

PUTIN: NEW RUSSIAN TSAR?

By Kevin Veitia
Staff Writer

A sinister new trend is arising in Russia; one invimir Putin was elected in 1999, the Russian people have seen the death of 12 journalists who were particularly critical of President Putin, over 60 attacks on journalists in which they were severely beaten, 11 attacks on editorial offices and over 344 violations of Russian journalist rights. But why would a democratic Russia censor its press so extensively and why have these Russian journalists been mysteriously killed? A link is becoming obvious as President Putin becomes more and more autocratic and his tactics become more and more like the tactics used by the soviet intelligence agency, the KGB, which, coincidentally, he

was once head of.

More recently, Alexander Litvinenko, a lieutenant-colonel in the FSB, the Russian intelligence agency, was murdered after being poisoned with polonium-210, an element which is increasingly becoming the signature of Russian government assassinations. Alexander Litvinenko had been a vocal critic of Vladimir Putin and described Putin's rise to power to be a result of an FSB coup d'etat. Litvinenko died recently in a London hospital of radiation poisoning. Authorities believe he injected the polonium while eating at a sushi bar in London. Others who ate at the sushi bar, as well as passengers on some international flights have been tested for polonium poisoning.

Matt Goldberg, a student here at South Miami, said

this of the incident: "I think it's clear whats going on here. President Vladimir



**ALEXANDER LITVINENKO
BEFORE CONTRACTING
RADIATION POISONING
FROM POLONIUM-210.**

Putin is bringing back the old Russian autocracy and sabotaging it's long fight for democracy. The United Nations and E.U. should look into this. They should convene and discuss possible sanctions on Russia, but the facts of the matter point to Russian oil being too valuable to Europe for such action."

So what does our govern-

ment have to say about this matter? Although action has not been taken as of late, it is apparent that relations between our governments are

becoming sour due to the events. It can be projected that, in the near future, some type of measures will be taken.

JUNIOR FORMAL POSTPONED

Junior Formal, scheduled for December 8 has been postponed until sometime in February. The theme will remain "Viva Las Vegas!" Tickets are \$30 and went on sale Wednesday, November 30 and continued into December. The first three days of sales, tickets were held exclusively for juniors and the time remaining, sales were open to the remainder of the school.

Michelle Ziadie, has

taken care of decorations, and Erika Rodriguez helped with invitations. Ms. Monica Duran and the Cobra Cafe will care of dinner. Hopefully this will be a great event

For those who worry about the gym looking like a gym, senior Ramon Martinez said, "It was decorated completely and did not even look like a gym. It was a fun time."

Profits from the event help lower the cost of Prom tickets for the Junior Class.