

Britain's False Flag Against Russia Poisons Corbyn's Labour

by Finian Cunningham via james - Strategic Culture Foundation *Wednesday, Mar 21 2018, 2:24am*
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British Conservative Prime Minister Theresa May's dramatic escalation of hostility towards Russia this week has had one benefit closer to home. Labour's erstwhile popular leader Jeremy Corbyn has fallen casualty to renewed Cold War politics.

May, who up to now was beleaguered from the Brexit debacle with the European Union, has suddenly rallied support for her Cold War agenda towards Russia within her own Conservative party - and from opposition lawmakers on the Labour side of the parliament.

While May was roundly cheered for her rhetorical attacks on Russia, Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn was subjected to vicious heckling from all sides in the House of Commons, including from many MPs within his own party.

May's [announcement](#) that her government was going to expel 23 Russian diplomats for the "attempted murder" of a former Kremlin spy living in exile in Britain was widely exalted in the House of Commons.

The expulsions mark the biggest diplomatic sanction by Britain against Moscow in 30 years. Moscow has vowed to carry out reciprocal measures in the coming weeks, as bilateral relations tumble in a downward spiral.

The British move was denounced by Russia as "unprecedented hostility" and a violation of normal inter-state relations.

Arguably, the Russian response is reasonable, given that the alleged attack on 66-year-old Sergei Skripal and his daughter in Salisbury on March 4 is far from evidenced. The entire official British position of directly blaming Moscow for attempted murder rests on unverified claims about a Soviet-era nerve toxin, as well as on wild supposition.

But such is the hysterical Cold War climate being generated by British politicians and dutiful news media impugning Russia that anyone who merely questions the lack of due process is immediately pilloried as a "Russian stooge".

That's what happened when Jeremy Corbyn [stood up](#) in the House of Commons this week and dared to ask the prime minister for "evidence" that the alleged Soviet-era toxin was indeed linked to Russian state actions.

Corbyn also enquired if the British authorities would be providing the alleged toxin samples to Russian investigators so that they could carry out their own independent assessment - a procedure that is mandated by the 1997 international treaty known as the Chemical Weapons Convention.

In short, what the Labour leader is simply requesting was for due process to prevail. That is, a rational, evidence-based approach to the furore. Which, one would think, is a reasonable, cautionary minimum especially owing to the present danger of a catastrophic military conflict breaking out at a

time from already sharp geopolitical tensions between US-led NATO states and Russia.

“Our response must be decisive and proportionate and based on clear evidence,” said Corbyn, who also refused to condemn Russia as guilty, given the lack of incriminating proof at this stage – less than two weeks after the apparent poisoning attack on the Skripals.

The Labour leader could hardly make himself heard amid boorish taunts of “shame, shame” from the Conservative (Tory) benches.

“You’re a disgrace to your party,” shouted out one Tory minister, Claire Perry, inciting the mob around her.

British [news media](#) followed suit, going on full-out Cold War offensive against Corbyn. The rabidly rightwing Sun, which last week was calling for military action against Russia, blasted its front page with the headline: “Putin’s Puppet”.

The Rupert Murdoch-owned tabloid “explained” to its readers with outraged tone that “Corbyn refused to condemn Russia” and that he had “questioned proof” of a Russian link to the attack on Sergei Skripal.

Another rightwing tabloid, the Daily Mail, also ran a front page vilification with the headline: “Corbyn, The Kremlin Stooge”.

The newspaper elaborated with the subheading that “Mutinous Labour MPs accuse [Corbyn] of appeasement for not condemning Putin”.

Meanwhile, the BBC was reporting that senior lawmakers within Corbyn’s cabinet team are mounting a rebellion against their leader precisely because of his “refusal to blame Russia” over the poisoning incident in Salisbury.

The return to Cold War politics in Britain is not just marked by knee-jerk hostility towards Russia – based on Russophobia and irrational innuendo – it is also characterized by the British establishment shutting down any dissent by smearing critics as “enemies within”.

British politics are this week hurtling back in time to the old days of Cold War witch-hunting against “Commies” and “Reds”. In the same way that the United States is still poisoned with the J Edgar Hoover and McCarthyite era of the 1950s and 60s.

Due process and rational, critical thinking are being banished again.

The poisoning incident of Sergei Skripal and his 33-year-old daughter Yulia should be a matter of criminal investigation to establish facts, motive and perpetrator.

Instead, the incident was immediately turned into a propaganda opportunity to assail Russia. The alleged logic that the Kremlin carried out a “revenge” attack on a traitor-spy who had been living for eight years in England, openly and undisturbed as part of an exchange deal with Britain’s MI6, does not make any sense. Indeed, it’s absurd, given the timing of Russian presidential elections this month and the forthcoming football World Cup to be held in Russia.

Resurgence of Cold War mania, however, suits the British establishment very nicely. Suddenly, the much derided Conservative Prime Minister Theresa May and her party are being portrayed as the

noble defenders of national security against a “malicious” Russian enemy.

Even better is that the opposition Labour party which had been rejuvenated by Jeremy Corbyn with a bold, progressive and socialist policy is now being cast as a useless Russian “stooge”. Corbyn’s political enemies within his own party – rightwingers who detested his successful rise as leader – are now empowered by the Cold War climate to tear him down.

Ironically, the toxic nerve agent that was used to paralyze former Russian spy Sergei Skripal and his daughter is having several invigorating political effects for certain British state interests. The Cold War Russophobia appears to be re-energizing the formerly feeble Tory leader and her party, while numbing the once promising rise of Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn and his socialist program.

Still, it remains to be seen whether the wider British public buy into the latest Cold War debacle. If it turns out to be a cynical stunt by the British state – as seems to be the case – then the popular backlash against the Tories and the establishment will be horrendous.

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