company for this period make no specific mention of this loan and the amounts supposedly being repaid to creditors, of under £10000, seem miniscule. Indeed rather curiously the amounts due to creditors within one year decreased after this loan was issued from £7,307 in 2008 to £1450 in 2009. If the loan were repaid at this rate it would, even if we exclude interest, take over 6,000 years for the creditor to be reimbursed. We should also note the unreality of a firm with a turnover of under £10,000 per annum and no apparent collateral being issued with a multi-million pound loan. Zhirnokleev and Rabinovics were both officers in the firm at various times. Whatever the intention the creation of these obscure companies and the loan and subsequent bankruptcy of GFG functioned as mechanisms for extracting funds from Parex in a period when, some might argue, the bank was being looted by its owners. Rabinovics's role in extracting funds from the bank may indeed predate the cataclysm of 2008. Parex's subsidiary Parex Asset Management purchased property in the heart of Riga in May 2007 from GFG for the sum of 10.3 m Lats. GFG made a healthy profit on the property, having purchased it for a paltry 5.3m Lats and, simultaneously having pledged them as collateral with a value of 10.7 m Lats for loans from the bank. The logic defying economics of these transactions should, perhaps, have attracted more interest from Latvia's law enforcement agencies in this period.

While Rabinovics was launching his raid on the Moskva store he was also involved in developing money laundering structures in Spain and in seizing other businesses in Russia along with the Taganskaia mafia. Aleksandr Torshin the ex-deputy chairman of Russia's Central Bank has now attained notoriety as the apparent handler of Maria Butina, a Russian citizen who infiltrated the National Rifle Association and the Trump campaign. Torshin was a close personal friend of Aleksandr Romanov, one of Rabinovics's partners in the Moskva raid. Indeed he had been intending to fly to Mallorca for Romanov's birthday party on 21 August 2013. The Spanish police were waiting to arrest him but, according to Russian media reports, he was warned by the Russian prosecutor's office and cancelled his flight. Romanov himself was arrested in December 2013 and sentenced for money laundering part of which included the purchase of a hotel in Mallorca via a fictitious loan in a manoeuvre glaringly reminiscent of his friend Rabinovics's ploys with Parex bank. Romanov was supposedly the intermediary between Torshin and the mafia.

Although the Spanish case against Romanov clearly implicates Torshin and Rabinovics the latter remain at large. Torshin, despite his possible role in handling Butina and her role subverting the US election in 2016 does not appear to be subject to any charges in the US at present. Rabinovics is openly spoken of as a key figure in a Mafia organisation which, since its inception in the 80s has committed numerous violent murders, yet he remains seemingly untouchable. The careers of both men shine a light on the web of connections between Russian business, organised crime, and Putin's subversion of western democracy. If Putin wins his societal war on the west their mafia style business methods may become as routine in Berlin, Paris and London as they are now in Moscow.