

TRANSCRIPT INTERVIEW ALEXANDER LITVINENKO
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TAPE ONE (1)

00:00:26:18 Yes, I've been leaving in London for a bit more than two years now. Of course, it's hard to leave away from my motherland. I miss my home, I miss my friends, but... I want to use this opportunity to thank England, the country that gave refuge to my family and offered us real protection. 00:46:10

00:46:14 Well, emigration is always a difficult thing, especially forced emigration, when you never thought of, never dreamed of leaving your homeland. There are people who live in Russia but want to go to the West – I never had such thoughts, I never wanted that, it just... became a necessity. It was a very hard decision to make both for me and my family.
01:15:14

01:15:18 And I must say that I'm grateful ... to England ... to the British government that made a decision on my case, sorted it out quickly and objectively and granted me political asylum. So the British justice system, the British law-enforcement agencies confirmed that I was a political refugee that I was persecuted in Russia not for criminal reasons... That my motifs were not of a criminal but of political nature. 01:51:00

01:51:04 And of course now... we're getting used to England, so to say... one can say we're putting roots into that soil. My son speaks very pure English now and I'm afraid he's going to forget his Russian. He's turning into an Englishman and I realise that quite well. He is acquiring a mentality of an Englishman. I can see that. He's different... He's different from those children that... that, let's say, grow up in Russia. 02:34:00

02:35:02 It's his... It's the way he sees life. And... My wife also speaks English quite well. I'm studying English. We're acquiring friends here... And if, say, I had to go back to Russia right now, if I went back to Russia... I understand it quite well, that while being in Russia I by now would have missed London just as I'm missing Moscow now. 03:09:12

03:20:04 Well, my application for asylum... Just a second, may I?... 03:00:25

03:26:10 Marina, Marina, close the door, please, it's too noisy. Please. Excuse me. 03:31:00

03:35:12 Let's roll it back a bit. I'm sorry. 03:37:00

03:41:04 Well, 1 November 2000 I and my family arrived in London to the Heathrow airport. Immediately on arrival, I think within an hour, we addressed the British government and appealed for political asylum. I was granted political asylum on 3 May 2001. 04:12:00

04:13:00 So, in fact, it took six months. 04:18:00

04:21:08 Well, I was granted political asylum because I was subjected... because my case was not a criminal, but a political one. I was persecuted at home because of my political convictions. For the things I said. 04:37:00

05:00:10 Well, I must say that that escape proved to be a very serious trial for me and my family. ... First of all, when I... Before we escaped Russia... If we consider it stage by stage... First of all, it was very hard to make a decision, the decision to leave Russia. I understood that if I leave Russia I'd be leaving it ... for a long time. 05:29:21

05:29:30 And I won't be able to come back anytime soon. And I... thought about it for a long time, so did my wife, before we took that decision. We discussed it. It was a painful, difficult decision. I'd compare it to suicide. I mean, in fact, it's when a man takes... the question whether to commit suicide... Well, it was tantamount to suicide. 06:03:21

06:04:00 I understood there'd be no way back. There'd be a new life ahead. And it would be full of things unknown. But I also understood quite well that if I stayed in Russia they wouldn't leave me alone, the Russian secret service, I mean. Because people working in those structures don't know how to forgive. If they start forgiving people, the whole system of secret service would be no more. 06:31:18

06:31:22 I mean, Russian authorities... they don't forgive. Well, this mentality, I'd say, is a Communist mentality. Communists never forgave those who challenged them. And now, unfortunately, that's what perpetuates in Russia, I realised that quite well. 06:56:12

06:56:18 I understood quite well that if I didn't leave Russia, they would never leave me alone, they'd be persecuting me... In the best case I'd be arrested and spend at least 10 years in prison for nothing. To be left alone I had to recant, to take my statements back. Recant and say, "I'm sorry. I won't do it again" – meaning, "I won't ever challenge the system again." "I won't speak the truth." 07:27:00

07:28:10 And... And that's the best case. In the worst case they'd just murder me ... on my own doorstep, somewhere.

07:38:00 It was quite possible. I was told so. Actually, not a single one of my former superiors cared to dissemble about that. 07:46:18

07:47:00 Well, I can tell you a curious episode. Before we made a decision that I had to leave Russia, naturally it wasn't just my decision, my wife took part as well. I'm telling this to you openly and honestly, so you must understand that it wasn't just my decision. Naturally, I discussed it with those people close to me – my friends and confederates. That, naturally, was Boris Berezovsky and Yuri Felshtinsky (checked). 08:21:10

08:21:14 Well... And, naturally, I didn't want to leave Russia. And before I made that decision we tried to make some arrangement with those people at the FSB that were persecuting me... so they might leave me alone or at least refrain from extreme measures. Felshtinsky, Yuri, met my former, the head of my Directorate, General Hoholkov (checked). Hoholkov just said... They talked for quite a long time, a couple of hours I think. 08:53:08

08:53:12 And Yuri asked Hoholkov – I'm sure he'll confirm... Yuri told Hoholkov "You do understand that we're not going to abandon Sasha whatever comes. He's our friend, our comrade and we don't abandon our comrades." From the times... From the times the dissidents were struggling against the Soviet Union these people never abandoned their friends in trouble. That's the reason there's no Soviet Union now and no KGB. 09:24:00

09:24:04 And Yuri told Hoholkov "We're not going to abandon Sasha, we'll keep helping him. Why do you need all this? Leave him alone. He'll get... You dismissed him from the FSB, he'll be getting another job. He's got a wife, a child – let him live in peace," 09:39:00

09:39:20 And Hoholkov said the following... Yuri told me that. He said "Let Berezovsky pay me a figure with six zeroes." That means about... more than a million dollars. It comes to at least a million dollars. For me it sounded so cynical... If Hoholkov said, "We're not going to leave Litvinenko alone because he challenged the system." – I could have at least understood that. 10:07:00

10:07:04 When Hoholkov... If Hoholkov said, "All right, we'll leave him alone, but he must never defy the system again." – I could have understood that as well. But Hoholkov demanded money, American dollars, mind you. More than a million. And I realised they were bandits. And I realised that in general... I know how influential was Hoholkov. I knew with what kind of people he was associating – Yastrzhembsky, Kokoshin... I mean, Hoholkov could enter any office... including that of Putin. 10:41:21

10:42:00 I understood quite well that the things Hoholkov had been doing he hadn't been doing by himself. He had been doing it all upon consulting with Putin and Patrushev. I realised we were dealing with honest-to-God bandits, who had not a shred of honour or conscience. And simply... You simply cannot treat with those people. And – forget about agreements – I simply wouldn't be able to keep silent. 11:12:00

11:12:04 Because I can... I realised it quite well... It was... That conversation between Felshtinsky and Hoholkov happened in 2000, sometime in March 2000. In March, or perhaps in April... I understood quite well that those people now held power and what they'd be doing with our country. And then I realised I had to escape, really. 11:34:21

11:35:00 Then there came a string of court cases that were breaking the law, that were breaking the constitution... And when the chairman of the Moscow regional military court a lieutenant general answered a question by my lawyer... My lawyer asked him "Why are you breaking the constitution?" And the chairman of the Moscow regional military court, lieutenant general Beznosiuk proclaimed, "Well, you know our system." So he hinted that "We have orders from above, we can't do anything." 12:06:00

12:06:04 And I understood I wouldn't get a fair trial in Russia. That that trial was a fiction. It was just a performance, a comedy of justice – and I had a particular part written for me in that performance. And I had no wish to play that part. And I understood that... that would be just a show-trial. So to save myself, my family, my little kid – I understood I had to run. 12:33:00

12:33:12 Then the threats began... That was when I tried to defend myself at court. I was ready to prove my innocence. I had ironclad proof – like videotapes of interrogations during which... - it was later claimed that I beat suspects into pulp... Though there existed a videotape of an interrogation where that man was questioned by a different person altogether – and nobody laid as much as a finger on him. I have them here in England. 12:57:12

12:57:16 I understood that... Yes, and I was told that if I brought that evidence to court and the court exonerated me – I'd been exonerated twice before that – nobody would be talking to me, they'd just kill my child. That was it. That was said in a very final way and I realised I must escape. And, naturally, we escaped from Russia. That's regarding the time when we lived in Russia. 13:26:00

13:26:04 As for the escape itself... Speaking of the technical side of the problem... The difficulty was that I had no secret/special services backing me. It's one thing if you're working for a secret service or collaborating with a foreign intelligence agency then when you escape the country you have that foreign intelligence service and its agents in place covering you, you get a passport made – or they get you through in a car boot – I had nothing of the sort. I had no secret service backing me up. 13:56:12

13:56:18 The only thing I did have of course, was the money for that escape. Boris Berezovsky helped me, naturally he didn't abandon me – he behaved as a normal human being. And when the question of money came up Boris said, "Sasha, look. For all practical purposes you saved my life. And it doesn't even matter that you saved my life. What matters that you and me think the same way and we know that with those people in power Russia won't be developing normally. 14:23:04

14:23:08 "It's not only me or you who they'll kill, they'll kill lots of other people. And we must do something that maybe nobody but us can do. We must fight for our ideas, for our convictions and do everything in our power to turn Russia into a normal civilized country. I have the money and I'm going to help you. And say..." 14:46:00

14:46:06 I said... I was feeling uncomfortable; after all we were speaking about money... He said, "You know, - he said, - "if you had the money would you help me?" I said "Of course, Boris Abramovich." "You see? So I'm going to help you now." But we weren't speaking millions of dollars. It was the kind of money I needed to buy the tickets, to stay at the hotel and... well, to pay for our food. Well... 15:07:00

15:07:05 And you know... I didn't have that kind of money. I just didn't have it. Because I never took bribes, I didn't go into... I didn't go into protection racket milking commercial enterprises like nearly everybody in the law-enforcement agencies did. The FSB too. In Russia. I didn't have the money. I had a pittance... I think... Well, it was a small sum in cash. I think 2.5 or 3 thousand dollars, no more. Where can one go with that kind of money? One one-way ticket and two days at the hotel – that's it, then it runs out. 15:48:02

15:48:06 Well, naturally he helped me with money. He helped me to settle, Boris Berezovsky. He helped me to settle here in England in the beginning, to find my legs. And I'm very grateful to that man. Well... 16:02:21

16:03:00 The most difficult moment of that escape was the time when we were in Turkey... We were followed - now I know beyond doubt that we were followed by the agents of the Russian foreign intelligence service. That was in Ankara. I went to the American Embassy... I was, I was ushered out of there. And I know now that Russia was trying to make Turkey agree to arrest and extradite me. But we still managed to scam out of Turkey and fly to England. 16:37:10

16:37:14 At that moment I had no passport. I had a fake passport of a different state because my own had been stolen during the police search of my house. I had no visa. And we were sitting in a hotel in Istanbul - my wife, a small child who knew something wrong was going on and was very nervous. He asked me "Daddy, where will we be tomorrow?" My wife held out, she is a strong, courageous woman, she held, but she didn't know what would happen to our family tomorrow. 17:10:00

17:10:04 We had a suitcase with our things. We had some money for expenses... I didn't know what would happen to me tomorrow. The only thing I did say to my wife was that under no circumstances I'd allow myself to be taken alive and I would not go to prison again. "Because,- I told her,- I don't want to croak having the stink of prison around me, I'd better die where the air is fresh and the sky is blue. 17:34:21

17:35:00 And... I was looking at my wife, at my child and I was thinking that tomorrow I might be no more. And at that time it was Alik Elfhart (?) who helped me a lot and I'm very grateful to him. He found out, he found out on the net that you don't need a transit visa to go to England - and that's what decided the fate of my family. We managed to get on the last plane, as they say. We got stuck in a traffic jam... and 40 minutes before departure we jumped into that plane - and flew to England. 18:07:21

18:08:00 Sometimes I think God saved me. And when God saves somebody, perhaps He needs it for some reason of His own. 18:16:00

18:35.04 Well. I joined the army... I started working for the army in 1980. I... 18:44:00

18:57:14 I understand. I joined the army in 1980. I started as a private and in 20 years of service I became a lieutenant colonel. I was a vice-director of the most secret Directorate of the Federal Security Service. In principle, I made quite a career in the secret service - at 33 I was a lieutenant colonel, I got that rank ahead of time and actually was one of the youngest lieutenant colonels in the system. 19:25:00

19:27:00 I was transferred to the KGB, to the Committee of the State Security of the USSR in 1988. 1988. I served in the military counterintelligence section. I ended up there because I liked that line of work. It was interesting. I was working with people. There was something mysterious about it. Our papers didn't say that the KGB actually dealt with terrorism. And the job of a counterintelligence officer on an operative installation - and I was servicing the units of the special Dzerzhinsky armoured infantry division - didn't include anything reprehensible. We were exposing people that tried... that stole arms and ammunition or soldiers that

intended to escape the unit with their weapons. We did have several such cases - some officers and sergeants were shot. So in fact we were preventing murders. 20:25:00

20:25:12 At the time... and I was involved in field operations since 89, 1989, at that time the 5th, the 6th Article of the Constitution had been already abolished - so that... That's the one on the status of the CPSU. So the KGB no longer worked with ideology. It was the 6th Article, yes, Maria Nikolaevna? Well.. it was.. an article.. Correct me if I'm wrong.... An article of the Constitution was cancelled and the KGB practically stopped working with ideology. We didn't charge our agents with finding out who told what joke about whom and who thought what. Our task was to prevent emergency situations, escapes, and, of course, to fight, to limit the activities of the foreign intelligence services. But where would you get foreign agents in an armoured infantry regiment? 21:19:21

21:20:20 Our duties mostly resembled those of a military police though in principle we were a KGB unit. And that unit was a part of the whole KGB system. So...21:34:00

21:36:16 After the coup of 1991, after the coup failed, I was transferred to the HQ to the unit... to the unit fighting organised crime. That was a unit of the Russian secret service. At that time they created... the Federal Security Agency of the Russian Federation. It reported to Yeltsin. 22:05:21

22:06:00 That's when I started working at the HQ. I was working on the organised-crime-related problems, then I transferred into a counter-terrorism unit. And I served there until 1997. In 1997 I... I and several my colleagues were transferred to the top, most secret unit in the FSB that dealt in - as we later understood as we started getting our orders - extralegal murder. Our unit received orders from the top officials of our country to liquidate people found disagreeable. 22:49:06

22:49:10 I served in that unit for half a year as a deputy section head... And the fact is we refused to follow the criminal orders of our superiors, actually the unit mutinied, if it needs to be spelt out. Well. 23:09:21

23:10:00 Several sections denounced their superiors to the attorney general's office. For a year an investigation was run on our superiors, then it was illegally closed and we got persecuted in turn. Actually they went after us the first day when we rebelled against our superiors. They started listening to our phone calls and put surveillance on us. Me and my wife were attacked not far from our house. 23:33:21

23:34:00 On several occasions they tried to send me to a mental hospital, to a psychiatrist... Well... It's an old KGB trick, the Fifth Directorate trick... that's the people who maintained the ideology. 23:49:12

23:49:16 When all those things failed, didn't work and persecution grew more severe... When Putin became the FSB Director we were all sacked - on Putin's orders. I was sacked on 10 January 1999. It was his personal signature... Personal... My order of dismissal was signed personally by Putin. 24:15:00

24:16:00 Well... They sacked us, they persecuted us so we made a decision... We realised that we were about to leave the secret service permanently - that they would make a short work of us. So we made a decision, I and five my colleagues made a decision to go to the people, to the parliament and to use the mass media to tell what was happening with the Russian secret service. 24:45:00

24:47:12 And we called a press conference in 1998 where we told everything we knew. Couple of days after that the first criminal charge was brought against me. 24:57:00

24:58:00 As for corruption and criminal activities of the Russian secret service... actually they have historical roots. If you closely read the KGB documentation it becomes clear... that KGB has in fact never been a secret service. Only several small units were involved in counteracting foreign intelligence agencies - i.e. doing what a secret service of a civilised country should be doing. 25:32:00

25:32:04 The main bulk of units and personnel of the KGB, I'd say 70% of all assets and resources that the KGB had at its disposal were busy with maintaining the regime and protecting the communist ideology. In reality it was an appendage, a secret appendage of the Communist Party. 26:00:00

26:00:18 After the Soviet Union... In the Soviet Union, you see, there were two ideologies - the communist one and the criminal one. I mean, the criminal world, it lived by its own laws, and the Communists could do nothing with it. They liquidated the Upright Men (criminal authorities), killed them, shot them, threw them into prisons... but they couldn't do anything. So... In the Soviet Union there were two ideologies - the communist one and the criminal one. 26:31:10

26:31:14 So when in 1991 the Communist Party expired... the communist ideology was superseded by the criminal one. And those people who worked in the KGB for their ideas sake started serving for money's sake. And... since nobody needed the communist ideology any more they made use of the criminal ideology. 27:05:00

27:06:04 It's not an accident, that starting at about 1996 when the FSB command posts became to be filled by people who spent their life fighting the so-called "enemy ideologies", that's the FSB Director, Kovalev Nikolai Dmitrievich, who spent all his life serving in the 5th Directorate units, doing the 5th kinds of jobs, he's the former underling of Bobkov - that's the people who persecuted dissidents. 27:33:00

27:36:00 He was replaced at the post of the FSB Director by Mr. Putin who... though he claims that he served in foreign intelligence - he also all his life... he was recruited as a student by the agents of the 5th KGB Directorate. His first job was within the 5th KGB Directorate. After his posting in Germany he got a job fighting the so-called "enemy ideologies". This man has always served in the 5th Directorate units. The same kind of jobs fell to Mr Patrushev who also all his life run on the 5th D track. In the KGB, I mean. The same story with Mr Cherkesov, the close friend of Putin and his confederate who also served in the 5th D units. 28:16:00

28:16:04 So... all that team... I'll tell you, the only things they knew was how to monitor the mood of the people, how to try to influence what the citizens thought, how to gather gossip, how to gather gossip and fill up files on people - who told what joke about whom... if we're speaking in the everyday life terms. 28:42:00

28:44:00 And... because they were used to... because those people need an ideology and the communist ideology was gone, they adopted a criminal ideology. And it's not an accident that Mr. Putin when speaking on TV or holding press-conferences... we often hear... excuse me, I'm going to quote the President verbatim... I might say something unprintable but I'm repeating after him verbatim "To bump them off in crappers", "to cut off something that will never grow back" - all this comes from a criminal jargon. 29:24:00

29:24:12 And if it might seem to some that he says those things by accident, that it's a slip of a tongue, I'll tell you he doesn't say those things by accident. It's a message to all those people who are part of organised crime groups, it's a message to the corrupt officers in the law-enforcement agencies and our secret service. It's a message to the corrupt officials - that the Russian throne has been taken by the member of their caste, of their social strata. 30:00:12

30:00:16 That they must support him and they must fight to preserve the current Russian regime. And the current Russian regime is criminal, criminal. 30:12:14

30:12:18 And starting from 1996, when I still served in the FSB we started noticing that our colleagues, many of our colleagues appear to spend more than they were supposed to earn, they lived beyond their means. They drove around in expensive imported cars, they spent their holidays at the most expensive resorts, and they had cash... For example I had a colleague that every day carried 10,000 dollars in his pocket. And actually, they didn't even count that money. 30:35:00

30:36:08 Then it got from bad to worse, as they say. You start arresting members of a criminal group - a real criminal group that dealt in murder, protection racket... And as soon as you arrest them you get a visit or a phone call - straight away - from one of your colleagues or your superiors... and you are told that your man must be released because he's on the informant's list of some other unit. That's a cover story. That's... 31:20:08

31:21:00 So they started establishing... the officers started establishing business ties with the leaders of the criminal world. And to legalise those ties, to give them a cover they put those men on the informant's list as our sources. And as soon as you catch him you're told, "You arrested an informant. Let him go." "You arrested an informant. Let him go." 31:43:00

31:43:18 Starting at about 1997 we began catching not just criminals but police and FSB officers... I mean they themselves... they've started committing crimes personally. Let's say we were arresting police officers that were protected by the FSB officers and by the people from the attorney general's office. And we were arresting them not for bribes, not for misuse

of authority or exceeding one's commission - we arrested them for such crimes as kidnapping, armed robbery... 32:19:06

32:19:10 I mean, those people formed gangs that robbed, killed and kidnapped people - and our superiors knew what they were. They acted on orders from their superiors who in turn were involved in protection racket, giving "cover" to commercial companies... 32:41:00

32:41:04 After every single such detention or arrest a terrible row would erupt in the Directorate where I was serving, people who took part in those investigations would be hounded and harassed, any work on those cases would be blocked, evidence would be removed... And then it came to direct threats... right up to "How dare you? What right did you have to detain those policemen?" 33:12:04

33:12:08 Let me tell you, right before my dismissal I arrested... It was my investigation... so I participated... I was in command... we arrested a gang made of police officers who dealt in kidnapping, robbery and burglary. They were found guilty. We, I, managed to secure a verdict sentencing them to 9-10 years in prison because we delivered watertight evidence of their criminal activities. But, once again, those who were found guilty were the smallest fry - police sergeants, junior police sergeants... 33:47:08

33:47:12 And when I started reaching for the senior MVD officers, the officers of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the officers from the very Security Directorate of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, who not only gave cover to that gang but personally took part in the acts of violence... When I found leads to the FSB officers, to generals that had ties to those criminal groups... When we established that that group was not only involved in protection racket and kidnapping but also in illegal arms deals... We found out that those weapons among other destinations went also to the Middle East, naturally, you can well understand where it could have gone... 34:27:12

34:27:16 So we... Who would allow us to follow that thread to the end? The only thing I was told by an officer of the internal security Directorate that I've met was "Sasha, they sell tanks, they sell arms, the sell... I mean, heavy arms, to Africa. Those arms go to the Middle East." 34:55:08

34:56:20 I mean now... To corroborate these words... I saw in the office of my head of Directorate, Hoholkov, that group was linked to Hoholkov... we actually had Hoholkov, the former head of our Directorate, on file as one of the top people in that group... I once saw Boot in his office. There's now an international warrant out for this Boot for illegal arms deals. 35:26:00

35:26:04 That man had ties to Ukrainian criminal groups, that man, according to our records, had ties to the son of Derkach, the former head of SBU (Ukrainian Security Service) and one of the closest associates of Ukrainian President Kuchma. On top of that there were links, there were threads going to the illegal sale of drugs. I mean, the head of our Directorate, Hoholkov, and it was him who ended up in our sights, his connections... He had links, he associated with criminal groups that were running drugs from Afghanistan. 36:05:10

36:05:14 That's Rahi... That's a man called Gafur... he's one of the crime bosses in Uzbekistan, and his associates... in Moscow. That's Salim. That's Mr. Yastrzhembsky and Mr. Kokoshin... All these people are close friends of Hoholkov, and of all those I named.
36:32:00

36:32:04 We established that drugs in huge amounts, tonnes of drugs, including heroin, come from Afghanistan from the General Abdul Rashid Dustum. They go through Russia... it's a transit point, to the St. Petersburg port. From there they go to Spain where they're parcelled up... they go to Spain and from there on to Europe. 36:57:00

36:57:20 Apart from that... Here in the West I met Nikolai Melnichenko, that's the former bodyguard of Kuchma. For two years he managed to tape the conversations in the office of Kuchma, the President of Ukraine. And Nikolai Melnichenko's tapes confirmed that the group we were investigating in Russia for drug dealing, for importing drugs from Afghanistan, the same group imported drugs from Columbia. 37:35:10

37:35:14 I must say that our data cross-matched perfectly. I mean, the evidence we gathered said that in St. Petersburg the drugs went through the St. Petersburg port that was "covered" by the St. Petersburg FSB officers. That criminal group included Patrushev, Cherkesov, ... Ivanov, Smirnov, he's now the head of the St. Petersburg Directorate, and Mr. Putin who is currently President of the Russian Federation. 38:06:00

38:06:04 That's so to speak the highest echelon. On the lower level it was the Tambov organised crime group, who is currently ruled by Kumarin-Barsukov (checked) - he is a major criminal well known in Russian and in St. Petersburg. 38:21:00

38:21:04 Well, Mr. Melnichenko kindly gave me access to his materials, tape-records of his conversation... tape-records of Kuchma's conversations with the head of Ukrainian security service, Mr. Derkach. Derkach reported to Kuchma that... he managed to get evidence from Germany that Putin had connections to the international drug trade, to one of the biggest Columbian drug cartels. 38:52:08

38:52:12 That conversation... he and Kuchma were examining those materials. And... Derkach reported that that the evidence looked very serious. So... That conversation, that tape was authenticated in America. I have the experts' report, it's in English, I can show it to you if you like. I can even make a copy for you. As a gift. I can also copy the tapes themselves. And the expert concludes that the tapes are authentic and the tape had not been subjected to editing or any other... type of counterfeiting or forgery. 39:34:04

39:34:08 So these materials can be used in court as evidence as a part of proof that people currently holding key positions in the Russian Federation are connected to the international drug trade. That the Kremlin offices were taken over by criminals. 39:53:00

40:00:12 So now... Yes... that our generals committed crimes, that FSB was riddled with corruption, that our generals were linked to illegal drug trafficking - I reported all that personally to Putin when he was appointed the FSB Director. That was approximately... I had that meeting with Putin in the middle of 1998, about a week after he'd been appointed the

Director of the FSB. He invited me to his office. I came. I reported to him all our findings... about all those crimes; I reported to him all the materials on those facts. 40:44:08

40:44:12 I also presented him with the analytical report on our generals based on the active cases. It was given to me by my comrades, I mean, I compiled it with the help of my comrades including those in the internal security Directorate. I don't want to disclose their names. Here's that report. I managed to get it out to the West. Here it is. Here. 41:07:10

41:07:14 It starts, "Information on the major criminal figure of the Central Asian region Rahimov Gafur Akhmedovich, aka "Gafur". His connections..." And this report... goes on. Here it speaks of... here it lists those, here, those who associate with those men. Here we have Shakro, he's a known Upright Man, "Little Taiwan" Tartahunov Alimjan Tursunovich, born on 1 January 1949, city of Tashkent. Here it says, "lives in Germany", he did live in Germany at the time. Now, you must know, right?, he's been arrested and already extradited, and sent under arrest to the States. 41:53:00

41:53:04 Well... and a number of others. There are people living in America... well. And here it speaks about... so it goes... this report contains complete information of connections, phone numbers of that criminal group. More. This report mentions Yastrzhembsky. Here, it says, "When Yastrzhembsky was a Russian Ambassador abroad... Gafur stayed, lived at his apartment." Then we were informed that Yastrzhembsky took money from that criminal group and built himself a dacha in the Sokolinaya Gora area - that's not far from Moscow... 42:35:00

42:35:12 Another name mentioned in the report - Alisher. ... Those people have connections in the KGB USSR, with the former KGB officers; now those people work in the FSB and are very highly placed. Here it says that that group has connections with Shamil Tarpishchev, with Korzhakov Aleksandr Vasilievich, former chief of the protection detail of the President of Russia. 43:08:10

43:08:14 That group is closely connected with Barsukov Mikhail Ivanovich, the former Director of the FSB. And with other... I mean, with many other people at the helm of the Federal Security Service. 43:24:21

43:25:00 This report is not that long but is quite rich in content... It's an extract from our cases, an extract - connections and... the gist of it. The kind of information that is reported to an official of the FSB Director level. 43:42:14

43:43:00 Well then... After that I was sacked and all the people about whom... about who I reported to Putin, including the FSB people, got a promotion. ... And when I had a meeting with my former head of Directorate he told me, "Sasha,"- he said... I said "What's wrong with Putin? I told him all that stuff, why is he doing this?" And he told me, "Sasha, they share the money." Then I understood that Putin... I mean... was directly connected to that criminal group that was involved in all that stuff. 44:19:14

44:19:18 Though he even before showed up in our files as a man who had corrupt connections in the criminal organisations of St. Petersburg. But here I was told directly that

the man was connected to that gang, to that group involved in drug dealing. Well, in my book I wrote that within Putin's inner circle I had a trusted source who gave me the same information - that Putin was closely associated with that criminal group involved in drug dealing. When it became known in the FSB that that man has been my source, about two weeks after our last meeting he was killed. And that's despite the fact that at that time he was holding a position of the Economic Advisor to the President. 45:09:21

45:10:10 There was a man called David Dvali who held a post of President's Aide on matters economical, now this position is held by Illarionov. So he, being Putin's Advisor, at Putin at the time has already been a President, David the last time gave me information on Putin himself. The FSB found us out and two weeks later David was shot. A man who was an Economic Advisor to the President. And silence. They made one announcement on TV and that was it - nobody even tried to investigate that matter... All quiet, as if nothing had happened. 45:50:12

45:50:16 He'd been killed in summer. In summer or in the beginning of autumn. No, he'd been killed in summer, in summer. In summer or in the end of spring 2002. Just a couple of months before I left Russia... he'd been shot. 46:08:00

46:09:00 Well, so I want to tell you that... corruption in the law-enforcement agencies and Russian secret service is not just a case of isolated facts when people are trying to earn some money illegally, it's a system that has its root in the office of the President of the Russian Federation. 46:34:00

46:34:04 And... I know some facts, I have facts at my disposal now when... criminal proceedings have been started against officers of the law-enforcement agencies or secret service - not those who committed or are at the moment committing those crimes, but, to the contrary, against those people who actually refuse to commit crimes when ordered so by their superiors, those people who refuse to trade in drugs, those people who refuse to commit... to participate in protection racket or take bribes. 47:08:04

47:08:08 They first try to run them out of the agencies, and they do run them out of the law-enforcement agencies... And if those people try to resist that criminal system they are sent to prison. At the moment I know that in St. Petersburg there's a major currently in prison because he refused to sell drugs. Well ... Russia is a criminal country. And it all comes from the top. 47:35:14

47:51:08 So here are the results of the expertise, for the tape, I mean. 47:56:08

48:07:12 That's the original. 48:10:00

48:14:20 Let me show you. 48:17:00

48:17:04 Yes. You can do it straight away. Switch it on [unclear]. You're going to edit and reshuffle it anyway. So let's shoot it now. 48:24:12

48:25:22 Wait, wait, let's shoot this part before we forget. 48:28:16

49:29:18 All right, let's go. Here we go. 49:35:00

49:36:22 Well... Well... For the first time I heard that somebody in the FSB wanted to kill Berezovsky... I heard about it on 27 December (I'll give you the exact date) 27 December 1997. 50:01:00

50:01:06 Well, on that day we arrested - that was the night of 26 to 27, we arrested a criminal group of police officers that had been involved in kidnapping, armed robbery and burglary. And after we arrested the sergeants - those personally involved in committing those crimes - we got leads to some high-placed MVD officers that were working in the Internal Security Directorate and in the main Organised Crime Directorate. 50:32:00

50:33:00 And we already had those people identified and we were going to pick them up when I got the orders to abort the operation and return to my unit. It was the deputy head of our Directorate, Kamyshnikov (checked). I passed those orders to my subordinates and we aborted the operation - I was on duty and had to follow my orders - and we came back to the Lubyanka. 50:57:16

50:57:20 We came to Kamyshnikov's office - and Kamyshnikov lived on the same floor as the Director of the FSB, in the office next door - so it was the 4th floor, room 413. And the Director of the FSB was in the room 401 - here, if you follow the corridor on the fourth floor here would be the office of the Director and right across it in the room 413, that's where Kamyshnikov sat. Those offices were 10 meters away. 51:22:00

51:23:00 And Kamyshnikov began lecturing us that we were not doing our job, that our unit had been created not to catch criminals but to remove them by using non-standard methods. It was a long conversation. That meeting lasted for 2.5 hours. He was showing us various strategies created by the FBI. "Here, take a look. That's how the FBI works. You see what they do..." Though I've read those strategic plans... I saw that those were secret, top secret documents from within the FBI, I have no idea how he got them... but nowhere did I read that FBI had been killing anybody. "Well, - I said, - they just dig up information, basically we do the same thing." 52:02:21

52:03:00 "Well," he said - he probably showed us those documents to show off. Then he showed us a book by Sudoplatov, that's the former head of the terrorist NKVD Directorate under Stalin. And he said, "That's what you should be doing." So he directly said that what we should have been doing was the kind of work Sudoplatov did. He said, "There are not too many of us - about 80 people in the whole Directorate. That's the total count; those who do operative work are even more scarce. And what we must do is... in general what we must be doing is solving the problems our superiors are facing." 52:40:21

52:41:00 "For example, when Dudaev was liquidated..." he said, "in this way a problem was solved... a problem our leaders had... Our country's leaders had a problem - a living president of Chechnya - he got liquidated and the problem was solved." After that he outlined the main tasks that we had to deal with. The first task was... to get two our officers that the Chechens

managed to capture in Ingushetia out of captivity in Chechnya. That was the head of the FSB Ingushetia Directorate Gribov (I think his surname was Gribov) and his deputy, his human resources man, an officer of the human resources section. 53:19:12

53:19:16 For this purpose... he said that our Directorate has an operation planned to kidnap Umar Gebrailov. And we had to kidnap Umar Gebrailov - he was a well-known businessman who later, by the way, even run as a candidate for the post of the President of Russia... We had to kidnap Umar Gebrailov and exchange him... get the money for him... later we found out that Umar was to be killed afterwards... and his corpse was to be left in Chechnya and blamed on some ungovernable Chechen band or Dagestani militia. I have an audiotape, a videotape where my section head says the same. If you wish I can give it to you, you can use it i your film. 53:57:21

53:58:00 Well, and already... Where Gebrailov was concerned work was already going on. They've already found a place where to hide him... and where he'd be killed later... in the Yegorievsk region there were several dachas rented by a unit in our Directorate - there was a private company "Stealth" that was closely working... it was a unit under our "roof", so to speak, in English they call it "undercover". Our Directorate used them to solve some of our problems. So as to, as they say in the secret service, not to show our ears. 54:32:00

54:32:04 That was the first task - I mean, to kidnap Gebrailov, to finish the job and kidnap him. The second task was to pinpoint the apartments where the Chechen terrorists might be hiding in Moscow. And the third task, he said that there were people whom we couldn't touch legally because they had amassed huge amounts of money. And those people prevent... those people hamper Russia's development, those people... interfere with our leadership, they are a torn in our leadership's side. And those people must be eliminated - because it's impossible to put them in prison, they're rich, they have connections everywhere... 55:09:04

55:09:08 Well, and then he came to me and said, "Do you know Berezovsky?" "Well, I do." "Then you have to kill him." I just, I remained silent and pointed at the cabinet's walls because many offices in the Lubyanka were taped. And that surveillance... 55:24:00

55:24:18 No. Why? I pointed at the walls "Well," I meant, "take a look..." I pointed at the ceiling, as they say in our line - there could be equipment there, mikes. He came closer to me, bent just like that, "You must kill Berezovsky. You, personally, must do it." After that it was no joke, it was said in presence of three other officers... After that he said that... 55:48:20

55:54:12 And he... And then he, I mean... It wasn't a joke, it was serious, because he warned us, he said, "If the contents of this conversation become known to anyone else you'll have problems, we won't be talking with you like this."

What if we're arrested, caught red-handed.? Especially when we're to steal Gebrailov - he was guarded by the police officers. So when the head of our section asked what were we going to do with those policemen the head of our Directorate said "Bump the stinks off." That's our criminal jargon. "Bump the stinks off," means, "kill those cops", those policemen. And our section head said, "How can we kill them? Aren't they... I mean, that guy is fine, he's a

Chechen, but they're our brother Slavs..." And he said, "They shouldn't guard a Chechen." 57:16:08

We were given a task to kill police officers in the very heart of Moscow. So... 57:25:00

Besides, when one of my men, Major Pontin said, "All right, you're setting us tasks - to kidnap and kill Gebrailov, to kill Berezovsky as well... Before that we were charged with sorting out the situation with Mikhail Ivanovich Trepashkin." (checked) That's the head of the investigative department of the tax police who sued the FSB, our former colleague, we were ordered to kill him as well... 56:29:10

56:29:14 It all has happened in a very brief period of time. And those events were all in preparation... literally in a very short time - one group was working on the murder of Trepashkin, another group was preparing Gebrailov's kidnapping, and the third group was to start preparing for the liquidation of Berezovsky. 56:45:00

56:46:00 So he says, "We're doing all that stuff, killing this guy and that guy... What if we're arrested, caught red-handed..." Especially when we're to steal Gebrailov - he was guarded by the police officers. So when the head of our section asked what were we going to do with those policemen the head of our Directorate said "Bump the stinks off." That's our criminal jargon. "Bump the stinks off," means, "kill those cops", those policemen. And our section head said, "How can we kill them? Aren't they... I mean, that guy is fine, he's a Chechen, but they're our brother Slavs..." And he said, "They shouldn't guard a Chechen." 57:16:08

57:16:12 I mean, in fact we had to... we were given a task to kill police officers in the very heart of Moscow. So... 57:25:00

57:25:04 And so when my subordinate Major Pontin asked, "Well, we start killing those cops or some other people... And what then? If we're arrested, for example... what are we to do?" He answered, "Don't worry. Stay mum. Don't admit it was an order from your superiors. Go to prison, we'll get you out. A year, a year and a half in there and we'll get you out and you'll be all right." 57:48:16

57:48:20 So... Well... it wasn't a joke, it was serious... Actually we had a colleague, Bavdeev Boris, who said, "Then give us a written order." They told him "Who is ever going to give you a written order like that?" There were measures taken... For example, with Gebrailov, his phones were wired, he's been under surveillance for a couple of months, there was work done on his brother Hussein. Well... 58:18:08

58:18:12 Work was done on Trepashkin as well - external surveillance, his pager was wired, we listened to his pager, we established his contacts. I

was given his file - they got it out of the archives and gave me his personal file for reference. I mean, it wasn't a joke. It wasn't just a joke. In fact those crimes were planned, measures were taken, units were working in concert... 58:42:16

58:42:20 For example, our unit even had a staff meeting dedicated to Gebrailov's kidnapping. There came the people from the task force who were supposed to organise the kidnapping itself, I mean, the capture of Gebrailov. Then they were supposed to pass him to us and we then had to get him out of Moscow and hide him in a basement. Our section head drove to look over that cellar where we were to hold him, he studied the route... 59:03:21

59:04:00 Well, the people from the task force asked for the money to be paid up front because before that they had stolen some citizen from Chechnya - your lamp is blinking...

Well... Before that they had stolen a citizen, I think they had stolen him from Chechnya... and he spent three days handcuffed in a gymnasium, he was handcuffed to the radiator. That's the radiator, they handcuffed him to it and he had to spend three days in the gymnasium... 59:27:12

59:27:16 Then Kamyshnikov picked him up and took him somewhere. Then my subordinate Shcheglov took 150,000 or 160.000 US dollars in a packet to give to some Chechens, to a group of Chechens in Moscow on Kamyshnikov's orders. They called themselves vahhabites. I mean, Kamyshnikov summoned one of my subordinates, Major Shcheglov, gave him a packet - 150,000 or 160.000 dollars - "Go, take that to the Chechens." The ones he's been working with. So I understood it the way that our generals were associating with groups of Chechens involved in kidnapping. 59:58:12

59:58:16 I mean our men kidnapped them and brought them out, those Chechens established contact with the relatives and negotiated a sum. Then the money arrived, it was passed on somehow... and our officers, our generals passed part of that money to those Chechens, those criminals, you see?

END OF TAPE 1