

Putin*Con*

MARCH 16, 2018
SELECTED MEDIA

 HUMAN RIGHTS FOUNDATION

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On March 16, 2018, the Human Rights Foundation organized PutinCon in New York City. Hundreds of Putin experts, biographers, critics, and victims came together to expose his crimes and support human rights and democracy in Russia. The event attracted significant coverage in the international media. Here are a few clippings that give you an idea of the extraordinary reach of the event, which went far beyond the hundreds in the theater and thousands watching online to the eyes of millions around the world through articles and videos like these.

Thank you for helping make this event possible.

Garry Kasparov

Chairman
Human Rights Foundation

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BUSINESS INSIDER

Some of Putin's most powerful enemies just had a daylong meeting —here's what they need you to know



Linette Lopez

🕒 Mar. 19, 2018, 4:30 PM 🔥 7,642



PHOTO | Russian President Vladimir Putin at a ceremony to receive credentials from foreign ambassadors at the Kremlin in Moscow on October 3

- **It is clear to people who have watched his rise that Russian President Vladimir Putin has decided the West is his enemy.**
- **Now it is time for us to understand him as well as he thinks he understands us.**
- **On Friday, under heavy security, some of Putin's most vocal critics gathered to explain what people in the West need to know.**
- **"Putin's main weapon is propaganda. He knows how to make people into zombies."**

The security at the New World Stages theater in midtown Manhattan on Friday was quite heavy, but you would expect that for a gathering of enemies of one of the world's most dangerous men: Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Sponsored by the Human Rights Foundation, PutinCon was the first event of its kind — a meeting of dissidents and journalists; of people who've been robbed by the Kremlin; of former soldiers who've seen too much; of prosecutors and politicians who know too much; of Russians and Europeans and Americans (North and South) who had enough of Putin's interference and violence.

Being there all day — submerged in dimly lit talks in which a single speaker performed a macabre one-man show describing experiences with Russia's president — was like a dark meditation.

And at the end, the message was clear: As far away (and weak) as Russia may be, Putin is our problem now — and he has no choice but to make himself such.

Our 'original sin'

To be American is to have the luxury of not having to know how Putin turns people into "others." This is one of the most important pieces of what Putin's enemies had to explain, and it was best articulated by Arkady Babchenko, a renowned Russian journalist who fought in the second Chechen War.

The war, you'll recall, was started after Chechen separatists were blamed for setting off a series of bombs in apartment buildings across Russia in 1999. These bombings turned Putin — then a nobody backed by the unpopular President Boris Yeltsin — into the only man who could save Russia. That made him electable, and so he was elected.

Once in office, Putin set about punishing his enemies. That didn't just mean leveling Chechen cities and going after terrorists, it meant dehumanizing the Chechens. Babchenko was told the Chechens were evil, that any Chechen ages 10 to 60 was a threat to "kill, kill, kill."

"Putin's main weapon is propaganda," Babchenko said. "He knows how to make people into zombies." He did it in Georgia in 2008, and he did it in Ukraine in 2014.

"Today, Russians hate you," said Babchenko, referring to Americans. Putin, running out of Russian money to steal

and people to blame for it, has turned his great propaganda machine on the US. That is why he is our problem now.

Now, about those bombings.

Five times in 1999, a bomb was planted in an apartment somewhere in or around Moscow. Four times the bomb went off, killing hundreds. At the time, an American journalist named David Satter was on the ground.

As the government blamed Chechen separatists, the independent press — then still active — told a different story. The bombs were planted by Russia's security



PHOTO | Preet Bharara at Putincon (Screenshot putincon.com).

force, the FSB. Yeltsin had appointed Putin head of the FSB in 1998.

This was painfully clear when the fifth bomb mercifully did not detonate. The FSB, whose fingerprints were all over the situation, tried to tell people that the bomb was a test, a drill.

"Everything would have worked had it not been for that one mistake," Satter said. He describes this as our "original sin" against Russia — the moment we should've known Putin had to be stopped. But in 1999, Yeltsin was so weak, and it looked as if the Communists might return to power.

And so we, the free world, turned a blind eye to state-sponsored domestic terrorism.

It was, Satter said, an affirmation of the idea that, to Putin, "the individual counts for nothing."

And so it remains.

If you give a moose a muffin

I had a moment to interview Garry Kasparov, the now-exiled Russian chess champion chairing PutinCon. We were speaking as nation after nation condemned Russia for the poisoning of a former spy living on British soil. One moment the spy was sitting on a park bench with his daughter, and the next he and his daughter were approaching death after being poisoned.

Putin, Kasparov agreed, is like the moose in the children's story "If You Give a Moose a Muffin." (There's a Mouse/Cookie version too if you prefer that.) The more you let Putin take, the more he'll reach for. The more you allow, the bolder he'll become. There is no red line for him. There is no stopping point, no deed too dark. That is for us to decide. These are important questions. How much should we let Putin steal? How much should we let him kill?

We are, after all, his enablers. You knew that.

A perfect example: There was much talk of how Putin's ill-gotten gains travel the world — how loot leaves Russia to be enjoyed by Putin's billionaire friends who get to live more peaceful lives in nicer places than their countrymen can afford. You knew about that.

It moves from Cyprus, to the British Virgin Islands, to the United Kingdom, and/or then to the United States, where it is folded into layers and layers of Delaware companies — laundered by our own bureaucracy and shielded by our unique interpretation of freedom under capitalism.

We're enablers. Remember that you know that.

We needn't be, though. In the afternoon, the former US Attorney Preet Bharara took the stage. He explained how his office managed to nail down foreign nationals who engaged in murder and money laundering on American soil with the blessing of their state. He had done so with people from Guatemala, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey.

He is barred from traveling to Russia for his efforts.

Bharara said we could, by upholding the rule of law without exception, stop Putin from killing and stealing. He brought up the Magnitsky Act, a law that is the effort of a single man, Bill Browder. As an investor in Russia a decade ago, Browder saw a friend, Sergei Magnitsky, murdered and his own money stolen.

That is how Browder, a soft-spoken man with what seems like unlimited patience, became Putin's enemy. The Magnitsky Act seeks to stop Putin's cronies from enjoying their ill-gotten gains in the world where it is enjoyable — in our world. It limits their travel and bars them from business in the US. It is what was discussed in Trump Tower in the summer of 2016 — the meeting that made Donald Trump Jr. exclaim, "I love it."

Don Jr., you see, was trying to make friends.


But as Bharara said, "Sometimes you want to judge a person by their enemies, and I don't mind that so much today."

This column does not necessarily reflect the opinion of Business Insider.

To read the original version of this article visit:
<http://www.businessinsider.com/putincon-meeting-preet-bharara-gary-kasparov-bill-browder>

Los Angeles Times

FOOD BOWL

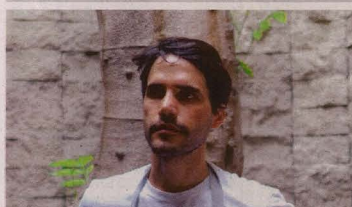
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BACK STORY

Chess great sees Putin's grip tightening in Russia

The human rights situation will further deteriorate, Garry Kasparov warns.

By ANN M. SIMMONS

Until his retirement from the professional game in 2005, Garry Kasparov was widely considered to be the greatest chess player of all time. These days, the Russian grandmaster has moved from battling opponents at the checkered board to fighting for democracy and civil rights.

He is the chairman of the New York-based Human Rights Foundation, whose mission is "promoting freedom and human rights around the world and ... supporting dissidents, no matter what cause they stand for, as long as it's creative dissent," he said.

Dominating its recent agenda is Russian President Vladimir Putin. This month, the foundation held PutinCon, a conference in New York dedicated to examining the Russian leader's rise to power, his 18 years at the helm and his vision for the country's future.

The gathering came two days before Putin was reelected to a fourth term as president and at a time when Moscow faces drastically deteriorating relations with the West, including U.S. financial sanctions and diplomatic expulsions from Britain after accusations that Putin sanctioned the poisoning of a former Russian spy living in England.

Kasparov, who in 2007 launched — but was forced to quit — a presidential campaign and fled the country six years later for fear of political persecution, spoke to The Times about Russia in the age of Putin.

The interview has been edited for length and clarity.

How do you characterize human rights in Russia today?

Russia is a personal dictatorship that openly embraces many elements of fascist ideology and also attacks its neighbors. Human rights in Russia do exist, but only within the territory that the Kremlin allows it for its own political purposes.

No one is safe in Russia. If you oppose the government, they may decide that for a while you could be sort of left alone. But you could go to jail, or ... you could be killed.

By the way, even reprinting [material considered critical of the state] is now one of the unofficial crimes in Russia, because they always find a way to describe it as an attempt to disturb social peace. Dictatorships are very creative in



GARRY KASPAROV chairs a human rights group that held a "PutinCon" conference this month.

finding new quasi-legal definitions that they use against people who may show either dissent, or in some cases not celebrating the dictatorship as vigorously as they're supposed to.

So are you expecting human rights to deteriorate further with the reelection of Putin?

The situation will deteriorate because ... we have a dictator that made it very clear that he would not go anywhere voluntarily. This dictatorship will not end by the ballot. They totally control everything and the grip on power in Russia has reached a point where you can hardly expect any social uprising that can lead to the demise of the regime, unless the regime is being weakened by geopolitical defeat.

How do you respond to supporters of Putin who say that Russia doesn't want a democracy like the West, that Russians want and need control by the proverbial 'iron fist'?

It's absolute nonsense. First of all, I don't want anybody to speak on behalf of Russians. What I want is just for people of my country to be able — as in America or Europe — to express their views freely, without fear of being punished for their dissent. And then we'll see what happens.

And if Putin is so popular ... why are his critics and potential opponents either being jailed or pushed into exile or killed?

People are saying, "Oh, he's very popular." How do you evaluate popularity in a dictatorship? If you have one restaurant in town selling food and all the other restaurants are burned to the ground, is this [sole] restaurant popular?

Also, polling in this country and elsewhere in the

world means that someone calls you — a stranger — and asks your opinion. Now, what do you expect [of] Russian people, many of whom were born in the Soviet Union? They still know what the KGB is. They know that a KGB lieutenant colonel is in power now. Do you expect them to be frank telling the stranger on the phone what they think about Putin?

We can see clearly that people given the opportunity to live in the free world always perform better, because at the end of the day progress is based very much on our ability to challenge the status quo, our ability to go against authority, our ability to accept failure as a part of our road to success.

The central planning economy, the communist dictatorships, they cannot accept failure because it contradicts the notion of ... supreme power.

What kind of lessons and strategy from being a chess grandmaster could be transferred to your human rights work?

I could start reading a long lecture about the lessons from the game of chess that can help you make decisions, strategize, be creative, read the opponent's mind. The problem is ... that in Putin's Russia it didn't help me at all, because in chess we have fixed rules and unpredictable results. In Putin's Russia it's exactly the opposite. The result always stays the same, while the rules are what the Kremlin thinks today is the most convenient to attain their goals.

You were once a beloved chess champion. Everyone knew you. How do you feel Russians view you today?

There are a lot who are either on the [Kremlin's] payroll or some who have

crazy ideas that Russia should be in confrontation with the West, and many of them believe that I am a bad guy. But I still believe I have a massive following, and if you want free and fair elections, I would be very happy to debate Mr. Putin, or whoever he appoints, on Russian television. The problem is that Putin has never participated in a single debate in his life.

How do you envision Russia post-Putin?

The collapse of the Putin regime — which I believe is inevitable — doesn't automatically mean that the next day you have representative democracy.

I always warn people not to expect immediate changes because it's not about just building democracy on the rubble of dictatorship. It's about giving people a chance. Unfortunately they can very often miss [this chance]. They can blow it up.

I can guarantee you that as long as Putin stays in power nothing will happen. There will be no positive changes, and moreover we could see that this paranoid dictator is getting more and more concerned about his own physical safety. Unlike dictators of the past, he has his finger on the nuclear button. And in the last few months you could hear him contemplating nuclear conflicts. He's reaching a point where he doesn't see the world without him being in power. And that's very dangerous. That's why every year he stays in power, every month, even every day, puts us in more danger.

So the only way for the free world to confront this very dangerous development is to make sure that some of his close associates will be forced to choose between their personal interests and their fortunes kept outside Russia, and deciding if they want to follow Putin's criminal orders.

You're very passionate and outspoken against Putin. Do you fear for your safety?

Would it help? People kept asking me when I left Russia, why I chose New York and not London. They're not asking anymore.

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Los Angeles Times

Chess grandmaster Garry Kasparov warns of a Russia increasingly devoid of freedoms



By ANN M. SIMMONS

As Vladimir Putin begins another six-year term as President, TAI asked the attendees of the PutinCon conference how to handle the Russian leader.

Until his retirement from the professional game in 2005, Garry Kasparov was widely considered to be the greatest chess player of all time. These days, the Russian grandmaster has moved from battling opponents at the checkered board to fighting for democracy and civil rights.

He is the chairman of the New York-based Human Rights Foundation, whose mission is "promoting freedom and human rights around the world and ... supporting dissidents, no matter what cause they stand for, as long as it's creative dissent," he said.

Dominating its recent agenda is Russian President Vladimir Putin. Earlier this month, the foundation held PutinCon, a conference in New York dedicated to examining the Russian leader's rise to power, his 18 years at the helm and his vision for the country's future.

The gathering came two days before Putin was reelected to a fourth term as president and at a time when Moscow faces drastically deteriorating relations with the West, including U.S. financial sanctions and diplomatic expulsions from Britain following accusations that Putin sanctioned the poisoning of a former Russian spy living in England.

Kasparov, who in 2007 launched — but was forced to quit — a presidential campaign and fled the country six years later for fears of political persecution, spoke to The Times about Russia in the age of Putin.



PHOTO | Garry Kasparov, chairman of the Human Rights Foundation, speaks in New York City at PutinCon, a conference focusing on Russian President Vladimir Putin, on March 16, 2018. (Photo courtesy of PutinCon/Human Rights Foundation)

How do you characterize human rights in Russia today?

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1,000 WORDS: JACKSONVILLE, Ala.

By the way, even reprinting [material considered critical of the state] is now one of the unofficial crimes in Russia, because they always find a way to describe it as an attempt to disturb social peace. Dictatorships are very creative in finding new quasi-legal definitions that they use against people who may show either dissent, or in some cases not celebrating the dictatorship as vigorously



PHOTO | Vladimir Putin won a decisive fourth term in Russia's presidential elections on March 18, 2018. (Yuri Kadobnov/Associated Press)

as they're supposed to.

So are you expecting human rights to deteriorate further with the reelection of Putin?

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And if Putin is so popular ... why are his critics and potential opponents either being jailed or pushed into exile or killed?

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Also, polling in this country and elsewhere in the world means that someone calls you — a stranger — and asks your opinion. Now, what do you expect [of] Russian people, many of whom were born in the Soviet Union? They still know what the KGB is. They know that a KGB lieutenant colonel is in power now. Do you expect them to be frank telling the stranger on the phone what they think about Putin?

We can see clearly that people given the opportunity to live in the free world always perform better, because at the end of the day progress is based very much on our ability to challenge the status quo, our ability to go against authority, our ability to accept failure as a part of our road to success.



PHOTO | Former chess world champions Garry Kasparov, right, and Anatoly Karpov play an exhibition rematch in Valencia, Spain, on Sept. 22, 2009. (Alberto Saiz / Associated Press)

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The only way for the free world to confront this very dangerous development is to make sure that some of his close associates will be forced to choose between their personal interests and their fortunes kept outside of Russia, and deciding if they want to follow Putin's criminal orders.



PHOTO | Garry Kasparov speaks during a rally in central Moscow in April 2007. (Maxim Marmur / AFP/Getty Images)

So the only way for us to see the split between Putin and the Russian elite is if the free world actually demonstrates political will to fight for our values and to make sure that any attack on our interests — on American elections, on European elections, God forbid on America's electrical grid — will be met with an overwhelming response.

You're very passionate and outspoken against Putin. Do you fear for your safety?

Would it help? People kept asking me when I left Russia, why I chose New York and not London. They're not asking anymore.

To read the digital version of this article visit: <http://www.latimes.com/world/global-development/la-fg-global-garry-kasparov-qa-20180319-story.html>

PutinCon is happening now on Youtube, and no, it's not pro-Putin

16 March, 2018

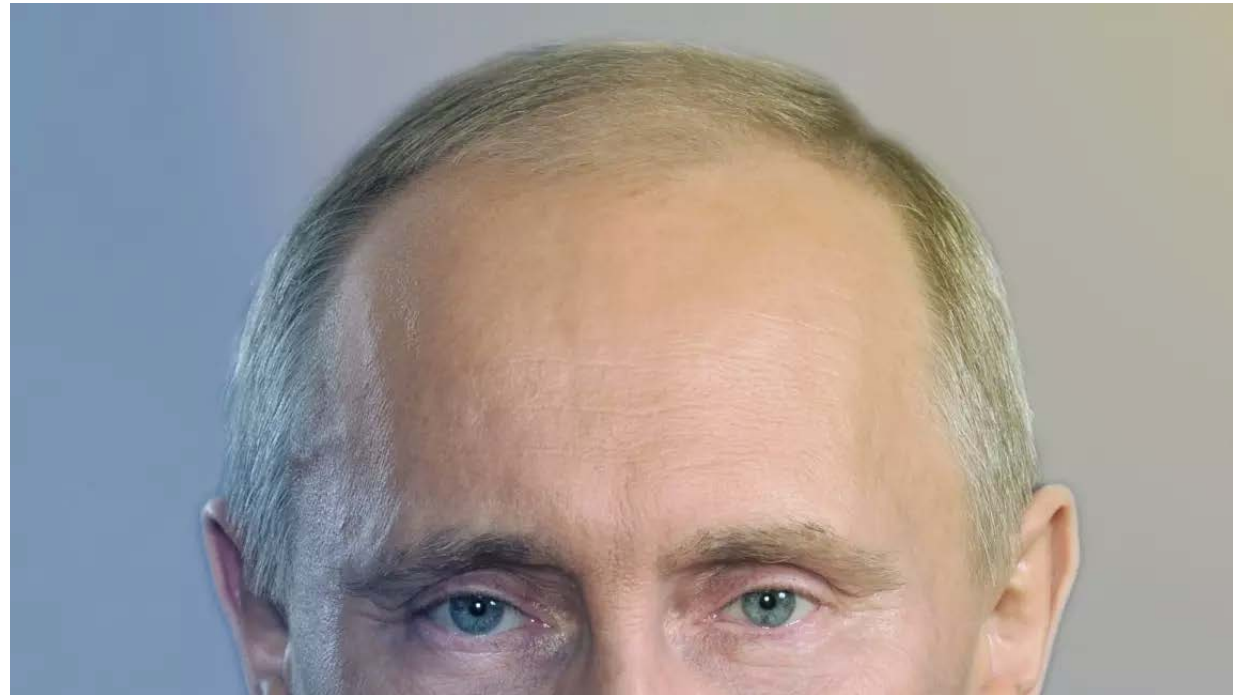


PHOTO | Russian Presidential Press and Information Office/Wikimedia Commons

You'd be forgiven for thinking an event called "Putin-Con" is all about paying tribute to Vladimir Putin. After all, Comic-Con is a world-famous celebration of comic books, and people who attend SantaCon tend to be pretty keen on St. Nick (if not too drunk to express it without vomiting).

Fortunately, PutinCon is not a big love fest for the Russian president, but rather a conference meant to address what organizers call "the gravest threat to democracy and Western values that exists in the world today." The anti-Putin conference, produced by the Human

Rights Foundation, is taking place today in New York City. It is a gathering of pro-democracy activists, Kremlin experts, historians, and Putin biographers with a common goal of freeing a country "crippled by totalitarian rule."

The event boasts speakers such as chess master Garry Kasparov, journalist Masha Gessen, and neuroscientist James Fallon. I've embedded the live-stream below, so do check it out. It's a weighty and worthy topic for an event—even if it could use a better name.



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#PutinCon is happening now on YouTube, and no, it's not pro-Putin <https://buff.ly/2pgnxjK>



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Garry Kasparov: Russian Elections Are A “Charade,” Sanctions Must Target Putin’s Money



To watch this interview visit:
<http://abcnews.go.com/Politics/week-transcript-18-18-rep-adam-schiff-sen/story?id=53822872>

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS, ‘THIS WEEK’:

Let’s get more now from Russian dissident, former world chess champ Garry Kasparov. He’s now chair of the Human Rights Foundation. And, Garry, starting out with that election, is there anything we can look to in these results that would suggest what Putin’s real strength is?

GARRY KASPAROV, RUSSIAN DISSIDENT:

First of all, stop calling it elections. It’s a charade. It’s the only vote that matters in a dictatorship like Russia is Putin’s vote, so you’re right showing him voting for himself and that’s it.

You’re absolutely right saying that the turnout is the only challenge. It’s not only just because of apathy because many people are scared actually to show up and to demonstrate that they disapprove of Putin’s policies.

STEPHANOPOULOS:

We’ve seen he’s been increasingly aggressive in the west. Obviously, this attempted assassination in the United Kingdom. Will he become even more brazen?

KASPAROV:

Absolutely. He has no other choice. In this country, you could say that if something goes wrong, so then you see the president just going after press, political appointees, blaming someone. If you are power for 18 years, there is no one to blame, so you need enemies outside Russia, so that’s why Putin needs the free world, America, Europe, as enemies to justify his eternal hold on power.

And if you think that his meddling in American election was bad, imagine what he does in Russia?

STEPHANOPOULOS:

He also seems to become something of a model for other leaders around the world. We’re seeing President Xi now do away with term limits as well. You have Venezuela, the Philippines. And you said something interesting, and it’s not so much that he’s inspiring these authoritarian leaders, as giving permission to them.

KASPAROV:

It’s also —a combination of inspiration and also it’s a story of success. What this leader is like, the Chinese leader and other authoritarian leaders, they saw in Putin is that he kept defining the west, actually, he’s just been doing things like poisoning and killing dissidents and defectors and former spy agents who found asylum elsewhere like Litvinenko, and nothing happened. So he succeeds in having Trump in the White House, so he definitely worked much harder with Trump’s election than with his own. And sanctions, weak, belated and it’s just always small fish.

Now, the first time we heard strong words from the UK. I wish we see the action, but don’t forget, 14 billion pounds money laundering according to official reports coming through England.

STEPHANOPOULOS:

You clearly think this is a serious threat. What is the most important thing we in the West should be doing to counter Putin that we’re not doing right now?

KASPAROV:

Well, two days ago you had a conference called Putincon. You could see at Putincon.com, 25 speakers from six countries talking about all crimes committed by Putin’s regime. It’s the past and present of Russian dictatorship, and everybody came to the same conclusion is hurt them where it hurts: money. Follow the money.

So it’s not that they park the money that they’re stealing from Russia in China or Venezuela or in Iran, it’s in this country, it’s in Europe. I mentioned the United Kingdom, so make sure that the oligarchs they will have to choose between following Putin’s criminal orders and their fortunes.

As long as they feel safe by having their families, their mistresses, their yacht, their palaces, the real estate everything here and following Putin’s orders nothing will happen.

It's Time to Attack Putin's Soft Underbelly

By JOHN FUND | March 18, 2018 5:42 PM

Vladimir Putin was reelected president of Russia today in an event as predictable as the sun's rising. But his biggest asset hasn't been his iron grip on Russian politics, it's been the fecklessness and passivity of his Western counterparts in the face of his outrageous actions. Garry Kasparov, the former world chess champion who has lived in exile in the West since 2013, wrote on Facebook that Putin, like most dictators, prefers playing poker to chess. "You can win at poker with a weak hand if your opponents play foolishly and keep folding their cards."

It was to plan a better series of future moves against Putin that Kasparov and Thor Halvorssen, the leaders of the Human Rights Foundation, assembled a collection of 30 anti-Putin experts in New York last Friday. Called PutinCon, the event featured everyone from former intelligence officials to a former Red Army veteran to former U.S. attorney Preet Bharara to Alexei Navalny, the anti-corruption crusader who was blocked from the presidential ballot in Sunday's presidential election in Russia.

All of them agreed that the West should confront Putin and take serious measures to counter his increasingly brazen behavior. According to British foreign secretary Boris Johnson, this behavior now includes the stockpiling of the deadly nerve agent Novichok, recently used against Sergei Skripal, a former Russian spy granted asylum in Britain, and his daughter Yulia.

Mikhail Khodorkovsky, an opponent of Putin's who is exiled and now lives in Switzerland, says that Russia has become a gangster-run state. Speaking of the attack on the Skripals, he told the BBC, "Either Putin has given



PHOTO | Russian president Vladimir Putin delivers a speech at his election headquarters in Moscow, March 18, 2018 (Reuters/Sergei Chirkov/Pool)

his consent to this operation, or he doesn't control the secret service to such an extent they can do it without his approval." The FSB, the successor to the Soviet Union's old KGB secret police, has seized complete control over Russia's security apparatus. The FSB is now more powerful than the KGB was at the time of Stalin — and much more independent from the Kremlin.

According to Khodorkovsky, a group of up to 100 people in Putin's orbit have "learned to manipulate" Putin "quite effectively." He said the only way to hurt Putin and his gang is to "undermine his reputation" in the eyes of the Russian public and to focus efforts on attacking the overseas wealth of Putin cronies. In 2015, French economist Thomas Piketty and a group of his colleagues estimated total Russian wealth overseas at \$800 billion.

Ian Birrell, writing for Britain's Mail on Sunday yesterday, noted the irony of Putin cronies trashing Western values yet trusting the rule of law in their own country so little that they send billions of dollars abroad. "They stash their cash in our banks, buy our properties, fight legal battles in our courts and send their children to be educated in our schools."

Toomas Ilves, who served as president of Estonia from 2006 to 2016, told the PutinCon audience that he was personally sickened when he learned that the daughter of Russian foreign minister Sergei Lavrov graduated from his alma mater, Columbia University.

Ilves and Swedish economist Anders Aslund, who is now a scholar at Washington's Brookings Institution, says there are clear paths available to the West to attack Putin's cronies. They note that most Western nations don't permit anonymous investments that allow assets to be concealed. The two big exceptions are Britain and the United States.

A month before he left office in June 2016, in the wake of the Brexit victory, British prime minister David Cameron organized an international conference to combat anonymous offshore ownership, including some 36,000 properties in London with a value of \$156 billion. The rest of Britain has some 70,000 anonymously owned properties. "This is why you have all those properties in Belgravia standing empty," Aslund told the PutinCon audience. He estimates that Putin's inner circle exports some \$40 billion to \$50 billion in assets overseas every year.

Following his 2016 conference, Cameron pushed eleven countries to increase their transparency, but he then suddenly resigned. His successor, Theresa May, hasn't followed through on the issue. In the wake of the nerve-agent attack on the Skripals, it's time for her to act: She should ban anonymous shell corporations from buying up property in Britain.

The United States could also do a lot more. In December 2016, the Wall Street Journal revealed that, under "attorney-client privilege," "tens of billions of dollars every year move through opaque law-firm bank accounts that create a gap in U.S. money-laundering defenses."

This is where the Trump administration can prove its critics — who accuse it of being soft on the Russians — wrong. In August, Trump signed into law a bill calling for far-reaching investigations into "senior foreign political figures and oligarchs in the Russian Federation" — including "spouses, children, parents, and siblings" — and their assets in such popular real-estate markets as Miami, Ft. Lauderdale, Palm Beach, New York, and Los Angeles. Stepping up those probes and actually freezing the assets of Putin's oligarchs would send a message that the West is finally serious about confronting Russia's misbehavior.

Freezing the assets of Putin's oligarchs would send a message that the West is finally serious about confronting Russia's misbehavior.

The incredible flow of assets out of Russia into Western safe havens is a clear vulnerability in Putin's authoritarian system. At a minimum, the West should prohibit law firms from acting as banks and also prohibit real-estate entities from effectively acting as banks for the oligarchs. Anonymous purchasers should no longer be able to hide their activities. It is only through moves like this that the West will get the attention of Putin and his cronies. The only thing a dictator such as Putin respects is strength, and it's time those who oppose his loathsome values acted as if they understood that.

To read the digital version of this article visit: <https://www.nationalreview.com/2018/03/its-time-to-attack-putins-soft-underbelly/>

A very telling ballot-box win for Putin

Squabble about Trump's response is an example of failed leadership.

By Cathy Young | Updated March 23, 2018 6:09 am



PHOTO | Russian President Vladimir Putin speaks to supporters in Moscow as he headed to an overwhelming win on Sunday. (Photo Credit: AP / Alexander Zemlianichenko).

To speak of Vladimir Putin's presidential election victory this week requires multiple quotation marks: it's a sham victory in a sham election in which no real challengers were allowed to run and no dissenters were allowed meaningful access to mass media. That's no different from several previous national elections in Russia. But today, what's happening in Moscow is at the highest level of concern to the United States, and the West, since the end of the Cold War nearly three decades ago.

Last Friday, two days before the election, a group of scholars, journalists, activists, and other Kremlin-watchers gathered in New York for an event billed as the world's first PutinCon — a daylong conference, sponsored by the Human Rights Foundation, to explore Putin's history and his impact on the world.

It is telling that the location of the conference in midtown Manhattan was disclosed shortly before the event to registered participants. A likely Kremlin-sponsored attempted assassination in London — the nerve gas poisoning of a former Russian double agent and his daughter — is still fresh in the news. At the conference, journalist James Kirchick quipped darkly that Russia's modus operandi in such matters can be described as “implausible deniability.” One of the speakers, Russian opposition activist Vladimir Kara-Murza, survived two attempts on his life.

Beyond such acts of terror, the Putin regime is widely seen as having a poisonous effect on Western democracies through campaigns of subversion using cyberattacks, “fake news,” and social media outreach — most notably in our 2016 presidential election. There has been intense debate on how much of a role Russian interference played in the outcome and on whether the Kremlin's goal was to elect Donald Trump or simply sow chaos.

Some say blaming Putin is a convenient deflection from our problems and failures. But the PutinCon speakers who addressed the Putin regime's role in the subversion of Western democracies, such as Kirchick and political strategist Molly McKew, stressed that the West's internal conflicts, weaknesses, and faltering commitment to liberal democratic values have created openings for the

Kremlin to exploit. That doesn't make the Kremlin's quest to replace the liberal international order with one in which, as Kirchick put it, “might makes right,” any less pernicious or dangerous.

The squabbles about the U.S. response to the Russian election are a stark example of failed leadership. Trump's decision to congratulate Putin on his fake victory was, as many conservatives have pointed out, no different from President Barack Obama's post-election greeting to Putin in 2012. But at least at the time, then-Secretary of State Hillary Clinton had some harsh words for Russia's rigged elections — reportedly the principal motive for Putin's vendetta against her. By contrast, when White House Press Secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders was asked whether Putin won a free and fair election, she replied that “we don't get to dictate how other countries operate.”

PutinCon's last session, which opened with a video greeting from Russian anti-corruption blogger and opposition leader Alexei Navalny (kept out of the election by a trumped-up fraud conviction), was rather optimistically titled “The End of Putin's Tyranny.” The moderator, opposition activist Garry Kasparov, noted that “we have a daunting task — to give you a hint of optimism after what you have heard today.” Optimism is increasingly rare in today's politics. And yet, as the speakers noted, change often happens quickly and unpredictably.

We can only hope that when reform comes to Russia again, the West will be ready to champion freedom.

To read the original version of this article visit: <https://www.newsday.com/opinion/columnists/cathy-young/a-very-telling-ballot-box-win-for-putin-1.17612678>

Putin Tests the West

Kremlin watchers: Russian poisonings, election meddling require harsh response

By **Douglas Burton** | March 31, 2018 5:00 am

An uptick in tense U.S.-Russia relations saw Moscow expel 60 diplomats from Russia Thursday as retaliation for the United States ordering the removal of 60 Russian officials Monday.

At least 27 nations have expelled Russian diplomats as well, thus standing in solidarity with the United Kingdom where a nerve gas poisoning nearly claimed the life of a former Russian spy and his daughter March 4. For Russia observers who have been urging a tougher stance against the Putin regime, the White House move was long in coming.

The gesture signaled that the administration had made up its mind about Kremlin involvement in the attack, which left former double agent Sergei Skripal, and his daughter Yulia in critical condition.

“This was a demonstrative attack, really a kind of terrorist attack,” according to Luke Harding, a Kremlin specialist with the Guardian newspaper, speaking to a conference of Kremlin watchers called PutinCon on March 16. “The fact is, the many agents in Russia’s FSB (the Federal Security Service) are willing to cooperate with Western intelligence,” he said.

The security at the meeting was tight, and the location of the event was kept undisclosed until hours before it began.

One of the presenters, Vladimir Kara-Murza, claims he survived two assassination attempts by poisoning and went on to continue his advocacy work at Open Russia. PutinCon was created and funded by the Oslo-based Human Rights Foundation, which aims to expose the abuses of dictators worldwide.



PHOTO | Vladimir Putin (Getty Images)

The Skripal poison attack recalls the murder of former Russian spy Alexander Litvinenko in the United Kingdom in November 2006.

“The real story is that the Kremlin is sending a message to these agents. We can do this to you and your family,” Harding told the PutinCon conference in mid-town Manhattan.

The Skripal poisoning was timed two weeks prior to the Russian presidential election, and was intended to impact several targets, the United Kingdom, which is politically isolated, and the Russian civilian population, according to Harding. “It plays well [to the Russians]. There is a kind of dynamic of confrontation where Russia is under siege by hostile Western conspiracy,” Harding said.

To no one’s surprise, President Vladimir Putin waltzed into his 19th year of power as either president or premier of the Russian Federation on March 18, despite allegations of ballot stuffing.

The meddling into the U.S. elections of 2016 was scripted by Putin’s entrepreneurial allies in St. Petersburg and mentioned in Independent Counsel Robert Mueller’s indictment of 13 Russian nationals on Feb. 16. The agent of meddling was the Internet Research Agency, also known as the Troll Factory, which employed thousands of Russians to post fake news in social media and news platforms in many countries. The Troll Factory was financed by Vladimir Litvinenko, a close aide to Putin since the 1990s and today a billionaire oligarch, according to Olga Litvinenko, his estranged daughter, who also presented at PutinCon.

Olga Litvinenko, who served two terms in St. Petersburg Legislative Assembly before breaking ranks with her father in 2011, dished a litany of accusations against Putin and her dad. Her father did more than assist Putin’s plagiarized doctoral dissertation on economics. “My dad actually was the author,” she said.

After Putin came to power in 1999, the elder Litvinenko, a rector at the St. Petersburg Mining Institute, as well as Putin’s political campaign director in 1998, headed a company that sold dissertations for anyone who would pay for them, Olga Litvinenko said. But the schemes of Putin and his cronies were diverse, including illicit export of metals, trafficking in burial services and the covert acquisition of St. Petersburg hotels, she said. “My father is the richest institute rector in the world,” she has said.

“The Russian oligarchs are not the actual owners of what they have in Russia,” according to Nikita Kulachenkov, a chief investigator at the Anti-Corruption Foundation based in Moscow. “They might lose everything in a single day, if Putin resigns or changes his mind. So, they will do anything to prevent that single day from arriving.”

Take the case of Oleg Deripaska, the mega-rich metals broker who was once considered Russia’s richest man, worth \$28 billion. Deripaska nearly lost everything due to mounting debts and the 2007-2008 financial crisis but found a financial rescue, some believe, by Putin’s administration. Nonetheless, the true owner of the company is in doubt. In a conversation with Russia’s Deputy Foreign Minister, overheard by “escort ladies” and posted

on their Facebook pages, “Deripaska was deferring to the foreign ministry official as if he were his boss, because he [the deputy foreign minister] is his boss,” Kulachenkov said.

The consensus of many at PutinCon was that Putin is not merely an acquisitive kleptocrat, but a threat to his own people and to the West.

“Perhaps the recent Skripal poisoning will open the eyes of the West,” said Amy Knight, an American scholar specializing in Russian history. “How many more brazen murders will it take before we take steps to prevent Mr. Putin carrying out more of these crimes?”

To read the original version of this article visit:
<http://freebeacon.com/national-security/putin-tests-west/>

A CONVERSATION AT PUTINCON

How To Deal with Putin

KARINA ORLOVA

As Vladimir Putin begins another six-year term as President, TAI asked the attendees of the PutinCon conference how to handle the Russian leader.



PHOTO | Yuri Kadobnov (AFP/Getty Images)

In a result that should surprise no one, Vladimir Putin was elected to a fourth term as Russia's President on Sunday, March 18. The Kremlin's outrageous efforts to increase turnout—including reminders to show up at the polls posted on the mobile apps of major state-owned banks—combined with massive and well-documented electoral fraud sufficed to give Putin 76 percent of the vote with a reported 68 percent turnout, the highest for the past decade. With this, Vladimir Putin gets a broad mandate for continuing his hostile policies towards both his own people and other countries.

Last week, just two days ahead of this inevitable outcome, I attended PutinCon, a conference held in New York and devoted to exposing the threats posed by Putin's governance. Organized by the Human Rights Foundation and led by the chess champion and prominent Russian opposition leader Garry Kasparov, PutinCon took place in a Broadway theater and attracted more than a dozen remarkable speakers and hundreds of attendees. Among them were Bill Browder, the financier and architect of the Magnitsky Act; former U.S. Attorney Preet Bharara, who oversaw the case against Preve-

zon that involved money laundering in the Magnitsky case, and who was fired two months before the case was settled; and even the Republican candidate Paul Martin, who is running for Congress in California's 48th District against Rep. Dana Rohrabacher and is building his campaign primarily on anti-Putin resentment.

I asked some of the speakers and attendees at PutinCon four questions about how to deal with Vladimir Putin's Russia in the next six years.

Is cooperation with Putin's Russia still possible and needed? If yes, in which areas?

Preet Bharara, U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of New York from 2009 to 2017:

In some areas we have to cooperate with most countries. Outside of my expertise on matters of war and peace and dealing with problems in the Middle East, sure, there might be some things we can cooperate with him on. But we should also stand strong for our own country as well.

Bill Browder, CEO of Hermitage Capital Management:

I think that we need to understand, the people in the West need to understand, that Putin has no interest in negotiating or cooperating on any issue. He only understands raw power, and so all the interactions with him should be on the basis of raw power.

Vladimir Kara-Murza, vice chairman of Open Russia, chairman of the Boris Nemtsov Foundation for Freedom:

There are some areas in which Western governments must talk and maintain dialogue with the Kremlin regime. But while they do that, it is important to also stand on the position of principle. Major Western governments should be able to do more than one thing at a time. If Ronald Reagan was able to negotiate success with arms control with the Soviet government and at the same time begin every bilateral summit by putting down the list of Russian or Soviet political prisoners on the table, then so Western governments today, including the U.S. government, can discuss not just those issues that they feel are in their interests to discuss with the current regime in the Kremlin, but also raise issues that are relating to the rule of law, to democratic governments, and to the respect for

human rights, which are, by their very nature and by the international obligations undertaken within the OSCE, supposed to be a matter of international concern.

Paul Martin, Candidate for U.S. House CA-48 Primary:

I would want to look at how Ronald Reagan dealt with Brezhnev. I would want to look at how JFK dealt with Khrushchev. There has to be [a] relationship to some extent, I'm assuming. But as long as they're meddling in our elections, that brings the situation to a whole entirely different realm. And we have Donald Trump who has not given any orders to begin either a retaliatory or a preventative act.

Luke Harding, foreign correspondent for The Guardian, author of *Collusion: Secret Meetings, Dirty Money, and How Russia Helped Donald Trump Win*:

It's just not possible at the moment. Putin's not interested in mutual solutions. He's a zero-sum guy, and he really sees the world in quite simple terms that what's bad for America is what's good for Russia, and vice versa. He's not interested in doing traditional cooperation, which is not to say that you shouldn't engage with Russia. It's good to talk. Everyone is pro-talking, but you have to talk with a goal in mind. Clearly, you need to talk with Russia over Syria, over the Middle East, over Iran, over Ukraine and so on, but I think it has to be done from a position of strength and also an understanding that Putin is pretty contemptuous of western politicians. He thinks they're all hypocritical, they're perishable, they never last very long. Whilst he lasts forever. He outlasted Brezhnev, closing in on Stalin. He will be there when Trump is gone and Theresa May is toast, and so on. I think we need to be absolutely clear-eyed about what the Russian state is in 2018, and it's a pretty nasty revisionist, authoritarian government that uses all sorts of illegal methods to pursue its goals.

David Kramer, Senior Fellow in the Vaclav Havel Program for Human Rights and Diplomacy, Florida International University:

It's not. They don't share any values, obviously, and increasingly share fewer and fewer interests. So, trying to strike a cooperative relationship [with a country] that murders its own people, interferes in other countries' elections, and baits its neighbors, it's pointless.

Garry Kasparov, former World Chess Champion, chairman of Human Rights Foundation:

I think it's totally useless to keep looking for common ground with the Putin regime. He's not looking for any compromises, and it's unfortunately a one-way street. The sooner Putin's regime goes down to the dustbin of history, the better for all of us.

Jamie Kirchick, journalist, visiting fellow in the Center on the United States and Europe and Project on International Order and Strategy at the Brookings Institution:

I think on some discreet issues like implementing the New START treaty, arms reduction to the extent that de-conflicting in Syria and these very discreet issues, yes—but there's no grand strategic commonalities that we have. We don't see the world in the same way. We don't want the same things in Syria. They're not interested in counter-terrorism. So, no. I think aside from a handful of these discreet issues, there's really no room for cooperation.

What should the United States do to better counter the Kremlin's attacks on the U.S. and Western democracy?

Luke Harding: First of all, acknowledge them. Trump has been very equivocal about whether Russia attacked or maybe it was some guy sitting on a bed or whatever. I think there has to be an understanding that what Putin's trying to do is use the openness of western society almost as a weapon against western society. The fact that it's quite porous, that you can have freedom of opinion, that you can hire a bunch of people to try and subvert Facebook and Twitter. We need to be very clear about that.

Karina Orlova: What do you think the United Kingdom should do in response to the poisoning of Sergey Skripal?

Luke Harding: Beyond diplomatic expulsions, which we've seen from Theresa May, they need to do something about oligarchs. Every oligarch likes living in London. It's a great place. I can't afford to live there. You could de-visa the top 5,000 Kremlin officials and their families, so they can no longer have visas. You can enact the Magnitsky law against people who abuse human rights. Actually this sort of legislation can be used

against all sorts of human rights violators. It's not just the Russians. There are plenty of decent Russians out there. There's all sorts of other countries as well. But at the moment, the UK, London in particular, is pretty much a kleptocrats' playground.

Preet Bharara: I think at a minimum sanctions should be imposed. I think the President should speak strongly about it. I think he should support our allies like the United Kingdom when they are attacked on NATO soil, those would be good starts.

Paul Martin: Our agencies should be given permission by the President, and then from there we certainly have our own cyber experts. This is the land of Google and Apple, we certainly have the capacity to counter attack them through cyber means, but prevention is the big thing. There aren't even preventative measures being taken. So I would say our hands are tied behind our back, because our Commander-in-Chief won't allow it. Basically a leader should say, "We're being attacked, our sacred democracy is being attacked. People have died for this form of government. I release all resources, financial and everything else to stop this from happening right now." We don't have that happening.

Garry Kasparov: First, the free world and the United States must recognize that we are at war. Whether it's a cold war or hybrid war, you name it, but you can lose any war even being superior in forces to [the] enemy if you don't admit that you're at war. America has a variety of instruments to make Putin and his cronies pay the price, but so far, we can see the lack of political will on both sides of the Atlantic to start using these instruments. Hurt them where it hurts. Follow the money and make sure that the price that they will pay for following Putin's orders will be unbearable.

Bill Browder: The main thing that the West, that America and other countries can do, is to freeze and seize money of Putin, Putin regime officials and well-connected oligarchs with the Magnitsky Act.

Thor Halvorssen, founder of Human Rights Foundation: I do not believe that democratic states should allow the propaganda vehicles of dictatorships to operate in their sphere. I would immediately shut down RT and all organs of the Russian state in democracies. They do not serve the purposes of media or well-informed citizenry. In fact, they do quite the opposite.

David Kramer: An active containment strategy, which means an increase in sanctions, going after the money, Putin and his regime, denying them and their families and their mistresses, daughters and sons, the privilege of coming here. It means increasing U.S. energy exports to Europe, it means increasing the military presence in the Baltic states and then the non-NATO countries, and it means pushing back on Russian corruption and cleaning up our own act, because otherwise we're enablers of the regime.

Jamie Kirchick: I think there needs to be tougher response to their behavior. Whether that's sanctions or whether that's releasing compromising material that we have on them, on Putin and his cronies. On visa bans, we need to be implementing more. Sending home the children of oligarchs and government officials that are studying in Western universities. There's a whole set of tools that we can be using.

Vladimir Kara-Murza: Better implement the Magnitsky Act and the Global Magnitsky Act, and really engage this individual, personal sanctions mechanism against those individuals in Putin's regime who are engaged in abuses of international law, human rights violations, and corruption. And I want to stress, I'm not talking about sanctions on Russia, I'm talking about specific, individual, targeted measures against those people who are responsible for these abuses. Implement this law better.

How do you see the transition of power in Russia after Vladimir Putin?

Bill Browder: I don't think Putin is going to leave power until he either dies of natural causes or is deposed. And so the transition will probably be unexpected and potentially violent.

David Kramer: It's hard to say how it will come about. I imagine that at some point, if Putin shows an unwillingness to lead, people around him will decide that he's leading up to a dead end, or it's possible that Russians will reach a point where they've had enough. We never know what the tipping point is in a country. But I'm not resigned to the likelihood of Putin being there for 10 more years.

Jamie Kirchick: I'm not hopeful it's going to get any better. I think it's not going to be democratic renewal after he's gone. I think it will sadly be more of the same, but potentially, worse.

Garry Kasparov: There's no guarantee that when the Putin regime collapses, Russia turns into a democracy, but there's a guarantee it will never happen if Putin stays in power. There's no way that regimes like Putin's can evolve peacefully into a democracy because we've reached a point where the collapse of Putin's dictatorship will be accompanied by violence. It's in our interest to make sure this violence will be short-lived and not too damaging, but we should recognize that the future of Russia will not be secured unless we'll be willing to investigate and properly evaluate the crimes committed both by Putin's regime and also by his Communist predecessors.

Vladimir Kara-Murza: I'm a historian by education. If you look at the history of Russia going back a century or so, every time the Russian people had a free choice in a more or less free election between dictatorship and democracy, they always chose democracy. 1906, 1917, 1991. And so I have no doubt that when Russian citizens are given the opportunity to freely vote to elect their own government that they will vote responsibly. It is our task as a responsible opposition, and this is the main focus of our work at the Open Russia movement, is to already today be preparing for that post-Putin transition. Because as the history of Russia again shows us, big political changes in our country can start quickly and unexpectedly. We cannot afford not to be ready when that time of change comes. So we need to be thinking about and preparing for a post-Putin transition today.

Luke Harding: It's not happening any time soon and there's no succession plan. It's a personalist regime, it's basically a dictatorship, which is neo-Soviet in many respects, although not ideological as the USSR was. My fear is that you would get Putinism without Putin. I think that's entirely possible. You can get someone like him, perhaps not quite as effective, but similar.

Which of Putin's weaknesses should the West exploit?

Jamie Kirchick: Their money. Their money that they have parked in all sorts of Western financial institutions:

City of London, offshore bank accounts. They're much more economically integrated with the West than they were during the Soviet era. We can use those tools to squeeze them more than we are.

David Kramer: It's a weakness that he and we share, and that's corruption. His regime is so corrupt. It depends on feeding corruption to placate people, to address their needs, but it means he's vulnerable, because the only way they enjoy the corruption that they engage in is by putting their money in safe places like the West. So if we go after it, they don't have the opportunity to exploit their ill-gotten gains. But it also means we have to clean up our own house, too.

Garry Kasparov: As [with] every dictator, Putin is very sensitive to geopolitical defeats. Any chance to show that Putin is no longer [an] all-powerful demigod, who can call the shots in any part of the world, is going to help. You have many spots on the world map where it could be achieved, whether it's Syria, North Korea, or [the] free world, if you want to use banks, not tanks. The key is psychology. Every dictator survives as long as he looks strong. He doesn't have to be strong, I want to emphasize it, but he has to look strong. Putin knows the rules of the game and it seems to me the West is slowly recognizing that without making him look weak, we do not expect realistically any uprising in Russia that will overthrow him.

Vladimir Kara-Murza: A lot of people—the corrupt officials and the oligarchs around the Putin's regime—have for years been using Western countries as havens for their money that they are stealing from the people of Russia. And for the same amount of time, these Western countries have been accepting this dirty money and these people on their soil and in their banks. It is long past time for countries to pride themselves on democratic governance and respect for the rule of law, [that] they stop this bad practice and that they finally shut their doors to those people in the Putin regime who use Western countries as havens for their looted wealth and send a message that they will no longer be able to do that.

Luke Harding: His money. He has a lot of money. He has more money probably than any other person in human history. He and his team are worth \$300 billion. It's a proxy system, so formally it doesn't belong to him, but he can use it to buy whatever he wants. Billionaires

don't like being separated from their money very much. It's what keeps them awake at night. They don't really care about super patriotism and "Krym nash," Crimea is ours, all this rhetorical stuff. What they care about are their yachts, their mistresses, their super planes, their villas, their Corsican holidays. If you separate them from the pleasures of being part of the international jet set, that really hurts.

Bill Browder: The weaknesses are that ... Putin is a very rich man and he keeps all of his money in the West. And that's our leverage.

Paul Martin: Without any question, money. Without any question, travel. I mean, really this is a big party that these oligarchs are having. This is all about sex, drugs and rock and roll at the end of the day. I hate to say it, it's all about exposure to nice toys, nice locations and money. And by freezing the assets, by restricting visas, suddenly, what's the motive anymore? So sanctions on these oligarchs is the answer, and on Putin as well. And freezing accounts.

Thor Halvorssen: It's not a question of his weaknesses, it's a question of understanding how to address and deal with them. Vladimir Putin is a psychopath. Psychopaths do not respond to incentives. We have it all upside down. We shouldn't be trying to see if he's going to be good or nice. We should, in fact, be dealing with him the way a psychopath is dealt with, which is through punishment. Disincentives, not through incentives. Incentives is a game where the psychopath in power is able to gain a little bit more every day. Disincentives, punishment is what they answer to, because they believe in survival for themselves. And so what I believe is we've been approaching him the incorrect way. Unfortunately, the last government was all about "let's reach out and extend our outstretched hand." That didn't turn out very well anywhere. In Cuba. In Venezuela. In Syria. In Russia. Everywhere that tactic was attempted, it failed miserably. It should not be that. The outstretched hands should be to the civil society groups, to the population of each country. To break the monopoly of information that the government has, to break the perception that we are against Russians. We're not. We're against Putin. There's a huge difference between the two.

James Fallon, neuroscientist, professor in the University of California, Irvine School of Medicine: This

is basically a mafia thug, right? [...] He plays to people's weaknesses. He is a predator. He finds out where you're weak and how you can be had and then tries to offer you that or con you. Now that doesn't work, a combination with just threats that he will be happy to carry out. And if you don't play with him, he'll kill you.

And this is basically a mafioso guy. If you want to know how to get to him, look throughout history of how they got mafioso on technicalities.

Karina Orlova: What personal weaknesses in Vladimir Putin's character, his personality, can you see?

James Fallon: Nobody has really tested it, because he's secretive. But he's done such obvious things. And he does things that most psychopaths do. Now whether he's a psychopath or a sociopath, it matters greatly. One of the key things is that if you're a primary psychopath, that's what [we] usually think of as a psychopath: They do not have emotional apathy, and they do not have moral reasoning, because that area of the brain that has to do with morality, [the] orbital cortex, is way underdeveloped early on, suppressed. Because of that they don't understand morality, but they study other people's morality. And they can learn by mirroring other people's morality even though they don't feel it.

Imagine being in a world where the worst thing you can do is take somebody's parking space, that's murder. We'd laugh at that, and he'd get mad. But he's like somebody who thinks that stealing a parking place is the worst thing you can do, but in killing somebody there's no problem. There's no morality there. You see? Because they're predators.

But a secondary psychopath, also known as a sociopath, is usually somebody abused later than two or three, four years old, who's maybe bullied when they're eight, nine, ten. In that case they understand morality. Because that part of the brain has already developed a full sense of morality, so they know what they're doing is wrong. Also they have a normal sense of anxiety, whereas a primary psychopath does not feel anxiety. And when psychopaths are caught doing something, they can lie, they don't have any tells of liars, because it doesn't matter to them. So they have no neural responses that show nervousness. Since they don't act guilty, they get away with everything.

And the question is whether you have moral reasoning,

a sense of anxiety and remorse. If you have that, that's a sociopath, not a psychopath. In that case, a sociopath can be cornered.

Whereas psychopaths till the end will just blow it off. The sociopaths, if you corner them, they'll go crazy. Those are two different things. In the case of a primary psychopath, there is nothing you can do to intimidate them, to retrain them. They're wired that way, and you basically have to eliminate them. You [have] either got to run, you go away from them, you don't interact with them, or you have to kill them. There's no rehabilitation, there's no sense you can talk into them, there's no way of talking him out of that trait. And that's what makes them very unique. And so in one case you have to eliminate them.

With sociopaths, you corner them. So these are two fundamentals.

To read the original version of this article visit:
<https://www.the-american-interest.com/2018/03/19/how-to-deal-with-putin/>

IN DECEMBER 1989, a young KGB officer was stationed in Dresden watching the collapse of communism when a crowd tried to storm his office. He rang a local Red Army tank unit to request help, only to be told they could not intervene. 'We can't do anything without orders from Moscow,' he was told. 'And Moscow is silent.'

The officer's name was Vladimir Putin. A decade later this diminutive spy had risen to become ruler of Russia – and he vowed his giant nation would never again be silent.

There is no doubt he has achieved that aim, having increased military spending twentyfold since taking office, started several conflicts in Europe, stepped into war in Syria and stirred up trouble from Warsaw to Washington.

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PutinCon was opened by Garry Kasparov, the former chess champion, opposition activist and chairman of organisers the Human Rights Foundation. After speaking about Putin's malevolent misrule, he joked that dictators preferred playing poker to chess. 'In poker you can win with a weak hand if your opponents keep folding,' he said.

Spot on. For this gathering underlined how Putin took charge of a struggling country and, sucking up cash and control, proceeded to run rings around his domestic and international rivals.

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Putin tested his political arsenal amid the chaos of post-communism in that beautiful Baltic city – just as today he tests his latest weapons amid the chaos of Syria. Rivals were killed or threatened, state resources plundered.

'They did not like him in St Petersburg,' said Litvinenko, who served on the local assembly. 'They remember Putin as taking bribes with the assistance of Mr Sechin.'

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When the world's top Russia experts gathered in New York last week, our man was there to hear their devastating verdict....

PUTIN'S NOT STRONG – IT'S WE WHO'VE GROWN WEAK

From **IAN BIRRELL**

IN NEW YORK

cruel regime from the start. Yet they chose to ignore his lies and contain, rather than confront, this malevolent man and his rapacious allies. Again and again we have seen this same appeasement of his tyranny: over wars in Chechnya, Georgia and Ukraine; over theft of territory in Crimea; over the shooting down of a civilian airliner; over the killing of internal enemies; over cyber-warfare; even over murder in our own land with the assassination of another former spy.

It is not that Putin is strong but we have become weak,' said German expert Boris Reitschuster. Hard to argue. Yet countries such as Britain could fight back by targeting the travel, families and assets of Putin's henchmen.

The former president of Estonia told the meeting how affronted he was to hear the Russian foreign minister lambast enlightened Western values, then see the same man's daughter graduating from New York's Columbia university, his own alma mater.

Here is the crux of the issue. Putin and his pals claim to love their land and loathe our values

– but they stash their cash in our banks, buy our properties, fight legal battles in our courts and send their children be educated in our schools.

The hypocrisy stinks – but so does our response. Alexei Navalny, an anti-corruption crusader, said he had just reported an oligarch, who recently listed a major firm in Britain, to our authorities for breach of the bribery act – but expected to be ignored as often in the past.

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We need to clean up our act, end our complicity and start putting morality before money. As one former US government official said, Putin should be wondering what the West will do next instead of us always reacting to his latest outrage.

Instead we are shocked when a gangster president uses his standard tactics of state terror in a quiet Wiltshire cathedral city. When will we learn to fight back?

The **Mail**
ON SUNDAY

Weapon that will really hit the Kremlin

MOSCOW'S expulsions of British diplomats were entirely predictable. The spiteful closure of the British Council's operations in Russia, a window into the free world long resented by the Kremlin, was also probably inevitable.

We knew such things would happen when we expelled Russian envoys from London. They all lie within the range of normal diplomacy when nations become genuinely angry with each other.

These events were more or less certain once it became clear that the only likely culprit for the Salisbury poisonings was the Russian state. They are necessary formalities in such circumstances.

Regrettably, they probably did not much surprise or dismay the Russian government. In purely practical terms, they may have harmed us more than they harmed it. Russia has easy access to our open society. We need a well-staffed embassy to have any idea of what is going on in an increasingly closed and impenetrable Russia, with its largely state-controlled media.

Which is why this cannot and must not be the end of things. Britain must now move on to take actions which will make President Putin regret what has happened, and resolve not to try it here again.

BUT we do not necessarily need to shout about what we now do. Of course we must continue to impress on our close allies that an injury to one free society is an injury to all. We need, over the next few weeks, to bring our friends round to a much more severe condemnation of the Salisbury outrages.

It is bad enough that lawless violence is practised by the state inside Russia. It is intolerable that it should dare to use such methods on the soil of any democratic nation.

But at the same time as we pursue this, there is another weapon we may use. The Mail on Sunday reveals today that we can soon expect action to investigate unexplained Russian money in London.

Many of its owners have links to the Putin Kremlin. If they feel pain, Mr Putin will feel pain. There is no need for grandiose announcements or elaborate threats. The normal lawful authorities have considerable powers which they can use to investigate and regulate this money, and they should do so.

IT IS sometimes argued that Russian money is too valuable to London for us to take any serious action of this kind. But that money is here because wealthy Russians actively like to keep it here. They like our fair law courts and our orderly streets, so unlike the corrupt and unpredictable conditions in their own country.

Well, from now on, they must expect to pay a higher price in scrutiny and supervision than before. And if they do not like it, then they will know very well where to complain. It is their government, not ours, that has brought about the new hostility between our countries. Britain may not have the same ugly tradition of merciless cruelty that still haunts Russia, and we are fortunate that we do not. But that does not mean that we are a soft touch, or that we lack cunning and subtlety when faced with such grotesque, criminal wickedness.

Daily **Mail**

Putin's Not Strong – It's We Who've Grown Weak



By Ian Birrell

In December 1989, a young KGB officer was stationed in Dresden watching the collapse of communism when a crowd tried to storm his office. He rang a local Red Army tank unit to request help, only to be told they could not intervene. 'We can't do anything without orders from Moscow,' he was told. 'And Moscow is silent.'

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Little has changed since St Petersburg beyond the ambition and scale. Putin was appointed prime minister in 1999

Britain prostitutes itself before the oligarchs

by a drunken president with dwindling authority – and instantly used hatred and terror to boost his popularity.

In September that year a series of bombs ripped apart four blocks of flats, killing almost 300 Russians. Security operatives were caught planting one device, while a key political ally disclosed the site of another attack three days before it took place.

Yet Putin used the slaughter to demonise Chechens and launch an onslaught on their republic. His popularity surged on a sea of patriotism, winning him the presidency months later.

This showcased Putin's tactics: stoking fear, inflaming patriotism with a patsy media – and spilling blood. 'This is a regime founded on terror,' said David Satter, an American writer. 'We've just seen the latest manifestation of this in the UK.'

Western powers knew precisely the nature of Putin's cruel regime from the start. Yet they chose to ignore his lies and contain, rather than confront, this malevolent man and his rapacious allies. Again and again we have seen this same appeasement of his tyranny: over wars in Chechnya, Georgia and Ukraine; over theft of territory in Crimea; over the shooting down of a civilian airliner; over the killing of internal enemies; over cyber-warfare; even over murder in our own land with the assassination of another former spy.

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<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-5514149/IAN-BIR-RELL-Putins-not-strong-who've-grown-weak.html>

The Once and Future Vladimir Putin

PRISCILLA M. JENSEN | April 06, 2018 8:10 AM



Just a partial recap:

- At the beginning of March a former British agent, Russian Sergei Skripal, now living in Britain after a spy exchange, and his visiting daughter Yulia were hospitalized after being poisoned by one of the Novichok nerve agents developed by the Soviets beginning in the 1970s. A British policeman who went to their aid when they were found dying on a Salisbury park bench was also poisoned; he's been released from hospital but the Skripals remain under treatment. At this point more than two dozen Western countries have declared more than 100 Russian diplomats persona non grata and sent them packing. The Kremlin quickly responded in kind, expelling diplomats and taking a page from the old provokatsiya manual by charging the U.K. with having poisoned the Skripals themselves to distract from problems with Brexit.
- What the New York Times calls "a pair of self-described sex instructors" imprisoned in Thailand say they are offering the United States evidence of Russian election meddling and other skulduggery in return for a guarantee of safety. There's likely to be some sort of real information; one of them appears in a video in which a Russian oligarch widely considered corrupt meets on a yacht with a deputy prime minister.
- On March 31 there came the arrest of Dagestani billionaire businessman Ziyavudin Magomedov on the now-go-to charge of embezzling state funds. The fact that he appears to be close to people who are close to Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev adds a frisson to suspicions that the move is rather a matter of Putin's consolidating power at the beginning of his new term. Magomedov, a construction magnate involved in building venues for this summer's World Cup soccer competition, is estimated by Forbes to be worth about \$1.4 billion. He denies the charges.
- There's even a group of freshly hacked emails, says Business Insider, apparently from Kremlin-linked figures, with price lists showing what Russia would pay for rent-a-mobs in Ukraine around the time of its invasion. Prices varied, depending on whether one wished to arrange email hacking or demonstrations.

Every one of these events implicates the government of newly reelected Russian president Vladimir Putin, and it's very unlikely that he isn't personally connected in some way, if only by implicit approval.

So earlier in March, with the reelection a foregone conclusion and the inevitable prospect of Putin, who sees the dissolution of the Soviet Union as the "greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the twentieth century," continuing in power, chess champion Garry Kasparov, chair of the Human Rights Foundation, was inspired to convene a day-long conference to look at Putin in the round. "Putin-Con," Kasparov said, was to be "a true 360 of Putin, his KGB, his nature, his past, his accomplices, his policies." Hoping that "this year's program may be the last one where we have to talk about the future of Vladimir Putin," Kasparov added to the list "his unraveling."

The conversation, held in New York on March 16, commenced with descriptions of the diminution of democracy in Russia in the late '90s, as Boris Yeltsin and his coterie looked for a successor. That this disappearance unrolled in tandem with multiple murderous attacks on ordinary Russians is no longer a revelation. The 2004 attack on Beslan's school, which ended in more than 300 deaths, half of them children; the 1999 apartment bombings that killed almost the same number—these were arranged to look like terrorist attacks, implicitly by Chechens but, as speaker David Satter recalled, were almost certainly planned and carried out with the participation of the FSB, the KGB's successor, at the time headed by Yeltsin's anointed heir...Vladimir Putin.

Other participants spoke about the worldwide effects of Putin's exercise of power: about the eradication of a free press, attacks on IT integrity around the world, the involvement of Russia in wars from Ukraine to Syria. Former U.S. attorney for the southern district of New York Preet Bharara spoke about the enormous kleptocracy that has made Putin the "richest man in history." Talking with Bharara, Bill Browder, founder of the stolen and eviscerated Hermitage investment fund, continued his call for more countries to pass versions of the "Magnitsky Act"—legislation that makes possible economic sanctions and visa denials for individuals implicated in human rights violations. It is named for his late associate, the accountant Sergei Magnitsky, who traced the government

fraud that gutted Hermitage and died when he was refused medical care while falsely imprisoned.

There was even a lively, if admittedly speculative, psychological consideration originally billed as "Inside Putin's Brain: At Lunch," which may have indicated a lack of data associated with breakfast and teatime.

And far from least: Alexei Navalny, the opposition politician who was prevented from being on the presidential ballot, spoke to PutinCon via remote link. Navalny called his listeners' attention to ongoing frauds perpetrated within and by the Russian government, reminding them that there are laws already in place in Western countries that could help identify and penalize them.

"We are here today not to dream," said Kasparov, introducing the final panel, on "the end of Putin's tyranny." But he encouraged positive takes on the subject by his interlocutors: Vladimir Kara-Murza, director of Nemtsov, a documentary on his murdered friend and political associate Boris Nemtsov and a two-time survivor of Russia-originated poisoning; Miriam Lansky of the National Endowment for Democracy; and David J. Kramer, a former diplomat and a scholar in the field of human rights.

Kara-Murza spoke about the unpredictability of political change in Russia, in August 1991 as well as in 1917, noting that Russians cannot afford to be as unprepared for Putin's eventual exit as for the earlier two episodes. Noting the tens of thousands of Russian young people who have participated in protests against the government in the last year or so, he suggested "training and educating and helping to prepare" the people who will be involved in political change, including by encouraging them to run even in today's "fake, truncated, manipulated" elections as a training ground. Along with serious work on the substance of law and policy that will need to be available if change comes quickly, such preparation is invaluable. "It's not ridiculous to think of and plan for a post-Putin Russia," said Kara-Murza. "In fact, it is ridiculous and shortsighted and irresponsible not to."

With its serious and thorough assessment of the current state of affairs, PutinCon thoughtfully raised and began to address one of the most venerable of Russian questions: Chto delat? What is to be done?

To read the original version of this article visit: <https://www.weeklystandard.com/the-once-and-future-vladimir-putin/article/2012194>

BILL BROWDER: How sanctions on Russia hurt Putin's closest allies

Noah Friedman, Linette Lopez and Lamar Salter

🕒 Mar. 16, 2018, 9:32 AM 🔥 4,386



Bill Browder, head of the Magnitsky Global Justice Campaign, explains how US sanctions on Russia hurt Putin's wealthy allies. Browder will be speaking at PutinCon in New York City on Friday, March 16. Following is a transcript of the video.

To read the original version of this article visit:

<http://www.businessinsider.com/bill-browser-magnitsky-act-how-sanctions-on-russia-hurt-putins-most-closest-allies-2018-3>

PutinCon: A Gathering of the Kremlin's Greatest Enemies Putin's critics gather in Hell's Kitchen

Kayla Stetzel | Mar. 16, 2018 1:15 pm

Conventions are usually gatherings of fans, but PutinCon—a one-off event today being hosted in Hell's Kitchen by the Human Rights Foundation—is a gathering of Vladimir Putin's loudest enemies. The conference is designed to unite people interested in understanding and defeating the Russian leader's regime.

"We're gathering the world's top experts on the Russian dictator in New York," explains foundation chairman Garry Kasparov, "to discuss how the free world could address the monumental challenge that Putin presents to international peace and security as well as human rights in Russia itself. This is a one-day master class on Putin from prominent public intellectuals, statesmen, biographers, and even some survivors of his brutality."

One speaker is William Browder, the founder and CEO of Hermitage Capital Management. Browder was once the largest foreign portfolio investor in the Russia. Now he's one of Putin's foremost targets. After the Russian government tortured and killed his colleague, tax attorney Sergei Magnitsky, Browder helped craft the Magnitsky Act, which freezes the offshore accounts of Russian officials found guilty of human rights violations and bars them from entering the U.S.

The Magnitsky Act, which was passed in 2015, is a sore spot for the Kremlin. Putin has retaliated against United States and Browder for it in several ways, including barring Browder's visa renewal and halting the American adoption of Russian children. The Magnitsky Act was also a key talking point of the Trump Tower meeting between Jared Kushner, Paul Manafort, Donald Trump Jr., and a Russian official.

Browder, who will be speaking about Putin's wealth, collusion, and cronies, believes Putin's net worth to be \$200

billion. He tells Reason he thinks the best way to weaken his regime is to go after his assets.

"In order to maintain his kleptocracy, he steals as much money as he can from his people, and he tortures, maims, and kills to do so," Browder says. "But he keeps his money in the West—in the United States, Britain, and elsewhere." Putin feels "rightfully threatened by this act," Browder suggests, because it cuts him off from resources stored around the world. Browder, who believes the U.S. is "effectively involved with a third world war with Russia," touts his act as "our best point of leverage."

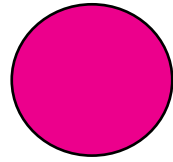
Other scheduled speakers include Kasparov, a grandmaster chess player turned democracy advocate. David Satter—the first journalist to be banned from Russia since the Cold War, due to his harsh criticism of the government—will speak on the events leading to Putin's rise to power. Historian Amy Knight, who The New York Times has dubbed "the West's foremost scholar" of the KGB, will talk about the extent of Putin's killings.

PutinCon takes place just two days before the Russian presidential "election," in which Putin has barred his most threatening competition, Alexei Navalny, from running. Between Russia's alleged meddling in America's 2016 election and the recent chemical attack on Russian ex-spy Sergei Skripal and his daughter Yulia, the conference also comes at critical time in Russia's relationship with the United States and the Europe.

To read the original version of this article visit:

<http://reason.com/blog/2018/03/16/putincon-a-gathering-of-russias-greatest>





Dictators and Their Jitters

By JAY NORDLINGER | March 16, 2018 1:34 PM



Today, the Human Rights Foundation is holding its “PutinCon” in New York. This is a one-day conference devoted to the Russian “president”: his origins, his rise, his deeds (both at home and abroad). Serving as chairman of PutinCon is Garry Kasparov, once the world’s chess champion, now a freedom-and-democracy champion.

We are told, always, that Putin is popular in Russia. He apparently doesn’t think so. He does away with his political opposition (sometimes permanently). He forbids a free press. He forbids genuine elections. This is not the behavior of a man who is confident of his popularity.

Dictators are traditionally afraid of their own people. Why shouldn’t they be? They know, as much as anybody, that they are illegitimate. So they use the apparatus of oppression to stay on top.

Today, I have many items in my Impromptus column. One of them is about Egypt, where a military dictator named Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi rules. According to a report out of Cairo, Sissi “has waged a massive crackdown on dissent in recent years, and authorities have ratcheted up pressure ahead of the March 26-28 election, in which

he faces no real challenge.”

If he faces no real challenge, why does he ratchet up pressure? That’s what dictators do. They can never be too sure. They run scared. The report continues, “All potentially serious competitors either withdrew under pressure or were arrested, leaving only el-Sissi and a little-known politician who supports him.”

Yes, this is classic. Putin has an “election” this Sunday. He arranged for an opponent named Ksenia Sobchak, a reality-TV star known as “the Paris Hilton of Russia.” (Unlike reality-TV stars in America, she is unlikely to make it to the top.) Years ago, Arafat allowed an opponent called “Umm Khalil” — a grandmother who was no challenge to him.

I have studied a few dictators over the years, and what impresses me is how similar they are to one another — whatever the continent, whatever the nationality, whatever the tongue.

To read the original version of this article visit: <https://www.nationalreview.com/corner/dictators-and-their-jitters/>



Vladimir Putin’s Worst Enemies Are Hosting a Summit in His Honor



BY BEN SCHRECKINGER
January 3, 2018

Organizers of the first-ever “PutinCon” are assembling the Russian president’s fiercest critics to discuss everything from Putin’s finances to his unraveling. Here, an exclusive sneak peek at what’s in store.

It’s like the Justice League, but in Hell’s Kitchen.

Imagine Vladimir Putin’s most vocal critics and dogged enemies all getting together in one room to, among other things, discuss his downfall. Well, that’s more or less what organizers of the first-ever “PutinCon” have in mind.

The one-of-a-kind conference, to be held on March 16 in New York, is designed by its organizers at the Human Rights Foundation to educate and organize the autocrat’s foes by bringing them together.

The event comes at a moment, of course, of mounting Russian aggression around the world and a time when Putin’s puzzling bromance with President Donald Trump isn’t yet fully understood. The gathering is also poised to be the single largest get-together of the various thorns in Putin’s side. Organizers hope the event will provide those most interested in countering Putin’s regime with a deeper understanding of the man—and the threat that they say he poses. “Too many people have underestimated him,” said Garry Kasparov, the chess grandmaster turned Russian opposition leader, who now chairs the Human Rights Foundation.

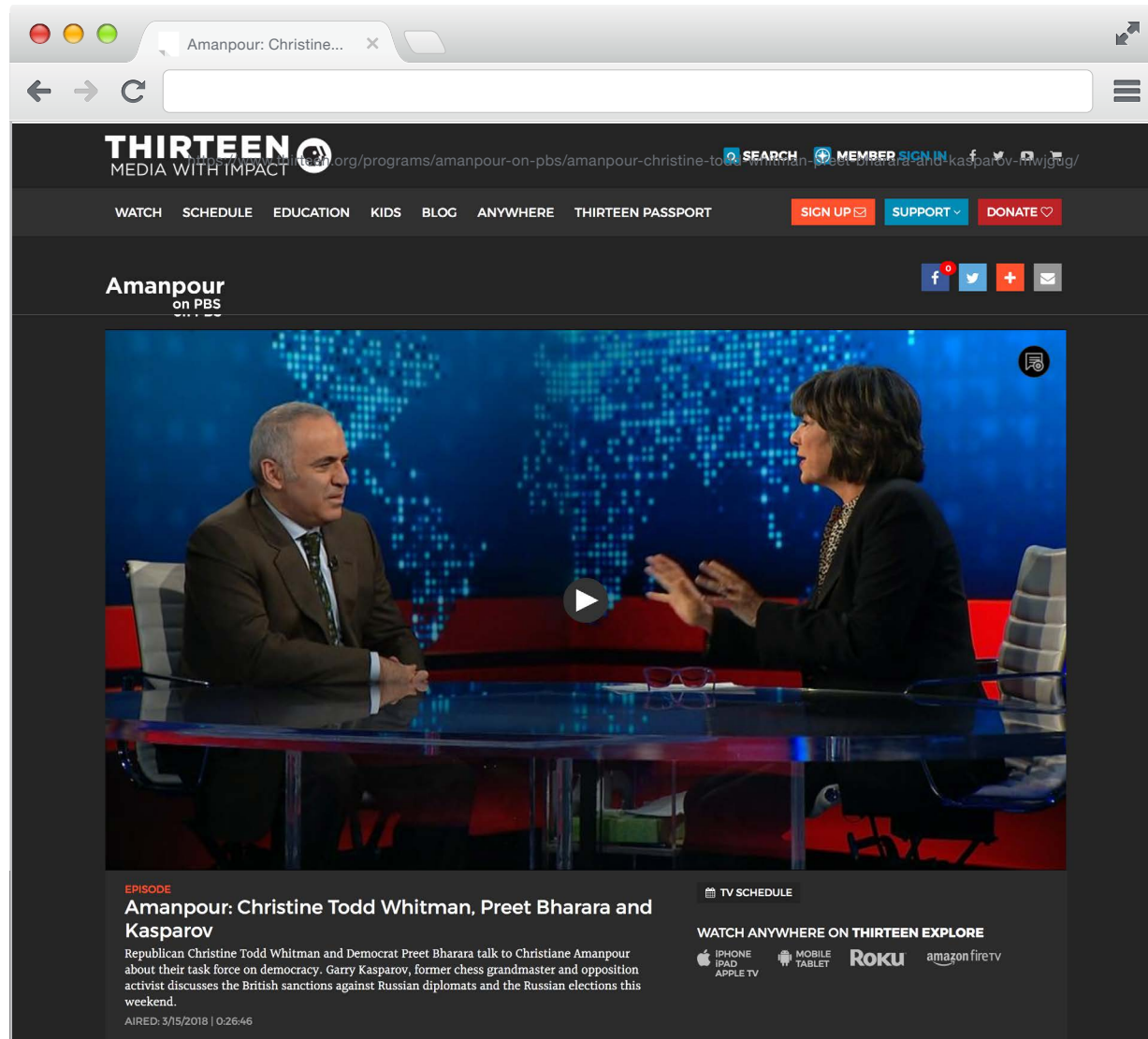
The day of lectures and networking sessions will take place 48 hours before Russia’s March 18 presidential election, which Putin is expected to win easily after neutering his political opposition. Alexei Navalny—who was considered Putin’s most serious competition in the race before being barred from running on Christmas Day—is not expected to attend, though several of his aides are.



Among the scheduled speakers is former U.S. attorney Preet Bharara, who will be leading a session titled, “The Richest Man in History and His Accomplices,” about Putin’s net worth and the looting of Russia, according to a release announcing the event, which was shared first exclusively with GQ. Putin, who has allegedly become the wealthiest person in the world while the vast majority of Russians wallow in penury, portrays himself as a simple salary-earner and is especially sensitive to explorations of his secret riches.

To read the original version of this article visit: <https://www.gq.com/story/putincon-nyc>

Amanpour: Christine Todd Whitman, Preet Bharara and Kasparov



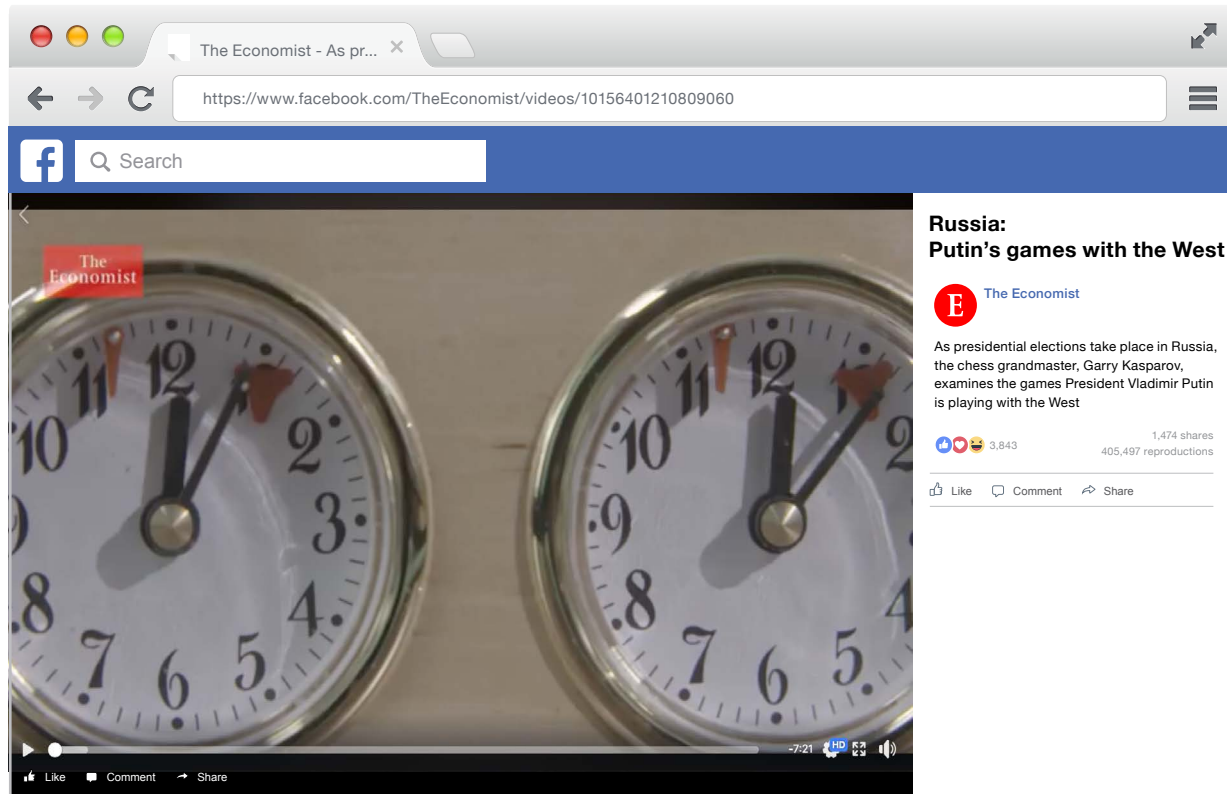
The screenshot shows the website for the Amanpour program on PBS. At the top, it says "THIRTEEN MEDIA WITH IMPACT" and "Amanpour on PBS". Below that is a navigation bar with "WATCH", "SCHEDULE", "EDUCATION", "KIDS", "BLOG", "ANYWHERE", and "THIRTEEN PASSPORT". There are also buttons for "SIGN UP", "SUPPORT", and "DONATE". The main content area features a video player with a play button. Below the video player, there is a description of the episode: "Amanpour: Christine Todd Whitman, Preet Bharara and Kasparov". The description states: "Republican Christine Todd Whitman and Democrat Preet Bharara talk to Christiane Amanpour about their task force on democracy. Garry Kasparov, former chess grandmaster and opposition activist discusses the British sanctions against Russian diplomats and the Russian elections this weekend." It also includes the air date "AIRED: 3/15/2018 | 0:26:46" and a section for "WATCH ANYWHERE ON THIRTEEN EXPLORE" with logos for iPhone/iPad, Roku, and Amazon Fire TV.

To watch this interview visit:
<https://www.thirteen.org/programs/amanpour-on-pbs/amanpour-christine-todd-whitman-preet-bharara-and-kasparov-mwjgug/>

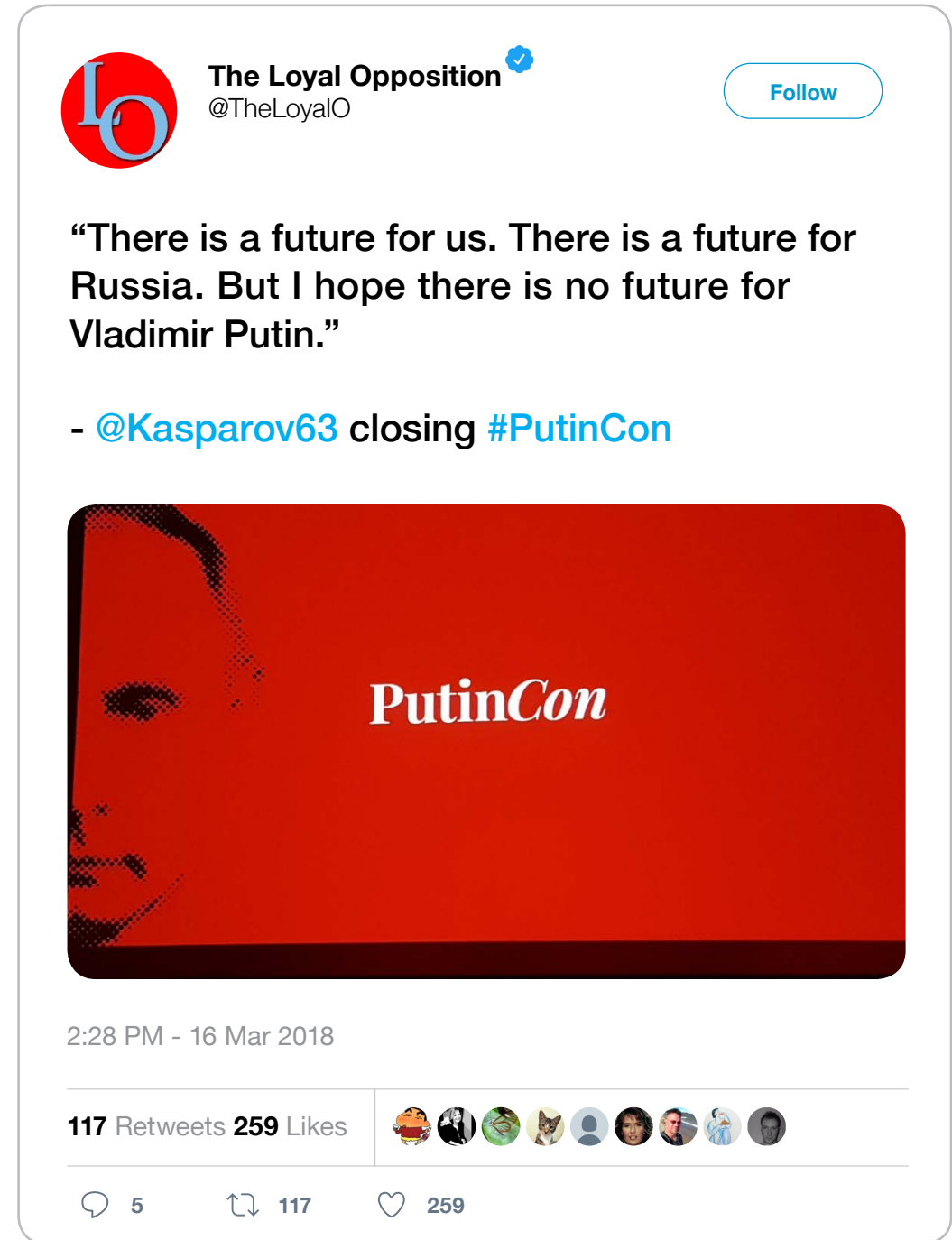


The screenshot shows a tweet from the account "Anderson Cooper 360°" (@AC360). The tweet text reads: "Russian Pro-Democracy leader and former world chess champion Garry Kasparov says that White House press secretary Sarah Sanders not saying whether Russian President Vladimir Putin was a friend or a foe 'insults' his intelligence. Putin is 'so far succeeding at creating chaos.'" Below the text is a video player showing Anderson Cooper speaking. The video player has a play button, a progress bar, and a volume icon. Below the video player, the tweet is dated "5:59 PM - 16 Mar 2018". At the bottom, it shows "295 Retweets" and "750 Likes". There are also icons for replies (35), retweets (295), and likes (750).

Russia: Putin's games with the West



To watch this video visit:
<https://www.facebook.com/TheEconomist/videos/10156401210809060>





Garry Kasparov



Garry Kasparov
@Kasparov63

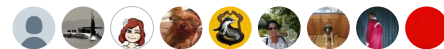
Follow

Great to have an ally like @Billbrowder in the fight for justice against Putin. Important conversation with @PreetBharara here at #PutinCon.



1:15 PM - 16 Mar 2018

465 Retweets 1,674 Likes



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117

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SLATE

The PutinCon Files

What message is Vladimir Putin sending to the West with the nerve-agent attacks on Russians in the U.K.?

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying a Slate article. The URL in the address bar is http://www.slate.com/articles/podcasts/trumpcast/2018/03/putincon_and_the_west_s_war_with_the_kremlin.html. The article title is "The PutinCon Files" and the author is Virginia Heffernan. Below the title is a social media share bar with Facebook and Twitter icons. A section titled "To listen to this episode of Trumpcast, use the player below:" contains an audio player for "The PutinCon Files" with a play button and a progress bar. Below the player is a short paragraph of text and a "SHARE SUBSCRIBE" button. To the right of the player is a small video thumbnail with the text "YOUR VOICE DESERVES TO BE HEARD." and a "BUILD THE BLOCK" logo.

To listen to this podcast visit:

http://www.slate.com/articles/podcasts/trumpcast/2018/03/putincon_and_the_west_s_war_with_the_kremlin.html



UN Watch
@UNWatch

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The man behind the Magnitsky Act and #GS18 speaker, [@BillBrowder](#), speaks about Putin's crimes with [@PreetBharara](#) at [#PutinCon](#)



1:00 PM - 16 Mar 2018

96 Retweets 270 Likes



6

96

270



Bill Browder
@UNWatch

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Proud to talk about Putin's crimes with one of the world's greatest crime fighters [@PreetBharara](#) at [#PutinCon](#)



11:42 AM - 16 Mar 2018

794 Retweets 2,810 Likes



91

794

2.8K



Casey Michel



Casey Michel
@cjcmichel

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@DanaRohrabacher gets a cameo in the listing of Putin's accomplices at #PutinCon:



7:55 AM - 16 Mar 2018

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19 200 373



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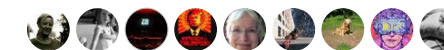
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Some of the artwork at today's #PutinCon:



11:24 AM - 16 Mar 2018

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2 20 42



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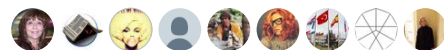
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“Schröder’ is actually Russian for ‘the corruption of political elite in another country.’ ... And @DanaRohrabacher is a mini-Schröder.”
-@reitschuster #PutinCon



12:02 PM - 16 Mar 2018

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1

10

17



Vladimir Kara-Murza



Vladimir Kara Murza
@vkaramurza

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Starting #PutinCon in New York City. An important reminder that this is about real people, not statistics. There are 143 political prisoners in Russia, according to the latest report by Memorial.



6:40 AM - 16 Mar 2018

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260



Defending Democracy



Defending Democracy
@DefendingDemo

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“It is time to hear the truth & to stand together.”

“You can lie to people for a long time - but not forever.”

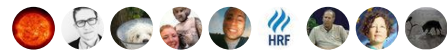
Watch the highlights of [@HRF's #PutinCon](#).



Inside PutinCon
Join us for highlights from inside PutinCon, as the Human Rights Foundation interviews the world's top experts on Putin's repression, corruption, and wars as...
[youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com)

9:27 AM - 16 Mar 2018

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1 26 60



John Fund



John Fund
@johnfund

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From Putincon: It's Time to Attack Putin's Soft Underbelly. His cronies are hiding billions of assets in Western banks and real estate ventures.



It's Time to Attack Putin's Soft Underbelly
Putin's biggest asset isn't his iron grip on Russian politics.
[nationalreview.com](https://www.nationalreview.com)

3:55 PM - 18 Mar 2018

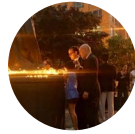
15 Retweets 24 Likes



2 15 24



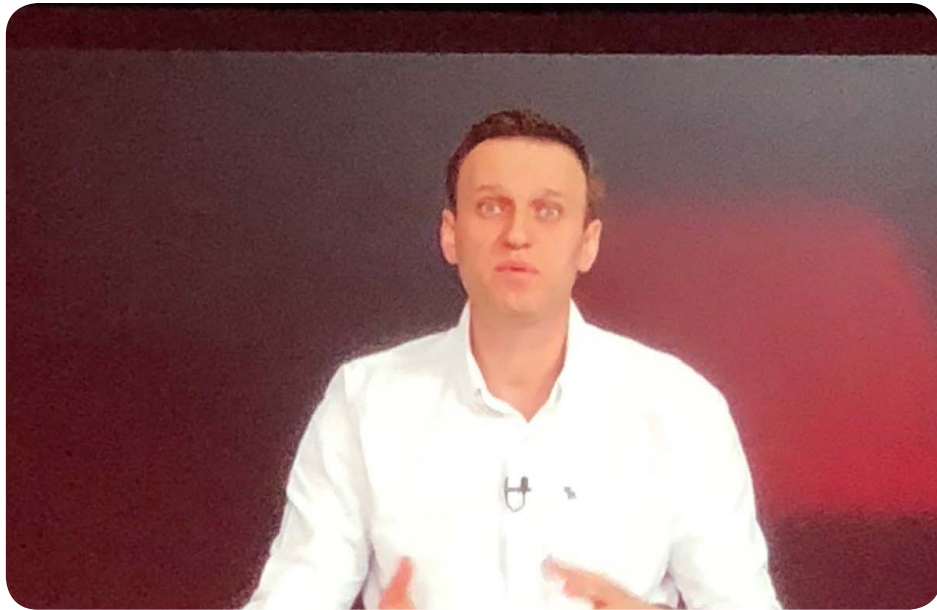
W. Briggs Burton



W. Briggs Burton
@WBriggsBurton

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A recorded message to #PutinCon by Alexei Navalny: the system of corruption in Russia has fueled Russian aggressiveness abroad, says Navalny.



11:36 AM - 16 Mar 2018

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23

109

435



Ian Birrel



Ian Birrel
@ianbirrel

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Putin's tactics of crushing rivals, inflaming nationalism and spilling blood have been clear from the start. Yet we allowed money to trump morality & did nothing - my MoS column after attending @HRF #PutinCon



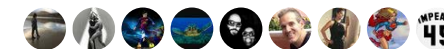
IAN BIRRELL: 'Putin's not strong - it's we who've grown weak'

'It is not that Putin is strong but we have become weak,' said German expert Boris Reitschuster. Hard to argue. Yet countries such as Britain could fight back.

dailymail.co.uk

4:17 AM - 18 Mar 2018

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9

83

168

Michael Carpenter



Michael Carpenter ✓
@mikercarpenter

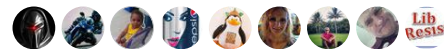
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Catching up with @Billbrowder at #PutinCon.



11:37 AM - 16 Mar 2018

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35

199

The Joint Baltic American National Committee



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New York, New York

jbancbaltics The Joint Baltic American National Committee (@jbancbaltics) had a chance to ask Bill Browder a few questions at #PutinCon in New York City about the importance of advocating in Congress. .
-Your book "Red Notice" has been a significant success around the world. Did you ever think it's going to reach such big audience? .
-I think it's really an important book for the remembrance of Sergei Magnitsky. It's an important book to help create Magnitsky Act's around the world, because most people won't sit with me for eleven hours, but strangely they'll sit with my book for eleven hours. And a lot of politicians are sitting with my book for eleven hours. And there have been countries, where the #Magnitsky Act has been passed, where I haven't even met the people who initiated them, because they read my book. And I hope it happens more and more as time goes on. .
-The second part of the book was mostly about #advocating. How important do you think is to go to and talk in person with congressmen, to go there often and to repeat your message? .
-There's an expression that the "squeaky wheel gets the grease." So, if you're there and nobody else is, then they'll do stuff. People who go into elected politics do it with good intentions. And if you go to politicians with a good policy to deal with the bad, the evil, most people respond positively to it.
-Do you have a message to give to the #Baltic community in the U.S. who are following everything that's happening the Hill? .
-One thing I'd like to point out is that while everybody is ringing their hands about #Russia somehow or Putin somehow getting the upper hand in #America and then people changing their opinion about him, I've spent a lot of time with Senators and members of the House of Representatives, and #Putin has made no inroads with the exception of one person in the House of Representatives so I don't think that anyone has to worry that the U.S. #Congress doesn't have the back of the #Baltics. #Estonia #Latvia #Lithuania 🇺🇸 🇵🇸 🇵🇸 🇵🇸



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MARCH 16

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motherjonesmag • Follow
Hell's Kitchen, Manhattan

Hannah Levintova
Another wall size chart. This one includes Oleg Deripaska. Also @RepRohrabacher

motherjonesmag There is (for real) an event in New York City today called PutinCon. So naturally we sent MoJo's Russia expert Hannah Levintova to check it out. The event (put on by the Human Rights Foundation) features opposition activists and journalists, and claims to be the "world's first conference dedicated entirely to the study of Vladimir Putin." Hannah is posting regular PutinCon updates to her Twitter feed (@H_Lev). Here are some highlights. #Putin #RussianElection #ElectionMeddling #vladimirputin #putincon

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MARCH 16

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smockmedia • Follow
New York, New York

smockmedia That's a wrap for #Putincon in New York City! Thanks to @hrf and all the amazing speakers and attendees. #democracy #elections #freesociety #freedom #Putin #soviet #humanrights

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Matt Sharfstein



Matt Sharfstein 
@MattAsherS

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“Every dictator, when the economy finally betrays them, must create the image of a besieged fortress.” - @Kasparov63 on why dictators create national enemies.



06:43 AM - 16 Mar 2018

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