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All Would Have Died If Russia Was Behind Salisbury Attack, U.K. Novichok Victim Told

By Reuters

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Russian Ambassador to the UK Alexander Yakovenko meets with Novichok victim Charles Rowley **Ilya Dmitryachev / TASS**

A British man whose partner died after being exposed to nerve agent Novichok was told by Russia's ambassador that Moscow could not have been behind the attacks because they would have "killed everyone," he told the Sunday Mirror newspaper.

Charlie Rowley, who was also exposed to Novichok after coming across a perfume bottle contaminated with the nerve agent last year, met Russian Ambassador Alexander Yakovenko on Saturday to ask him why Moscow had killed his girlfriend.

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"But I didn't really get any answers. I just got Russian propaganda," Rowley told the Mirror. "The ambassador kept saying the substance definitely wasn't the Novichok they had made because if it was, it would have killed everyone."

The embassy said in a statement Moscow still wanted a transparent investigation into the March 4, 2018 attacks in the English city of Salisbury but accused the British authorities of "hiding the circumstances of the incident."

Last year, British prosecutors identified two Russians they said were operating under aliases — Alexander Petrov and Ruslan Boshirov — whom they accused of trying to murder former Russian spy Sergei Skripal and his daughter with a military-grade nerve agent. Dawn Sturgess, Rowley's partner, died in July.

Britain charged the two men in absentia with attempted murder and said the suspects were military intelligence officers almost certainly acting on orders from high up in the Russian state. Russia has denied any involvement in the poisonings.

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