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Government and the Intelligence Community: A Case Study on Russia and the United States Government's Effect on Intelligence Systems

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Government and the Intelligence Community :
A case study on Russia and the United States government's effect on intelligence
systems

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements
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ABSTRACT

The United States and Russia are two major superpowers with governments that are run in different manners. Central to a government's and country's defense is their intelligence systems. The intelligence systems of these two countries are run as part of the government and are integral to its functioning. The purpose of this thesis is to discuss how both the governments and intelligence systems are structured and do they coincide with their respective systems. Using a case study on the United States and Russia, their intelligence systems and governments a comparison was drawn. While looking at the history of both governments and communities and what they are like in present day it was determined that there exist similarities in structures. As the countries grew and modernized so did their intelligence community. The history of how the intelligence community developed in their respective country and interacted with citizens both foreign and domestic showed striking similarities to the governments own workings. Another important find was the rules and restrictions that were involved in the government's evolution was also paralleled in the intelligence communities evolution. In the United States there are regulations against intruding into the lives and properties of citizens and the intelligence community reflects this in executive order 12333 that states intelligence communities cannot collect information on citizens unless it is imperative to the safety and security of the country.

DEDICATION

To my family, and friends,
for encouraging me to never give up
and follow the path my heart set.

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INTRODUCTION

Russia and the United States have had many conflicts throughout the years in the form of wars, most notably the cold war. However, a large amount of the public does not know about the covert conflicts that occur between the intelligence systems of the respective countries. Both the political bodies and intelligence systems of these two countries are similar in nature but are structured and ran differently. Using a specific case study with Russia and the United States as a focal point we can better understand how much the political structure of a country affects the intelligence communities. To start off it is important to talk about the most recent case of Russian-American tension. The 2016 election was marked by tumultuous rumors regarding Russian interference. The president-elect, Donald Trump, was rumored to have been helped by Russian intelligence (The Washington Post 1). Reportedly, the Central Intelligence Agency concluded in a secret investigation that Russia did in fact intervene in the 2016 election. The individuals who hacked thousands of emails from the Democratic National Committee, including Hillary Clinton's, were found to have connections to the Russian government. It is worth noting there is debate on whether the information found is accurate given that there is no definite intelligence showing that Russian officials directed the individuals to give the emails to WikiLeaks. The Trump administration has vehemently denied the rumors saying "it could be Russia. And it could be China. And it could be some guy in his home in New Jersey." (The Washington Post 2016)

Nevertheless, James Comey, the now former director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, confirmed in March of 2017 that the FBI is investigating whether or not Russia interfered in the 2016 election. The investigation includes looking into whether anyone in the

Trump administration or their associates were in contact with Russian officials and if they ever planned any collusion with them. Mr. Comey states "The Federal Bureau of Investigation, as part of our counterintelligence effort, is investigating the Russian government's efforts to interfere in the 2016 presidential election (The New York Times 2017). The investigation has recently shifted focus onto Jared Kushner, Ivanka Trump's husband, and his ties to the Russian government. Jared Kushner is an influential White House adviser and son-in-law to the president and is reported to have had extensive interactions with Russian officials during the 2016 election. The red flag that is raised in this investigation is that in his security clearance forms Jared Kushner omitted meetings he had with Russian officials Kislyak and Gorkov in December 2016. Michael Flynn, the national security advisor in the Trump administration, is also under a separate investigation by the Pentagon regarding foreign payments including one for 45,000 dollars from Russia to appear with Vladimir Putin at a dinner for a Kremlin-controlled media organization in 2015 (The Washington Post 2017). It is important to note that in May 2017 James Comey was fired by the Trump Administration. According to the New York Times this was a way to "terminate the top official leading a criminal investigation into whether Mr. Trump's advisers colluded with the Russian government during the election" (The New York Times 2017).

The Russian and United States governments have always had a rocky relationship, meaning on the surface they are civil however underneath there is continual conflict. This is mainly because of how different their political systems are. Russia's government while supposedly having a democratic regime with a constitution, the Konstitutsiya Rossiyskoy Federatsii, is actually more like an Authoritarian regime given the amount of corruption that surrounds the "democratic" style government. An authoritarian regime is defined as "A political

system in which a small group of individuals exercises power over the state without being constitutionally responsible to the public” (O’Neil 164). Russia’s political goals stray from the responsibilities of developing a stable nation and are more focused at securing political power for selected private groups to benefit from (Levin & Satarov 2). There is also a complete lack of civil rights among the people. The Russian government has complete control over the media and what is shown or reported to the Russian citizens. More recently there has been reports of abusive treatment against the homosexual community of Russia. Reports of gay men being arrested and tortured in prisons (New York Times 1) and the prevention of any “gay-oriented public or mass actions” such as pride parades (Johnson 2).

The United States government is most notably a democratic system. Defined as “A political system in which political power is exercised either directly or indirectly”. The United States is more specifically a liberal democracy, which is a political system that promotes participation, competition, and liberty (O’Neil 129). This can be seen by the United States Constitution and the amendments that secure the rights of citizens to participate in politics and have the freedom to do so. Democracies like the United States have always fought to end non-democratic regimes that take power and influence away from their citizens. This is most apparent during World War II when the democratic allies fought to end fascism in Germany and during the Cold War when they fought against the communist Soviet regime. Therefore, because of this, tensions run high with regards to the political relationships between the United States and Russia.

The intelligence communities of countries are always connected to the government. The job of intelligence organizations is to gather information for their employers, usually the

leadership of their countries, regarding other countries governments. As stated previously it is rumored that the Russian government asked their intelligence officers to interfere with the 2016 election. It can be rightly said that governments directly affect how their intelligence offices are run, but it can also be said that intelligence organizations have an effect on their governments. Intelligence can affect a president's policy if they are given the right information to sway or justify their policy. There are also the personal connections that presidents may have to their intelligence agencies. The two countries being studied have perfect examples of this. The 41st president of the United States George H. W. Bush was the director of the central intelligence agency from 1976 to 1977, he retired from the agency then was elected Vice-President and soon after President (CIA Archive 1). Vladimir Putin also had an active career in the Soviet Union's intelligence agency KGB. President Putin, current president of Russia, was a KGB officer which included a posting in East Germany (Lo 9). Then in 1991 the fall of the Soviet Union broke apart the countries and he became the elected President of Russia where he has a heavy influence over the main Russian intelligence agency, the FSB.

The goal of this thesis is to discover and outline if the political regimes of countries affect how the intelligence organizations are organized. This is accomplished by looking at two specific countries and the history of their intelligence organization. The democratic system of the United States and the authoritarian regime of Russia are the countries of interest for this thesis. The best way to go about handling this research is through a case study that's specific for these two differing countries. This will be a different kind of case study given the fact that a case study is mostly used for experiments involving a person or group involving a treatment given by the researcher (Gravetter & Forzano 386). In this case study, however, research on the history of the

political regimes for the United States and Russia along with research on their intelligence organizations history will give the information needed for this thesis.

THE UNITED STATES

History of Government Control

When the United States created their constitution in 1776 the main ideology was to create a government that didn't impose its control on the people. Citizens were able to have a voice and some control over who ran their government and made decisions for the public. The constitution created a set of checks and balances to ensure the government did not control the people. There are also basic rights added in for citizens that cannot be changed but that can be amended. The three branches created were balanced out among each other to ensure one section did not have more power over the other. The United States was designed to be the pinnacle of what a democracy should look and act like. The constitution, when drafted in 1776, created a set of checks and balances to make sure the government did not control the people. There are also basic rights added in for citizens that cannot be changed but that can be amended. The three branches created were balanced out among each other to ensure one section did not have more power over the other. The main objective the constitution created was the possibility for American citizens to participate in the democratic process. This is in stark contrast to the way the Soviet Union structured its government and even how the Russian government is structured today. There is more freedom in the United States to have diverse opinions than that of the government. Peaceful protests and freedom of speech are constitutional rights and can not be a source of persecution for the US government. The United States government, or rather candidates running for office, tend to have an inflated sense of control over citizens through campaigning. Since the constitution allows citizens to vote for who they want in representative government seats,

candidates for those positions influence voters by airing ads on television, social media, calling phones, canvassing, and using campaign groups to spread their message and effectively convincing citizens to vote them into office. Now although this isn't the proper form of the word control, there are certain aspects of campaigning that does control what the population sees. Negative ads are run against oppositional candidates in order to manipulate and control how citizens view the candidate and their opponent. Also, candidates pick and choose what kind of message they want to send to voters, like their platform or their image while trying to hide any negative or unwanted views. This can be observed heavily throughout the last election, both campaigns of opposing candidates released negative information on the others' character that changed some voter's opinions on the candidates. Hillary Clinton suffered a hit when it was revealed she wasn't using a government-issued email server to send work emails but rather a home-based server to send both work and personal emails. This influenced how some people viewed her because they assumed she was mishandling classified information or working against the government during her tenure as Secretary of State. Donald Trump was also hit when his alleged sexual misconduct, overt sexism, and possible Russian ties were uncovered. These revelations mixed in with his brash comment on race controlled how the voter's perception of his character, swaying voters into thinking he wasn't fit for office. The increase of advanced communications technology throughout the decades has made it easier for the government to exercise a certain type of control but it also makes it harder for them to conceal classified information from the public. The National Security Agency and the Federal Bureau of Investigation has the ability to access personal technology, like a cell phone or computer, of a citizen they deem to be possible threat. They use this to surveil them in order to gather

information on who they are in contact with and if there is a threat to public safety. However in 2014, Edward Snowden leaked classified information to the media, that the National Security Agency was gather the telephone records of millions of Americans. Further revelations revealed that the agencies tapped into the servers of popular social media websites to track communication (BBC 1). This further eroded the trust U.S. citizens had in their government, which had been in decline since the 1970's post-Vietnam senate hearings on government surveillance, criminal activities and obfuscation on intelligence data.

History of the Intelligence Community

Before the intelligence agencies of the United States became an important part of the government today, there was only one very important agency. The Office of Strategic Services, the OSS was formed in 1941 when the United States entered into World War II and is considered the first US foreign intelligence system. It is important to understand how the OSS was structured and operated. The current foreign intelligence system, the Central Intelligence Agency, was formed from this organization. It is apparent to see this in the structure and organization of the OSS. On the top of the hierarchy is the Director, followed by two assistant directors. Underneath them is the Secretariat, executive officer, field selection, general counsel, board of review and special assistant and representatives. The OSS was running much like the CIA is today, where the president or policymaker gives the director an assignment or area that needs to be assessed, and the director sends out the assignment to department heads, who assign it to specialized groups. However, unlike the CIA today, there wasn't an internationally diverse focus on many countries but mainly relegated to Germany and Asia because of the wars the US

was involved in at the time. After the OSS was disbanded and fractured into separate agencies the biggest agency, the Central Intelligence Agency, took its current form.

Present Day Intelligence Structure

The intelligence community in the United States today is fractured in the sense that there are many government agencies involved in different aspects of information processing. For this thesis I will be focusing on the major intelligence agencies: Central Intelligence, Defense Intelligence, and National Security.

The Central Intelligence Agency was created by the National Security act of 1947 in order to manage the nation's intelligence activities and the correlation, evaluation, and dissemination of intelligence that affects national security (CIA Factbook 5). The collection begins with the President, the President's cabinet or other policymakers requesting information on a certain country's actions. Then it gets passed down to the appropriate team who sends it out to the agents in the field. The agents in the field are responsible for quietly recruiting citizens of that particular country to help them gather information. The information is then collected, analyzed and condensed into a briefing that is given to the President or policymaker. This is essential because the intelligence collected has a crucial role to play in the decisions that the leaders make when creating new legislation.

The Defense Intelligence Agency works to provide military intelligence to soldiers, policymakers in charge of defense, and force planners in the Department of Defense. They support the United States military planning, operations and weapons systems acquisition by delivering the necessary information. The main difference between the Defense intelligence

agency and the Central intelligence agency is that the CIA focuses on intelligence for the President and Cabinet whereas the DIA disseminates intelligence to military missions (DIA.mil).

The National Security Agency collects intelligence information from foreign electronic signals for national foreign intelligence and counterintelligence purposes. They also protect foreign governments from gaining access to classified security information. Instead of focusing on human intelligence as the Central Intelligence Agency and the Defense Intelligence Agency do, the NSA uses signals intelligence and logarithms to find information on foreign governments. It is their job to collect and interpret the coding that is involved with the acquisition of foreign communications.

RUSSIA

History of Government Control

Russia is a federalist society meaning there is a balance of power between the government and the people, much like the United States. Although there are instances where the Russian government, more specifically president Putin, have stepped outside the bounds of appropriate behaviors. Putin has bribed uncooperative local leaders with jobs in the government, money or with threats of violence to leave office willingly. He has also kept local leaders he did not approve of from running for re-election by focusing on a technicality that takes them out of the running (Triesman 63). Bribing in Russia is the most widespread type of corruption in the country and in 1993 it was found that over 42 percent of the offenders were Government officials and 25 percent were law enforcement officers. A poll conducted in 1994 showed that 14 percent of Russians living in Moscow said they considered Russia a democracy and 23 percent of Russians believed that organized crime like the Russian Mafia (also referred to as Bratva), not the Government, ran the country (Boylan 2000-20005). The Mafia has a heavy influence in the government due to bribes and the “dirty work” they do for the President. The President uses this Mafia to act on orders that do not fall within the constitutional rights of the state. This creates an imbalance of power between the people and the government. Even back before the Soviet Union collapsed the Mafia and the government partnered to control the black market.

Before Russia became its own country, it was part of The Soviet Union, a communist state. The power over the people during this era was immense. Any time there was a glimmer of uprising or unrest the government would send in KBG agents to “handle” the situation discreetly.

The Sword and the Shield: the Mitrokhin archives details a case of anti-Soviet sentiment that was quelled by the KGB. Alexander Solzhenitsyn was another writer, like Mitrokhin, who wrote about the corrupt nature of the communist government and the KGB and shared these sentiments with the west. The KGB found the manuscripts for his new book hidden away and said it contained politically destructive statements and publicizes slanderous lies (Mitrokhin 777). The KGB forcibly removed Solzhenitsyn from the country and exiled him. They also used threats and violence to discredit the validity of his writings. Even years after the expulsion the Soviet government and the KGB would use other publications to make him look like an immoral person and discredit his works which were currently circulating throughout western civilization (Mitrokhin 798). The influence of the government through the use of the KGB dissemination campaign destroyed the life of an anti-Soviet activist. This was just an example of one person, Mitrokhin also writes about the use of Gulag camps in the Soviet Union as a way to control citizens. Gulag camps were forced labor camps created by Stalin and the Soviet government, to put people that were troublemakers for the government. Some of these people were ex-foreign intelligence agents, cartel heads, middle-class nationalists, and leaders of anti-Soviet groups. They were treated unfairly, many citizens that were arrested were sentenced to these camps, where they were forcibly worked to death (Mitrokhin 369). The mere thought of the possibility of being sent to these camps was enough to deter most citizens from unlawful or anti-governmental activities.

History of the Intelligence Community

Founded in 1954 by the Soviet Union the Komitet Gosudarstvennoy Bezopasnosti is one of the most notorious intelligence agencies in the world. Their history is riddled with accusations of abuse, threats, corruption and death. In the literature section, the book *The Sword and the Shield*, written by former KGB agent Vasili Mitrokhin outlined some of the nefarious doings by KGB agents and operations. The KGB was often used by the Soviet Union as a coercive and repressive force. This means KGB operations and agents were used to control citizens and even foreign governments. The KGB was used to make the public believe that if they stepped out of line, retribution would be coming for them. More than 2,000 Soviet citizens were interviewed for the Soviet Interview Project about their distrust of the KGB. Many of the citizens acknowledged that the distrust and fear of the KGB came from how competent it was, the survey found that the KGB was viewed as highly capable with 57% of citizens responding that the KGB leaders were almost all competent (Bahry and Silver, 1074). It was also found that respondents of the survey who had contact with KGB before, hold a more negative view of authorities. It also created distrust amongst the citizen because close to 80% of respondents felt that it was difficult to tell who amongst their co-workers, fellow students, or neighbors might be a KGB informer (Bahry and Silver, 1077 -1083). The KGB unlike the CIA was used by the government as more of a control organization than an intelligence organization. Although they were very skilled at collecting information it was usually through sinister means earning them the reputation of a policing organization.

Present Day Intelligence Structure

The Federal Security Service is the most powerful of the intelligence systems in Russia and is very much reminiscent of the KGB. This is because the FSB developed from the ruins of the KGB and combines the functions of an elite police force with a spy agency. Before Putin stepped into the presidency, the FSB was close to collapsing. After President Putin took office, most of the power was restored and many of his former KGB colleagues took senior positions in government or state-controlled companies (The Guardian). It is also important to note that as President of the Russian Federation, Putin, oversees the activities of the FSB. The headquarters, called Lubyanka, is located in central Moscow, where the KGB interrogated political prisoners during Soviet rule (Peter, BBC.com). Putin as I mentioned before was a high-ranking officer within the KGB and came into a position of power when the Soviet Union collapsed. The FSB is the largest intelligence agency and is a combination of domestic and foreign intelligence for Russia. It is equivalent to the combination of the CIA and FBI of the United States. What sets them apart from the agencies in the United States is the fact that the FSB has the power of a law enforcement agency. This means they are able to enter citizens homes to conduct searches and surveil their citizens, and they are able to make arrests. Chapter 2 Article 25 of the Russian Constitution states that “The home shall be inviolable. Nobody shall have the right to enter a dwelling place against the will of those residing therein, except in those cases provided for by federal laws or on the basis of a court order” (The Constitution of the Russian Federation 2:25). This is the same basis in the United States Constitution where a warrant or some court document is needed to enter a person’s private residence. This is mostly due to the fact that, unlike the US agencies, the FSB runs on the interest of the state not of the people. Like I stated before the

Federal Security Service (FSB) even though it is an intelligence agency, like the CIA, it has domestic power in the lives of citizens. The United States intelligence community has a variety of agencies to handle domestic and international information separately although this helps combat corruption, it also causes a lack of communication. The intelligence community of Russia is smaller, not in size but in agencies. There are four aspects of the Federal Security Service: The FSB of Russia, territorial security bodies, security forces in the army, and border authorities. The FSB of Russia is the main body all the bodies mentioned fall underneath this category, it includes the departments and other elements that directly relate to the activities of all the bodies of the federal security service, as well as the departments that perform an administrative function. The territorial security bodies aid in the management departments of the FSB of Russia for individual regions and citizens of the Russian Federation. Security forces contain the directorates of the FSB of Russia that are in the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation, other troops and military formations, along with their respective governing bodies. Border authorities are simply agents of the FSB of Russia that are involved in border security (FSB.com). All their agents are all well-educated, much like the US agents, they must have a master level education. Also, according to the official website of the FSB, agents must attend the FSB academy to receive a proper intelligence education and training much like “The Farm” for CIA agents. There is a similar chain of command as well there are many directorates of the FSB which are high ranking agents that have years of experience and the head reports directly to President Putin (Peter, BBC.com). The centralized nature of the Russian intelligence community means that communication is tight, and information is never lost. However, it also allows the strongman President to yield unfettered power over citizens much like the KGB in Soviet times.

DISCUSSION

The main purpose of this thesis was to provide facts on the governments and intelligence system of two different countries and if there is a correlation between how the government is run and how the intelligence agencies operate. In the body of the thesis I provided information regarding the United States government and its intelligence systems and the Russian government and their intelligence system. In some moments I do compare the two countries however in this section I will explain in depth about the difference and similarities between the two. There are two correlations I will discuss: the structure of the governments versus the structure of the intelligence agencies, and the treatment of the citizens by the governments.

How exactly do these differences in structure affect their intelligence communities? The research in the body above has outlined the governments and intelligence structures. The basis of the United States government is a system of checks and balances designed to control the power the government wields. The same can be said for the basis of the intelligence agencies of the US. The intelligence agencies like the CIA, DIA, or NSA do not have the abilities to arrest citizens and laws were created, such as the foreign intelligence surveillance act, that prevented intelligence agencies from domestic spying on American citizens. The US government also has separate branches to control aspects of government rule, the executive, legislative, and judicial branches are all part of the same government with different roles. The US intelligence community is similar to this. The intelligence agencies all have one goal, to carry out the needs of customers and find out information set by policymakers, yet there are several agencies tasked with gathering different kinds of information. The NSA collects cyber intelligence, the CIA

collects international political information, the DIA collects international defense information and there are many more all working toward the same goals of collecting vital information from foreign entities. A lack of communication is also prevalent in both the government and the intelligence communities. When the government's leadership is misaligned, meaning the executive branch is one party and the legislative is the opposite, it is more difficult for the government to run effectively. Disagreements on policy, on appointments, etc. all cause a government gridlock and it can cause problems. During the Clinton administration and Obama administration there were a total of three government shutdowns because the Democrat led executive branch and Republican legislative branch could not come to an agreement (Fox News). Now three may not sound like a lot given the many years the two presidents served, however any shut down is detrimental to the government process and should be avoided. Unfortunately, the same happens within the intelligence communities and the consequences can be grave. The fractured nature that comes with having many intelligence agencies means there is often times a disconnect of communication. This becomes apparent with the September 11th attacks in New York, the CIA had intelligence on the terrorists but did not provide the information to the FBI and they slipped between the cracks (Brookings.edu).

In Russia, the power the government has is more centralized and yielded without a block. There is only one man, the President, who truly has a say in what occurs in the country. He can change the constitution to fit his needs or block certain content from reaching the citizens. The intelligence agency of Russia is centralized as well, there is one agency performing collection and disseminating both domestic and international intelligence. There is very little opposition when it comes to the FSB and they also have authority over their citizens mainly because they

possess the power to arrest and detain citizens. They are also often allowed to collect information on citizens even though the constitution allows citizens a right to privacy. During Soviet era of Russia, the intelligence agency was controlled by the government and was used as a weapon to control citizens, because the nature of the communist government itself was to control. President Putin was once a KGB agent himself and understood the nature of the business. It is highly likely that he would want to instate an intelligence agency that is aligned with his government, so that he may be able to maintain control over both. The government of Russia has always been centered around the ability to control the citizens and be a leading country amongst all other countries. Their intelligence system reflects this by the way their agents have a hand in many of the worlds affairs such the infamous Russian hacking of the 2016 election, and poisoning of former Russian agents.

There is no specific hard data that can prove a correlation between government control and intelligence structure. There is no variable that can be tested to formulate a concrete correlation, however, when looking at these two powerhouse countries and their dynamic nature, a strong correlation can be drawn. The US government is based around distributing power and protection of its citizens, and their intelligence agencies reflect this goal. The Russian government is about knowledge and control over citizens which reflects in their powerful singular agency and strongarm tactics.

CONCLUSION

Summary

The purpose of this thesis was to determine if there was a correlation between the way the government of a country is structured, and the way its respective intelligence system operates, specifically concentrating on two superpowers with vastly different systems: Russia and the United States. From the research I provided it is not possible to determine a definite correlation, but I can say with certainty that there exists a strong possibility that a correlation exists.

During World War II, the two countries were strong allies fighting against a fascist regime and common enemy in Germany. After World War II, a fight for the position of dominant superpower began between Russia and the United States, and this is when the two allies became global competitors again. The Cold War was the epitome of the conflict between the intelligence agencies of Russia and the United States. On the surface it seems that the governments of the United States and the Russian Federation are very similar. Both countries have a presidential figure, a constitution, a seemingly democratic system where citizens can vote. However, upon closer examination the details reveal the difference in structure for between countries.

The United States is a superpower that has long been the inspiration for a democratic system with the people having as much power as the governmental body. Since the U.S. democratic system was formed much earlier than Russia's, the system had more time to develop a more lenient tendency when it came to citizens. This was apparent mostly in the way that the United States treated their uncovered spies. In cases where United States agents turned spies for other countries, like Aldrich Ames and Robert Hanson, they were tried in a court of law and sentenced.

This is directly correlated with the constitution of the United States where citizens are entitled to a fair trial by a jury of their peers. It is also evident in cases like Chelsea Manning where an agent can leak classified information to the media and be given a trial and even pardoned. In contrast to Russia during the communist Soviet regime citizens had little to no freedom and agents who were uncovered to be spying on the country were executed as soon as they were brought back into the country, like Valery Martynov.

In modern times this is reflected even more because United States citizens are more aware, thanks to technological advances in mass communication, of what intelligence agencies are doing. There is a level of semi-transparency when it comes to the power the U.S. intelligence agencies have thanks to the numerous laws that are enacted to keep them in check, much like the checks and balances that are fundamentally existent in its government structure. In Russia this transparency is superficial, meaning citizens believe to know what the government is doing. In reality they are only shown what the government wants them to see, since they control most of the media outlets. President Putin has been elected and served as president for over 20 years now, mainly because he steers the citizens in his direction and discreetly gets rid of his competition. The FSB is similar in this aspect, being the actual force behind the government that the President is able to control at will, they are allowed to enter citizens homes much easier than US agents are constitutionally allowed.

Future of the topic

There are still many areas that need to be discussed, analyzed, and researched in this field. Russia is an intensely private country and the information provided is limited. I feel the

future of this topic requires more inside information into the government and intelligence community of Russia. I recently had the pleasure of conversing with a former Russian citizen about his views on President Putin. I was surprised to find out that the Russian citizens, even those who are not living in Russia anymore feel the Kremlin President is doing a great job running the country and that he has a large approval rating amongst his people. I think it is important to understand if this phenomenon is because he really is improving the country as opposed to his communist predecessors or if citizens are led to believe this because of the control the Russian government has over its own media.

When Snowden released documents from the NSA to the media that documented the number of citizens being watched and how they were able to do it, the glass plate that once kept their dealing secret was shattered. This caused a massive rift between the citizens and the trust placed in the government. Now citizens are wary of what the government actually does, and increasingly we find citizens trying to uncover other secrets. This topic is important to the future of this research because there used to be a trust in the government before technology allowed us to see behind the curtain. I think it is important to research if this open window into classified information will keep widening as technology advances, and what will happen if citizens find out what has been going on underneath the surface. Will this create a divide between the people? Will this lead to a shift in government control? Will the intelligence agencies need to secure their documents even more than they are?

Recent events that correlate

Russia's reign of unfettered control is still prevalent today, a number of outspoken critics of President Putin have died due to mysterious circumstances. The most recent of these was Sergei

Skripal, a former Russian double agent who was seeking asylum in Britain. In early March 2018, Skripal and his daughter were discovered on a park bench in England unconscious. They were poisoned by a Russian created nerve agent called Novichok. Skripal was targeted because he fled from Russia to work with MI6 in Britain and was mining Russian contacts for information. This was not the first time Russia has sent agents to silence former citizens, the same happened to former spy Alexander Litvinenko. Litvinenko died from radioactive poisoning in London in 2006. He was killed by two Russian agents, Andrei Lugovoi and Dmitry Kovtun, and there was a strong possibility they were given orders by the FSB. Litvinenko was an outspoken critic of President Putin and it is the reason why he was targeted (The Guardian, 2016). Other cases of this type of unencumbered Russian power internationally include: Alexander Perepilichny, a Moscow banker who became a UK whistleblower, who died after he was poisoned. Another victim Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev, the former Chechen president, who was killed in a bombing in 2004 and by three Russian men. The three suspects were tried for the bombings, extradited back to Russia, freed and hailed as heroes (The Guardian 2018). President Putin has denied that he had any involvement in these cases and accused the UK government of ignoring the principle of presumed innocence.

At the start of this research I mentioned the investigations being done on the 2016 elections and Russian interference. When I first began this thesis the investigations had just commenced, now a year later there have been many new developments in the case. In May of 2017 the Department of Justice appointed Robert Muller to lead the investigation after former FBI chief James Comey was fired by the Trump administration. The investigation has led to multiple charges; however none are directly related to the campaign but do involve Russian dealings. In

December of 2017 Michael Flynn, whom I mentioned in the introduction of this thesis, pleaded guilty to one charge of misleading the FBI about his meetings with a Russian ambassador. In late 2016 he talked to Moscow's ambassador to Washington D.C. about the U.S sanctions against Russia (Schallhorn, Fox News). Flynn was not the only one to get caught in the investigations. Donald Trump's former campaign chairman, Paul Manafort, had financial dealings in the Ukraine and was accused of paying former European politicians to lobby on behalf of Ukraine becoming part of Russia. Richard Gates was also involved in Manafort's dealing and both were indicted in October 2017 with several charges including, false statements and failure to file reports of foreign bank and financial accounts. At first, they both pleaded not guilty to the charges but then Gates pleaded guilty to the charges of federal conspiracy and false statements, Manafort has continued to maintain his that he is innocent. Another suspect charged with making false statements to the FBI about connections with Russia is George Papadopoulos, former foreign policy advisor to Trump's campaign. On many occasions Papadopoulos attempted to set up meetings between Trump's campaign officials and Russian officials. He is also accused of meeting with a professor who had significant connections to the Russian government. Papadopoulos informed candidate Trump that the Russians had incriminating information on campaign opponent Hillary Clinton, he later pleaded guilty to the charges (Schallhorn, Fox News). The first to be sentenced in the investigation was Alex van der Zwaan, a lawyer on the Trump campaign. He was sentenced to 30 days in prison for lying to investigators about Richard Gates when questioned by the FBI. The biggest sign of Russian interference in the election was the indictment of 13 Russian nationals and 3 Russian entities, by a federal grand jury for allegedly interfering in the election and plotting to wage information warfare on the United

States. They found out this information through Richard Pinedo who sold the bank accounts to the offenders and in February 2018 he pleaded guilty to using stolen identities to set up the accounts (Schallhorn, Fox News).

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