

Russia offers fig leaf in British dispute

by UPI

MOSCOW -- Russia offered Britain a proposal Monday to end bickering over Moscow's refusal to extradite a citizen wanted on murder charges in London. The dispute centered on former Kremlin bodyguard-turned-businessman Andrei Lugovoi, whom Britain has linked with the radioactive poisoning death last November of defector and anti-Kremlin campaigner Alexander Litvinenko. The Russian constitution forbids extradition of citizens and the two countries began a series of retaliatory measures against one another, including the expulsion of four British diplomats last week, the Novosti news agency reported. Monday, Deputy Russian Prosecutor General Alexander Zvyagintsev told reporters if Britain asked Moscow to prosecute Lugovoi and provided "all the available documentation," Russia would assist. He said Russia has a history of helping other countries in criminal prosecutions, but was not willing to change its constitution to accommodate one request.

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