)

Typical of someone who dislikes the truth being stated.

You've yet to state any truth, only your limited opinion. How can any of us dislike the truth?

Slavik_Avenger posted on 2006-11-25 03:02:33 ET [Reply](#) [Trace](#)

38. To: Slavik_Avenger (#31)

Proof to my opinions and beliefs are stated, in black and white, on this thread--opinions to which I am entitled, as are you with *your* speculations.

BTW, it is common knowledge that people take seriously a dying man's words. And if you don't realize that, I suggest *you* disprove what I just stated are commonly held opinions.

Scrivener posted on 2006-11-25 03:05:48 ET [Reply](#) [Trace](#)

39. To: Slavik_Avenger (#37)

That comment was not addressed to you; I suggest you reread what the comment was concerning. Your comments to valid remark suggests you're a bit slow on the uptake.

Scrivener posted on 2006-11-25 03:07:46 ET [Reply](#) [Trace](#)

40. To: Destro (#0)

Berezovsky, who spent time by Litvinenko's hospital bedside, has said he suspected Russia's intelligence services were behind the alleged assassination attempt. But in Russia on Friday, pro-Kremlin lawmakers suggested Berezovsky was behind the poisoning.

Which looks more like a used car salesman?

Berezovsky



Putin



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fasttalker posted on 2006-11-25 03:09:30 ET (2 images) [Reply](#) [Trace](#)

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