

# The Case of Alexei Navalny. Reviving the Cold War

By [Prof. John Ryan](#)

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*The mainstream media considers **Alexei Navalny** to be **Vladimir Putin’s** main opponent. However, a “[Levada Center poll from November 2020](#) — three months after Navalny’s poisoning — found that only 2% of Russians would vote for Navalny if he were a presidential candidate. That is a number that has remained steady for years.” How is it possible that there can be such a divergence of views?*

In the western media, Navalny has been portrayed as an indefatigable Russian patriot who is trying to expose corruption in Russian society and has been victimised by [various criminal prosecutions](#).

To set the record straight, in 2014 Navalny was charged and convicted of fraud and embezzlement of a French cosmetic firm and a Russian state-owned timber firm, totalling about \$1,000,000. For the first criminal offence he was given a 3½-year sentence and for the second, a 5-year sentence, but both sentences were suspended. On the other hand, his brother who was similarly charged did go to jail. During this probation period Alexei Navalny was to report at regular intervals to police officials.

Much has been written in the Western press about an “assassination attempt” on Navalny using a weapons grade nerve agent known as Novichok and Navalny’s accusation that “Putin was trying to poison me” has been taken at face value. However, little has been said about the many questions that have arisen around these important matters and they are worth airing

On August 20th, Navalny fell seriously ill while in mid-flight from Tomsk, Siberia to the Russian capital. The Moscow-bound plane was abruptly re-routed to make an emergency landing in the Siberian city of Omsk where the Navalny was hospitalized.

Somehow while Navalny was still on the plane bound for Omsk, **Pyotr Verzilov**, a member of the protest punk rock Pussy Riot group, was notified of Navalny’s illness. [He then immediately managed to arrange](#) for the Berlin-based NGO Cinema for Peace Foundation to send an aircraft to Omsk with a coma-specialised team on board. This plane arrived the next day, on August 21, and these German doctors were allowed to take part in the examination and treatment of Navalny. In fact, they were able to make tests and report these back to Berlin.

The Russian doctors have [affirmed](#) that despite comprehensive toxicology tests on his biological fluids and organs, they detected no traces of toxins. He was tested for many types

of poisons, including organophosphorus compounds and narcotic substances. Moreover, [the atropine treatment by Russian doctors](#) was exactly the same as would later be done at the Berlin Charité medical university. And most importantly, no evidence was detected by the German doctors of a poison attack on Navalny in the Omsk hospital, as Navalny and the western media have recently alleged.

The chief toxicologist at the Omsk Emergency Hospital, **Dr. Alexander Sabaev**, stated that [their doctors found no traces of toxic substances](#) in the comatose Navalny's kidneys, liver, or lungs, which led them to conclude that Navalny's condition was caused by a metabolic disorder and an "*internal trigger mechanism.*" It appeared that Navalny had suffered a [grand seizure due to hyperglycemia after going into diabetic shock](#) in which a combination of alcohol, lithium and benzos taken by Navalny himself were involved. Sabaev also noted that tests were conducted in multiple laboratories at once.

By their skilled quick intervention, these doctors saved Navalny's life. The Omsk doctors not only stabilized Navalny's condition but also had demonstrated the effectiveness of the Russian antidote medication. The crucial point is that these Russian toxicology tests found no Novichok or any other such nerve poison in Navalny's body. The Russian medics still possess the original body samples taken when Navalny was being treated in Russia.

On August 22 Navalny was flown in this German plane to Germany, along with his medical condition reports, which were to be given to the Charité Clinic in Berlin. His transport on a medically equipped plane with German specialists was permitted by the Russian authorities. In fact, [it was Vladimir Putin who personally authorized this](#), afterwards saying, "I immediately asked the Prosecutor General's office to allow that."

Two days later, on August 24, [a report on Navalny](#) from the Charité hospital stated "Clinical findings indicate poisoning with a substance from the group of cholinesterase inhibitors. The specific substance involved remains unknown, and a further series of comprehensive testing has been initiated."

This claim was signed by a press agent, not a doctor or head of the patient treatment team. However, German hospital protocol requires the treating doctor to take responsibility for the release of a patient's medical record. There is no evidence that such permission was granted. In fact, [Florian Roetzer of Telepolis, asked Manuela Zingl](#), the press agent who signed her name to this, to name the head of the Navalny's treatment team and to provide details of the treatment. She refused. We will return to the question of why protocol was breached so seriously on such an important matter at a later point when we come to additional information that came out in December.

Notably, the [Berlin doctors admit](#) they did not detect organophosphate poisoning in Navalny's blood, urine or on his skin; they tested no water bottle or clothing evidence which had been brought to Berlin by Navalny's staff on the evacuation aircraft. They also acknowledge they did not know what might have caused "severe poisoning with a cholinesterase inhibitor" until the German armed forces laboratory in Munich reported the Novichok allegation two weeks later.

For an undisclosed reason, further research on Navalny was not done at the Charité hospital in Berlin. This was assigned to be done at the German army's chemical warfare laboratory in Munich, the Institut für Pharmakologie und Toxikologie der Bundeswehr (IPTB). On September 2 the [IPTB issued a brief report](#), with no details, directly to Chancellor Angela

Merkel in Berlin stating that on the basis of their toxicological investigation “definite proof of a chemical nerve agent of the Novichok (sic) group was produced.”

However, there is a problem with IPTB’s entire report. There was no toxicology report from the IPTB, no name of the IPTB expert in charge of the testing and of the interpretation of the results, and there was no name of the chemical compound of the “Novichok group,” which IPTB should have explicitly reported on paper, according to the naming protocol of the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry; or else the report fails to do that because it was inconclusive. The failure to compile a full report on these matters seems to [indicate their analysis was inconclusive](#).

Immediately after receiving the report on Navalny from the IPTB, Chancellor Merkel met with her cabinet and [issued a report saying](#), “The German federal government condemns this attack in the strongest possible terms. The Russian government is urged to explain itself regarding the incident.” A communiqué was sent to Russia saying that Germany now has “unequivocal proof” Navalny was poisoned with a Novichok nerve agent and demanded that Russia conduct an investigation into this. The next day Russia rejected Merkel’s accusations and demanded documents and proof to support their case.

Germany’s announcement immediately led to a series of charges in the media that the Kremlin was responsible for the attempted murder of Navalny using the Soviet-era nerve poison. Without providing any supporting evidence to Moscow or the public, the German government demanded an explanation from the Kremlin. Amazingly, Germany refused to share their analytical data and samples with Russia, but in spite of this they demanded that Moscow launch a criminal investigation into the Navalny case.

Upon hearing these accusations, [the scientists behind Novichok development](#) – **Leonid Rink** and **Vladimir Uglev** – dismissed the German claims. They stated that Novichok is an extremely deadly nerve agent and there’s no way Navalny could have survived its application. Furthermore, Uglev pointed out that others who interacted with the Navalny after he fell ill – fellow plane passengers, ambulance crews, and others would also have been contaminated. Leonid Rink stated that Navalny’s symptoms are not consistent with poisoning by Novichok. According to him, if Novichok was used, Navalny would have had seizures, and he would have already died, instead of falling into a coma.

Russia then sent a formal request from the Prosecutor-General in Moscow to Germany to provide medical condition evidence on their Navalny findings. In response, the German authorities have not produced a single medical datum, pathology, toxicology or forensic report. In European protocols of patient care and in medical professional terms, this is unprecedented. As such it appears that German doctors were under government orders not to communicate with their Russian colleagues or to respond to an official Russian government request.

German doctors who treated Navalny wrote a report that became the basis for an article in *The Lancet*. This was [published December 22](#) as a four-page clinical report on Navalny. In this report, the main editors Eckardt and Steindl say “severe poisoning with a cholinesterase inhibitor was subsequently diagnosed,” not at the Charité hospital in Berlin, but by a “laboratory of the German armed forces”, i.e., the IPTB.

[British toxicologists have repeatedly cautioned](#) there can be many causes and sources for the cholinesterase inhibition detected from metabolites in Navalny’s blood and urine, and

they continue to ask the German doctors and the IPTB: “Name the compound. That would be a good start.” Writing in *The Lancet*, the doctor in charge of Navalny’s treatment at the Charité, Kai-Uwe [Eckardt and a British colleague, David Steindl note that](#): “results of toxicology analyses conducted in a special laboratory of the armed forces [IPTB] are not included.”

[A British organo-phosphate expert adds](#): “I can’t stress enough the need for the German scientists to be specific. To speak of ‘Novichok family’ or ‘Novichok class or group’ is just not good enough. There is no reason why the correct IUPAC chemical name should not be stipulated. Without this certainty, there is no analysis that can stand up as toxicologically defensible evidence of a crime.”

As cited in the December issue of *The Lancet*, German doctors reported that “based on clinical and laboratory findings, severe cholinesterase inhibition was diagnosed and the patient was started on atropine and obidoxime . . . cholinergic signs returned to normal within 1 hour after the onset of this antidotal therapy.” This report is in stark contrast to the Charité press agent’s report on August 24 which spoke of “poisoning with a substance from the group of cholinesterase inhibitors.” It also neglected to mention that the atropine treatment was effective within one hour and that the atropine treatment by Russian doctors at Omsk was the same as provided to Navalny by German doctors.

Thus, the August 24 announcement by Charité hospital’s press agent was not only inaccurate, it was overly alarmist. As we have seen, it was also released by a press agent, without the signature or the authorization of a doctor. Now we know why: it appears to be a purposeful misrepresentation of Navalny’s medical condition. But questions still remain . . . why was this done, who authorized it, and for what purpose?

At Germany’s request, on September 10 OPCW sent experts to collect biomedical samples from Navalny’s blood and urine. This was three weeks after Navalny became ill and by this time he was reasonably well recovered. Almost a month later, on October 5, the OPCW sent a report on its findings to Germany claiming that “The [results of the analysis](#) of biomedical samples conducted by the OPCW designated laboratories demonstrate that Mr Navalny was exposed to a toxic chemical acting as a cholinesterase inhibitor. The biomarkers of the cholinesterase inhibitor found in Mr Navalny’s blood and urine samples have similar structural characteristics to the toxic chemicals belonging to schedules 1.A.14 and 1.A.15, which were added to the Annex on Chemicals to the Convention at the Twenty-Fourth Session of the Conference of the States Parties in November 2019. This cholinesterase inhibitor is not listed in the Annex on Chemicals to the Convention.”

There was no further report to clarify what this actually meant. Despite this, it became accepted that OPCW claimed it was a variant of Novichok. Overall, OPCW’s remarkably late intervention in this matter is questionable and their report remains cryptic. The fact that immediately after Navalny became ill Russian and German doctors at Omsk were not able to find any traces of toxins in his blood and urine, three weeks later OPCW’s “experts” supposedly managed to do so stretches credulity.

The latest on this is that [it is now reported](#), as of February 15, that on the day OPCW took samples of Navalny’s blood and urine, the German record shows his cholinesterase scores were so close to normal, it was impossible for the OPCW to claim they had evidence of a Novichok attack. This substantially undermines Germany’s claim that the Novichok attack

was perpetrated by the Russians, on order of President Vladimir Putin.

It's not that OPCW has an unblemished impartial record. [Its reputation was seriously compromised](#) in 2019 when the head office leadership altered the report of its own on-site investigators in Douma in Syria in an attempt to justify an unwarranted and illegal bombing raid in Syria by US and British aircraft. Because of this, the two top investigators quit their jobs, and one of them later [presented a detailed report](#) at the United Nations in which the true course of events was presented on what actually happened at Douma in 2018.

On December 22 the [Charité clinic released some of its laboratory test results on Navalny](#). These reveal a surprising number of medical symptoms: acute pancreatitis, diabetes, liver failure, severe dehydration, muscular rigidity, as well as serious bacterial infection, and a possible heart attack associated with his kidney problems. According to the clinic's experts, these are not recognizable symptoms of a nerve agent attack. Given this great variety of ailments, it is clear that Navalny is not in good health.

The Charité hospital's doctors also revealed that Navalny had a medico-psychiatric problem and was a heavy user of lithium and benzodiazepine drugs. They reported this in a set of four data tables they attached as appendices to their case [report](#) on Navalny. Their data raises the question — what would happen if Navalny was forced to withdraw from his drugs quickly. Further on this later.

Navalny's wife, [Yulia, had refused to reveal or allow Navalny's doctors to report](#) on several of his prior illnesses and medical preconditions; these are known to cause sudden reduction in blood sugar and cholinesterase levels—diabetes, Quincke's Disease, and allergies leading to anaphylactic shock. It is not known if Navalny afterwards allowed this.

The disclosure that in his Tomsk hotel on August 19, hours before he collapsed, Navalny had taken a large dose of lithium, diazepam, nordazepam, oxazepam, and temazepam, was first published on December 22 in *The Lancet*. The medico-psychiatric literature is clear on what happens to a habitual user of these drugs if rapid withdrawal is attempted: for lithium, read [this](#); for the benzodiazepines, [click to open](#).

[European medical sources report](#) that the lithium found in Navalny's blood is commonly used to treat bipolar disorders. It is known to depress the butyryl cholinesterase which Navalny's laboratory testing revealed at the

Charité hospital. Navalny was also being treated to stabilise his insulin level with Metformin, a drug that is known to be a cholinesterase inhibitor. From the combination of these drugs and the additional ones he took in the Tomsk hotel, Navalny would have suffered dramatic cholinesterase inhibition effects before his collapse on the plane from Tomsk to Moscow.

As such there is medical evidence provided by Russian and German doctors that Navalny may have collapsed because of the combination of drugs he was taking. [The use of benzodiazepines](#) is especially dangerous when used with alcohol or other drugs.

[Independent western toxicologists, pharmacologists, and physicians](#) believe that the *Lancet* evidence of Navalny's drug intake shows that he had consumed a potentially lethal cocktail of drugs, which, if combined with alcohol and a pre-existing diabetic condition, could have triggered the cholinesterase inhibitor. An expert from the above-cited group adds that the 0.2 blood alcohol level reported from the Omsk hospital testing on August 20 "is an



extremely high level.”

The mystery of what the Berlin doctors treating Navalny discovered in his bloodstream and urine tests has deepened after the Russian Foreign Minister Sergei [Lavrov publicly referred in mid-February to the clinical findings](#) of a

Swiss-based neurologist, Vitaly Kozak. He revealed that Kozak has been reporting for several weeks that the biomedical data tables published in *The Lancet* in December reveal evidence of cholinesterase inhibition effects of poisoning by the drug lithium which Navalny was taking himself before his

collapse on August 20. [Why is it that The Lancet has refused to publish](#) a clinical commentary in the form of questions from Dr. Kozak?

Kozak has pointed out there is evidence that lithium inhibits cholinesterase activity in the blood. Also not explained was that 31 hours after Navalny collapsed from his illness “he had ‘wide pupils non-reactive to light’ which is contrary to cholinergic toxidrome.” He explained the significance of this, which was not reported by *The Lancet*. [Dr. Kozak’s expert credentials as a neurologist](#) are such that he is more qualified to comment on Navalny’s clinical data than the neurologists in the Charité hospital team who listed themselves as co-authors of December 22 *Lancet* report. Despite this, Kozak’s observations and inferences from the data tables have been rejected for publication in *The Lancet*.

[It is noteworthy that career diplomat Frank Elbe](#), who headed the office of German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher for five years and negotiated the Convention on the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons as head of the German delegation in Geneva from 1983 to 1986, stated that “I am surprised that the Federal Ministry of Defence concludes that the nerve agent Novichok was used against Navalny.”

As he put it, Novichok belongs to a group of [“super-lethal substances that cause immediate death”](#) and that it [“made no sense to modify a nerve poison that was supposed to kill instantly in such a way that it did not kill, but left traces behind allowing its identification.”](#)

To sum up this issue, the case from Germany and the west is that Navalny was the target of an attempted murder, and that Novichok was the weapon used. The Russian government case is that the medical evidence is of a metabolic crisis caused by the combination of alcohol, lithium and benzodiazepines taken by Navalny himself.

The balance of evidence available and outlined here would suggest that the Russian assessment is more credible than the Western consensus.

Aside from all of the above, there is a further more sinister possibility that should be considered. It was the doctors at the Omsk hospital who first treated Navalny and saved his life from his strange ailment. Several German doctors were there at the time and fully approved of the tests and medical care that he received. The Russian doctors still have Navalny’s biological samples, which show no presence of toxins. Hence, because of such evidence, surely there is reasonable cause to suspect that [the German version may be a fabrication](#). That could mean that the claimed detection of Novichok by the Germans was the result of deliberate contamination of his body fluids while he was being treated in the Berlin hospital, or that his was done later at the Munich military laboratory.

Russia has been transparent in all this from the outset. But strangely, the Germans rebuffed

all Russian requests for reciprocal transparency from their side to back up their extraordinary claims that Navalny was poisoned with a military nerve agent. All efforts by Moscow for cooperation in investigating what happened when Navalny fell ill on August 20 have been stonewalled. However, the German lab did share some of their information with personnel from other countries.

There are additional questions. After Russian doctors saved his life and were prepared to deal with his recovery, why was there an urgent request from his family and his supporters to have him flown to Germany for further hospital care? Why was there an urgency to do so? Why did Moscow relent in allowing this strange foreign intervention in its internal affairs?

If, for argument's sake, the Kremlin had in some way plotted to cause Navalny harm with Novichok or some other poison, why would Moscow permit his relocation to Berlin where toxicology tests would uncover the purported plot? That scenario is illogical.

A further point on this matter is that Novichok substances exist in at least twenty Western countries while Russia claims to have none. Furthermore, the Russian scientists who invented Novichok have [stated](#) categorically that if used, it would have killed Navalny almost instantly. Moreover, anyone who came in contact with him - his aides, doctors, fellow passengers - would inevitably have been contaminated, sickened and perhaps died, so deadly is this chemical weapon.

Recently a Russian doctor died at the Omsk hospital where Navalny was treated six months ago. Immediately there was speculation that it was that this was somehow connected to Navalny. Upon inquiry [it was reported that the doctor died of a heart attack](#) and that this had nothing to do with Navalny.

When in Germany for treatment, a mysterious water bottle was produced by his family that the Bundeswehr labs [are now claiming](#) had traces of Novichok on its surface. If Novichok truly were on the bottle, Navalny and his assistants would have died, as well as the Bundeswehr technicians.

In addition to the water bottle, other purported methods were considered such as a bad tasting cocktail Navalny had in the hotel or perhaps it was the cup of tea while he was waiting for his plane in Tomsk. But the latest and the final idea is that Novichok was applied to Navalny's underwear while he was staying at a hotel in the hours before his flight to Tomsk. Laughable, yes, but this is their latest idea.

This latest explanation is based on a claim that Navalny somehow through a phone call tricked a person from the Russian Federal Security Service to admit that they had applied Novichok to his underwear. Russia immediately denied such an accusation and showed that his claim was preposterous and a fake.

In all of this there was an astounding dereliction of legal process by the Europeans, as well as the flouting of diplomatic norms in their communications with Moscow . . . all unworthy of normal bilateral relations.

Despite all this, [critics wonder why](#) "the Russian regime has not yet even opened a criminal inquiry." Why should Russia do this? The Russian doctors who saved Navalny's life did not find any toxic substance in his body. The German investigators have not provided any evidence of their findings of Novichok in Navalny's body. Without such evidence what would

be the point of any such inquiry?

The timing of Navalny's alleged assassination came as the Nord Stream-2 natural gas project between the European Union and Russia entered into a final phase for completion. Predictably, there have been vociferous calls from the EU and from some sectors in Germany for that project to be cancelled, in accordance with Washington's long-held demands. The USA is involved in this because it wants to sell its own abundant gas (from fracking) to Europe, even though it would be far more expensive than Russian gas. Obviously, this is about trade and American financial interests. In response to this, Russia is considering an [international court challenge](#) against US actions.

This \$11 billion pipeline is the likely reason why the Navalny issue has been handled in this manner in Germany. Strangely there are a number of pro-Washington German politicians who have been persistent in their opposition to the ambitious boost to energy trade between Russia and Europe. On the other hand, most German politicians realize that Germany needs Russian natural gas as it phases out dirty coal and nuclear power. Natural gas is a cleaner source of energy than coal or nuclear power. The completion of this line would double the supply of Russian gas to the EU.

Despite sanctions to disrupt construction over the past year, the Nord Stream-2 project resumed near the end of 2020. All that is needed is about 150 kilometers of pipe-laying to the German coastline in an overall 12,000-km route from Russia.

From a strategic political and commercial viewpoint, the Americans are crazed by this partnership between Europe and Russia. Navalny's bizarre poison story and subsequent media agitation seems central to halting the Nord Stream-2 project.

So desperate is Washington to sabotage the pipeline that it is now throwing caution to the winds in its efforts at trying to incite a colour revolution in Russia. The hypocrisy is astounding considering the shrill and unfounded accusations the Americans have leveled at Russia about its supposed interference in US affairs.

But also astounding is the servility of European governments and [media who entertain the American agenda](#). Germany wants and needs Russian gas, but Berlin has accepted the Navalny nonsense and has endangered its relationship with Russia.

In any case, under the laws of the Russian Federation, during Navalny's five-month stay in Germany, he was on probation for a suspended jail sentence concerning his fraud conviction in 2014. For the last two months of 2020, [according to his German doctors, he was fully recovered](#) and in good health. Hence there were no grounds for him not to return to Russia and thereby to abide by Russian laws.

Near the end of December Russia's Federal Penitentiary Service warned Alexei Navalny to return immediately from Germany or else face a suspended sentence being made into jail time. He ignored this and returned on January 17. He was detained at the airport and placed in detention till February 2.

At the ensuing court case on February 2, seemingly because he had been unable to take his usual drugs, Navalny became unhinged during the proceedings. During the court hearing, he was asked to apologize to a 95-year-old World War II veteran for insulting and defaming him some months before because the veteran had supported an amendment to Russia's



constitution. Instead of doing this, Navalny proceeded to further ridicule and malign not only the veteran but his family as well, to the extent that it even appalled his supporters in court. [As later reported](#) “Navalny’s constant shift into shouting, rolling into hysterics, bickering with the court, and insulting other participants . . . the judge, unable to stand the circus, gave five minutes to the lawyers to ‘bring the defendant to his senses’, since ‘there is no longer any possibility to tolerate this.’” It’s fairly certain that if Navalny had done this in the USA he’d have been charged with contempt of court and given an additional sentence. At the end of the hearing, he was jailed for parole violations resulting from an earlier embezzlement conviction and sent to serve the remaining 2½ years in a penal colony.

Probably because of Navalny’s bizarre performance in court, his staff announced they have suspended their demonstration plans until the [spring](#).

Russia has dismissed US and EU criticism of the jailing of Navalny as meddling in its domestic affairs and said Navalny’s current situation is a procedural matter for the court, not an issue for the government.

It should be noted that while he was in Germany “recuperating,” Navalny proceeded to accuse President Putin of personally ordering his alleged assassination. On the basis of these bizarre and totally unsubstantiated charges the European governments proceeded to impose further sanctions on Russia. The abdication by European governments of due process and of respect for Russian state laws, its government, and its president is astounding.

In a question directed at Putin regarding Navalny’s comments about him, Putin responded by saying that Navalny’s claims are merely “laundering of US intelligence” for which the dissident figure is an asset.

The notion that Russian President Vladimir Putin would try to assassinate an opposition person who holds a minuscule 2 to 4% support amongst the population is contrary to any reason or common sense. There is a reason Putin consistently polls about 60 to 70% in favorability with the Russian people. Such polling is done regularly by the Levada Center, an independent non-governmental polling association.

Russians are fully aware that it was Putin who directed the country away from Western domination under the ruinous neoliberal economic policies of his corrupt and inebriated predecessor Boris Yeltsin. Under Yeltsin in a matter of five years from 1990 to 1994 life expectancy dropped from age 69 to age 64, and economic output fell by 45 percent during 1989 - 1998. Under Putin the economy recovered and life expectancy in 2020 was 72.3.

After his arrest, Navalny’s supporters released a two-hour YouTube video about an opulent Black Sea residence allegedly built for Putin. It immediately got wide media attention, especially in the West, and it has been widely viewed in Russia. President Putin immediately denied having anything to do with this structure. Shortly afterwards, a Russian businessman, [Arkady Rotenberg, provided proof](#) that he owns this property and that this has nothing to do with the Russian president.

Navalny’s so-called Anti-Corruption Foundation (FBK) has a checkered history of shady financing, from allegations of foreign funding by the U.S. State Department to charges of embezzling millions of dollars. The [FBK is registered as a ‘foreign agent’](#) by the Russian

Ministry of Justice because they have evidence that it has received funding from abroad in the past.

Navalny is being used by the USA as a useful agent in its attempts to subvert the Russian state by fomenting social unrest. For example, upon Navalny's return to Russia on January 17, the US embassy in Moscow published detailed street maps of planned protests. Just imagine the hue and cry if, for example, the Russian embassy in Washington had published maps of the Capitol buildings prior to the January 6 violent assault there by Trump supporters.

Navalny's FBK on January 31 [asked the White House to enact additional sanctions on Russia](#). Russia's Foreign Affairs official, Vladimir Dzhubarov, denounced the organization, saying: *"It smacks of treason. Can you imagine an American organization appealing to Vladimir Putin with a request to impose sanctions on the US president?"*

[Amnesty International](#) has recently withdrawn its designation of Navalny as a "prisoner of conscience" due to past xenophobic statements he has never retracted. The group said it *"is no longer able to consider"* Navalny a prisoner of conscience because he *"advocated violence and discrimination"* and has never retracted any of such statements he made in the past. They noted that he has compared Muslims to cockroaches and flies and recommends shooting them with guns if swatters and shoes fail.

At a party in 2013, celebrating the anniversary of the newspaper *The New Times*, [Navalny suggested](#) that they "make the first toast for the Holocaust"; he referred to religious Jews in his blog as: "dandies in fox hats and rags." Also, Navalny in [2013 supported the Biryulyovo race riots in which Russian skinheads attacked immigrants in a Moscow district](#). In 2017, in an [interview with the Guardian](#), he said he has "no regrets" about his past statements and called it "artistic licence."

Navalny's world view was [formed under the total dominance of the right-wing market liberal ideology in the 2000s, when he supported radical privatization and decreases in social guarantees as a member of the Yabloko Party](#).

Even though Navalny is now in prison he may still face an investigation for a newer fraud case, in which he and his Anti-Corruption Foundation have been accused of misusing donations from supporters. [There is a possibility](#) he may also be charged with treason. [A recently released video](#) reveals new evidence of links between MI6 and Navalny. The video exposes the role of the US and UK in helping Navalny to foment political discord in Russia and other countries. With respect to Navalny and his supporters, Russia's media spokesperson, **Maria Zakarova** [was even more direct](#), saying *"stop calling them opposition, they are NATO agents."*

The case of Andrei Navalny is Russia's problem, but because the Cold War has now been revived, in the West he is being used an instrument to try to undermine that country.

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**John Ryan, Ph.D.**, is a retired Professor of Geography and Senior Scholar at the University of Winnipeg.

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