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US Expulsions Cost Russia's San Francisco Consulate **Their Chef**

By Jason Ditz December 30, 2016

In addition to kicking Russian personnel out of a pair of rural compounds popular as vacation sites for diplomatic personnel, the Obama Administration's moves against Russia for allegedly "hacking the election" included expelling 35 diplomats, who officials accused of being "spies."

Of course, it is not uncommon for most major nations to use diplomatic auspices as a cover for spying activity, as it affords anyone caught with certain legal immunizes. The US has been caught out in this matter, including the 2011 arrest of Raymond Davis, nominally a "consulate employee" in Lahore, Pakistan, who was later revealed to be working for the CIA, and was arrested for killing two people.

The 35 Russian diplomats expelled, however, don't appear to have been linked to any spying activity, at least not in any evidence offered in the course of the administration ordering them out of the country. Four were working at the Russian Consulate in San Francisco.

The Consul General in San Francisco is none too happy over it, either, not the least of which because one of the four expelled is the consulate's chef, meaning that the remaining diplomats will have to cook for themselves for the New Years holiday.

Consular officials say they intend to keep the consulate open as usual, but that some services may be temporarily limited because they are a bit short on help. For most at the consulate, however, the biggest shortage will be in perogies, as they await a new chef.