



## Navalny – the hero in the West is a criminal in Russia without any popular support

**In the Russophobic West, he is revered as a liberal freedom fighter. What is wrong with this portrayal of Navalny?**

*Felix Abt*

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The Western political elite and their media partners hail Aleksei Navalny as a brave liberal freedom fighter who is standing up to the Russian "dictator" Vladimir Putin. However, he became notorious as a racist and radical nationalist, in contrast to the demonized Russian president. Politicians and journalists in the West, however, who practice superior moralism, are aware of his earlier hate speeches, which do not bother them. For instance, Navalny has said that the best weapon to use against

Muslim immigrants is a gun, calling them "cockroaches." This was done in a video that he also used to demonstrate how to shoot a "cockroach"; you can find the video and more information [here](#).

Navalny once said: *"Immigrants from Central Asia bring in drugs [to Russia]."* In an interview in 2012, he defended what he described as a "realist" visa requirement for *"wonderful people from Tajikistan and Uzbekistan."*

*"Everything in our way should be carefully but decisively removed through deportation," Navalny said in a [video](#) dressed as a dentist, comparing immigrants to dental cavities.*

He declared war on "illegal immigration" in the late 2000s and even started the *"Stop Feeding the Caucasus"* campaign, which was meant to protest government aid to underprivileged, autonomous regions in the south of the nation that were inhabited by ethnic minorities.

His Western fans also seem to deliberately ignore the fact that the nationalist Navalny supported Russia's war against Georgia in 2008 and declared that he would [not return Crimea](#) to Ukraine.

Navalny used to attend the so-called 'Russian march,' a very far-right nationalist group generally behind the slogan of *'Russia for ethnic Russians!'*

Yet, he had no intention of joining the ranks of the petty nationalist "Führers." He discovered a unique calling that elevated him to a hero status well beyond the confines of the radical right-wing subculture. He rose to prominence as the nation's chief anti-corruption advocate. He would obtain access to the papers of large state-owned firms by purchasing modest amounts of stock in them. Based on this, he carried out and published well-known research. A few of them were good pieces of journalism, but critical observers believed that Navalny was only taking part in the "media wars" between competing financial-industrial organizations and accepting "orders" and material that exposed their rivals.

The astute politician and tactician Navalny has recognized that true popularity in Russia can be drawn from left-wing social populism rather than right-wing nationalism. With this in mind, he has changed some of his political statements. These include, for example, his call for a higher payout to pensioners. Observers suspect that he is probably supported by some oligarchs.

However, his agenda also includes "political freedoms" such as the privatization of state-owned companies - a step that US corporations would prefer to take. He did not emphasize this point more because he knew it would enrage many Russians. The Russian people do not want to experience what they experienced with a handful or two influential personalities who, under President Yeltsin, appropriated large parts of state property for little or nothing and became extremely rich oligarchs, while the majority of the population was plunged into poverty and misery.

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**The New York Times**

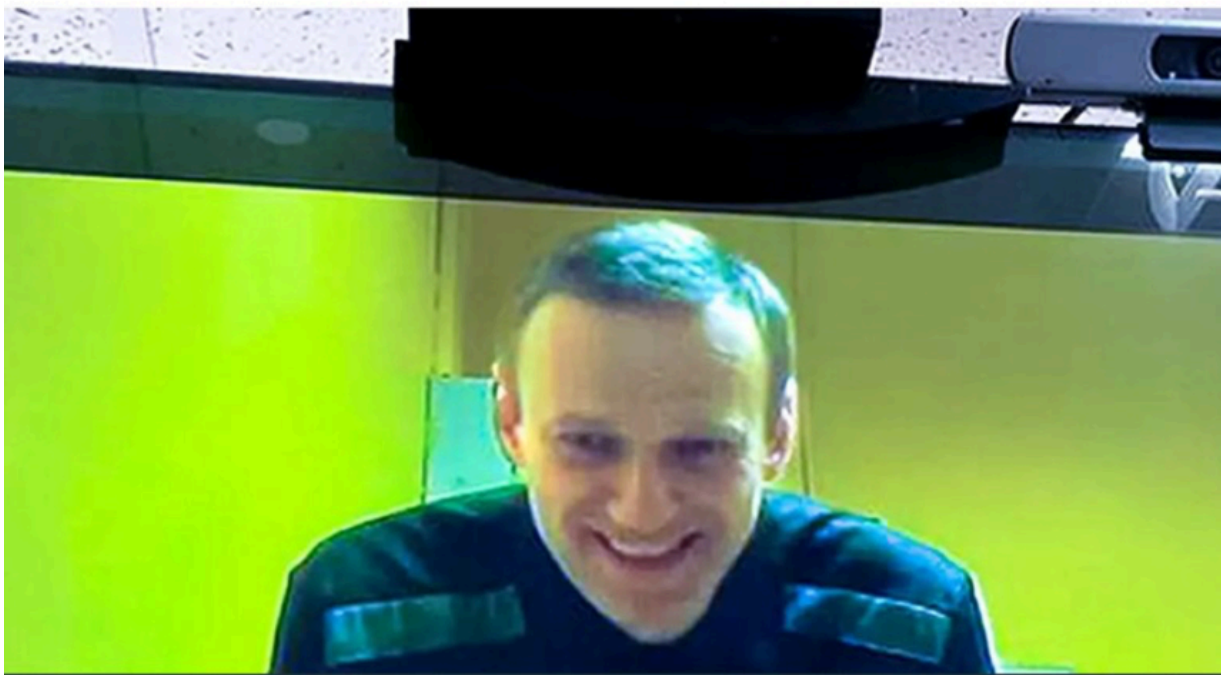
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## ***‘Where Is Navalny?’ A Search Is On for the Missing Russian Dissident.***

Aleksei A. Navalny, the imprisoned opposition leader, did not appear at a court hearing two weeks ago and has not been heard from since. His allies are trying desperately to find him.



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*The Western media has always paid much more attention to the fate of convicted Russian criminal Aleksei Navalny than to Julian Assange, who has not been convicted and is being arbitrarily detained in a London prison. (Screenshot headline of the New York Times)*



Unsurprisingly, U.S. Secretary of State Anthony Blinken pledged Biden administration support for Navalny and called him "*a voice for millions and millions of Russians.*" The US-government-funded "American Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty" is openly and passionately supportive of Navalny's movement. Richard Haas, President of the US Council on Foreign Relations, proposed that Navalny be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. The Navalny opposition group is openly supported and possibly covertly funded by Washington, as is often the case in countries where Washington is trying to bring about regime change in favor of a regime that serves its interests.

## The Western-supported divider against the unifier

To the delight of American strategists, Navalny would also shatter up Russia to help make America great again and render a likely much-shrunken, white-supremacist Russia irrelevant on the international scene, while Putin works to keep multicultural Russia, the world's largest and most resource-rich country spanning 11 time zones and encompassing 200 national and/or ethnic groups, together and combat Islamophobia and other forms of racism and division.



*President Putin meeting leaders of Russia's Muslim community*

The estimated 20 million Muslims in Russia represent the second-largest religious minority in the nation, accounting for 14% of the overall population. Russia has seven federal subjects with a majority of Muslims: Tatarstan, Bashkortostan, and

five North Caucasus republics. Navalny has expressed strongly ethno-nationalist attitudes towards the Caucasian minorities in Russia and previously made opposition to illegal immigration a key part of his platform.

The hostility that Navalny has fostered between Russians and minorities would pose serious new issues for the nation if he were to become president. In Chechnya and elsewhere, civil wars could not be ruled out.

## A political hero or a criminal?

What else is being kept from us about this wonderful hero of freedom? Navalny was found guilty of fraud in two criminal trials in Russia and given suspended sentences. This is unusual because if a criminal is convicted a second time while serving a suspended sentence, the conviction is usually overturned and he has to serve a prison sentence.

Although Navalny would normally have been imprisoned, he was treated with leniency. He was allowed to move freely for another sixty violations of his parole conditions before he was finally sent to prison in Russia.

René-Burkhard Zittlau, a German expert on Eastern Europe who lives in Moscow, explained to me that one of the last trials against Navalny ended with his conviction for insulting a World War II veteran. Tax offenses are punished less severely, Zittlau said, but insulting a World War II veteran is a sacrilege in society. Navalny's attitude expressed in this way shocked even loyal Navalny fans and cost him considerable sympathy points.

When Navalny reached his political peak, he did not achieve much more than 2% of the vote despite his high profile and Western support.

Zittlau concludes:

*"Of course Russia allowed him to give interviews from prison. Even if this is rather unusual by Russian standards, it is above all a sign of Russia's strength and not that an imprisoned criminal with political ambitions has asserted himself against the Russian state. He is not another Solzhenitsyn and never will be."*

RENÉ ZITTLAU

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