navalny is a "liberal opposition" figure only by russian standards at best. chubais and kiriyenko, some of the men responsible for putin's rise, were too once considered progressive liberals.

In 2015 navalny opposed western supplies of weapons to Ukraine.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2015/03/ 18/a-rare-interview-with-kremlin-critic-alexei-navalny/

In Washington there's a discussion about arming Ukraine to increase the cost for Russia. Is this a good way to help Ukraine? Is this a good way to calm the situation?

I do not think that supplies of weapons, well, lethal weapons, will change the situation dramatically. Just because the fact is that a military victory of Ukraine over Russia is impossible. Putin will get new facts that Americans are fighting the war in Ukraine and not Ukrainians. But I cannot assume that the Ukrainian army, even armed with American drones, will win a victory over the Russian army.

The supply of weapons is a somewhat popular step inside the United States. This is something for the American public opinion. "We armed Ukrainians so that they could resist." I would say that introduction of visa and financial restrictions for oligarchs would hit Putin's regime harder than drones.

If it had not been for economic and sectoral sanctions, Putin would have seized Odessa by now. And I think that self-confidence of Putin and his circle was, "The West is weak, the West is amorphous, and they will not be able to introduce economic sanctions."

So, of course, there was a certain effect. However, the idea to split the elites via personal sanctions did not succeed. Because personal sanctions should be introduced not against 12 people but against the party of war, against a thousand people.

So why do I and so many others from the neighboring countries and non-ethnic russians from russia dislike navalny so much? Well, there are a lot of good reasons. Let's look into the man's past.



But first, a few clarifications. Is navalny a russian opposition leader? The optics of his position suggest so. To the unenlightened, he and his Anti-Corruption Foundation, FBK, seem to be a very potent threat to the current Kremlin regime promising a better future...

...a better future for the ethnic russians that is. Ethnic minorities within russia and the neighboring countries on the other hand would not be so lucky, should he ever be seated on the throne in the kremlin.

Why? Let's start from the beginning.

navalny started his political career with the social-liberal party Yabloko. In the 1990s it was an opposition party to yeltsin. However, even they did not outright oppose russia's colonial war against Ichkeria, calling the war "ambiguous and complicated."

https://web.archive.org/web/20121226035740/http://www.yabloko.ru/Elections/2003/History_Yabloko/yabloko_history_011.html

In 2006 navalny was expelled from Yabloko for his participation in the ethnic russian marches (русский марш). Those are annual events in russia and attract thousands of ethnonationalists in country-wide demonstrations chanting "russia for ethnic russians!"



Neo-Nazis on the March in Moscow: 'We Russians Are Part of the Whit...

Thousands of Russian neo-Nazis marched through Moscow on National Unity Day this weekend, joined by pensioners, students and families. Experts believe Russia's far right gives President Vladimir Puti...

https://www.spiegel.de/international/world/neo-nazis-on-the-march-in-moscow-we-russ...

The Der Spiegel article is from 2007. Read it, it explains very well what those marches are. Technically the first ever ethnic russian march took place in 2005. So navalny liked the idea from the very start.

https://www.jstor.org/stable/23438715#metadata info tab contents

To keep things chronological, let's look at what else happened in 2007. At a political debate navanly got into a violent argument with one of the attendees. The details of the incident are conflicting. It is clear the two got into a fight.



Между дебатами и дебошем

«Единая Россия» отказалась от дебатов с конкурентами на телевидении. Вечером того же дня случились драка и стрельба из травматического пистолета, увенчавшие политический спор в московском клубе Gogol...

https://expert.ru/russian_reporter/2007/23/debaty_i_debosh/

ЭКСПЕРТ

Между дебатами и дебошем

8 ноября 2007, 00:00

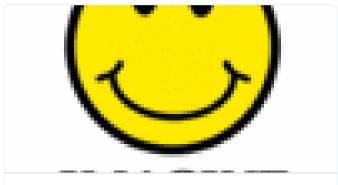


«Единая Россия» отказалась от дебатов с конкурентами на телевидении. Вечером того же дня случились драка и стрельба из травматического пистолета, увенчавшие политический спор в московском клубе Gogol. Свидетелем потасовки стал корреспондент «PP»



Later it was alleged that the attendee was an FSB agent. During the fight, navalny fired several shots from a gas pistol that he brought to the debate. navalny threw in a few ethnic slurs at his opponent, who is Ossetian. navalny was arrested but shortly released without charges.

navalny is no stranger to using derogatory language. Below is his response to someone in the comments to his post: "judging by your profile pic, you are a homosexual, or colloquially - a f^{**} unfortunately I cannot continue the conversation with you."



Про Тесака

 Действительно уголовное дело возбудили по жалобе, которую направило в прокуратуру движение "ДА!". Подписались я, Гайдар и Козырев. 2.
 Многочисленные ...

https://web.archive.org/web/20120202010010/http://navalny.livejournal.com/142157.ht...



navalny navalny

2007-07-09 09:32 am (UTC)

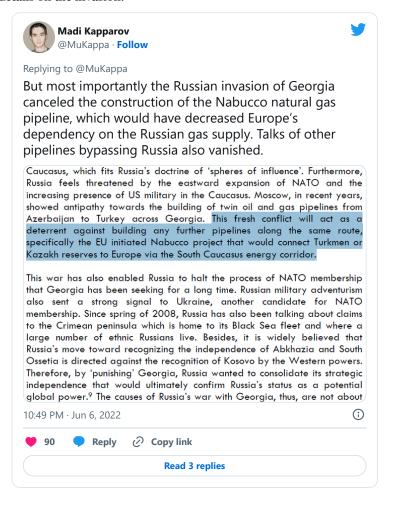
судя по вашему юзерпику, Вы гомосексуалисть. в просторечии - пидор к сожалению не могу поддержать с вами беседу (<u>Reply</u>) (<u>Thread</u>)

In 2007 navalny also released a xenophobic clip. He titles himself a "certified nationalist" and says "I recommend full sanitization. Everything in our way should be carefully but decisively removed through deportation." He equates immigrants to cavities.

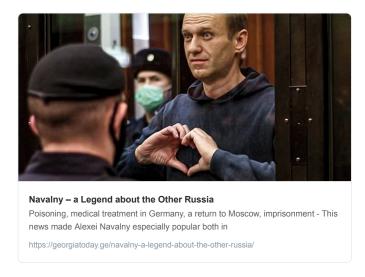


https://www.youtube.com/embed/ICoc2VmGdfw

On August 1, 2008, russia invaded Georgia on a fabricated casus belli of genocide perpetrated by the Georgians against the local minorities, American biolabs (imagine that), etc. Other details on the invasion:

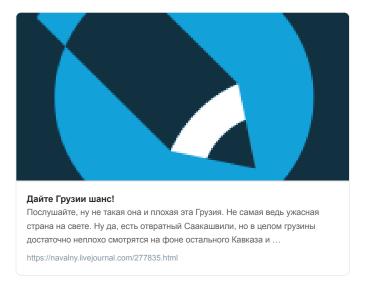


navalny shared his thoughts on the invasion of Georgia as it was unfolding. navalny called the Georgians "rodents," an ethnic slur in russian, and argued for a more destructive war against Georgia arguing that the entire country had to be taken over.



After the active phase of the war against Georgia was over, navalny did delete his Facebook post and expressed "regret" for calling the Georgians "rodents." However, he never retracted and, worse, maintained his imperialist stance for a russian takeover of Georgia.

He also never deleted his Georgia blogpost from Livejournal (Zhivoy Zhurnal). On August 12, 2008, he posted this:



You may need a VPN connection to view it. Many things he wrote in the post highlight his outright russian ethnonationalism and imperialism.

The blogpost is sarcastically titled "Give Georgia a chance." Here navalny says: "If a small nation likes to play big politics - it must become a satellite of a large nation. Or it must become an enemy of a large nation."

И с грузинами будет то же самое.

Нельзя построить маленькую империю. В современном мире это не работает.

Если маленькая нация любит играть в большую политику она должна стать сателлитом большой нации. Или стать врагом большой нации.

Но можно не играть, а просто жить.

Here navalny calls Georgia's then-president Saakashvili a "Europeanized Georgian Hitler."

Кандидаты уже много лет отвечают: Мы сплотим всю грузинскую нацию! Мы восстановим наши граници!

Логическим этапом политпроцесса стал приход к власти европеизированного грузинского Гитлера -Саакашвили.

Он действительно объединил нацию. И даже вернул часть страны - Аджарию, изгнав оттуда коррумпированное правительство Абашидзе (которое, к слову сказать, приютил и наделил новыми бизнесами Лужков).

Finally, navalny ends his post with the following three sentences: "Let's love Georgia and give it a chance! Ha, it would be great to recognize Transnistria as well. The Moldovans deserve a chance too."

The post is full of schadenfreude oozing with imagined imperial greatness.

Так что вот! Давайте будем благородны. Давайте будем проводить ответственную внешнюю политику. Давайте признаем очевидное - нестрисимость Южной Осетии и Абхазии.

Давайте полюбим Грузию и дадим ей шанс!

Зы. а вообще, хорошо бы и Приднестровье признать. Молдаване тоже достойны шанса. Alright, back to navalny's participation in the ethnic russian marches. Till 2013 he attended each march held annually. Starting in 2011 he was a member of the committee organizing the ethnic russian marches.



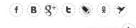
Алексей Навальный вошел в оргкомитет «Русского марша»

Навальный зовет либералов на «Русский марш». Его сторонники огорчены: их отвлекают от критики очередной госзакупки и заставляют задуматься о проблеме национализма

https://snob.ru/selected/entry/42365/

Главная / Политика

Олеся Герасименко / 20.10.11



Алексей Навальный вошел в оргкомитет «Русского марша»

Навальный зовет либералов на «Русский марш». Его сторонники огорчены: их отвлекают от критики очередной госзакупки и заставляют задуматься о проблеме национализма

Всего реплик: 86

Участикк дискусски: Антон Носик, Сергей Дрезнин, Степан Пачиков, Svetlana Kondratieva, Ксения Семенова, Алексей Федосеев, Мария Семендяева, Мария Генкина, Александр Мансилья-Круз, Олег Кашин, Владимир Владимирович Громковский, Liliana Loss, Захар Прилепин, Александр Янов, Катерина Инноченте, Павел Ивлев, Константин Зарубин, Дмитрий Маларёв, Евгений Левкович, Алексей Абраков, Вячеслав Смирков, Алека Рева, Марина Тяжелкова, Майя Куцова, Юлия Юзефович, Алексей Наджар, Михаил Спиваков, Виктор Аргонов, Таня Ратклифф, Олеся Герасименко



The same year the moscow part of the marches was attended by up to 25 thousand people. The common slogans used at the ethnonationalist demonstration were: "Give russia back to the ethnic russians!" "russia is an ethnic russian land!" etc. Again, navalny was one of the organizers.



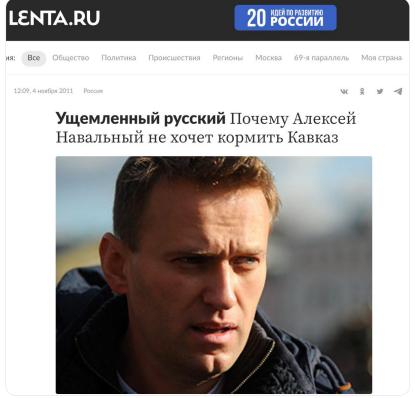
There is also plenty of video evidence of navalny's attendance of the ethnic russian marches. Here is a Youtube video compiled from multiple sources along with some translated things navalny's said at the marches.



https://www.youtube.com/embed/Yba-LJ8clgc

In 2011 lenta interviewed navalny for anarticle titled "An oppressed ethnic russia. Why aleksei navalny does not want to feed the Caucasus." navalny defends his active participation in the ethnic russian marches. However, two other things stand out for me.





First, navalny's thinly veiled disgust with the Caucasus is just beneath the facade of his financial reasoning. His rhetoric lines up with the common colonial treatment of the territories. The Northern Caucasus are called an "internal abroad" in russia.



The North Caucasus: Russia's Internal Abroad?

The North Caucasus remains economically and politically a part of Russia, but the internal situation there is increasingly regulated by the region's own local traditions.

https://carnegiemoscow.org/2011/11/30/north-caucasus-russia-s-internal-abroad-pub-4...

Second, explaining his participation in the marches navalny says: "A large number of ethnic russians who remained beyond russia's borders is also a fact. Ethnic russians are the largest split people in Europe, this is accepted by and obvious to everyone"

Do you see any parallels?

Есть конкретная повестка дня, которая волнует людей. Эта повестка заключается в большом количестве нелегальных мигрантов. Факт, что по этому показателю Россия находится на втором месте после США. Факт, что у нас есть проблемы на Кавказе. Факт? Факт. То, что Кавказ, Чечня в частности, превратился в политически-правовой и финансовый офшор - факт? Факт. Огромное количество русских, которые остались за границами России – тоже факт. Русские - крупнейший разделенный народ в Европе, это принято и всем очевидно. Ну, и так далее. Есть конкретные проблемы. Эти проблемы табуируются, к сожалению, некими системными политиками, считается, что это не нужно обсуждать, потому что это очень опасно. Потому что, типа, как ни обсуждай проблемы русских или проблемы Чечни, все равно в итоге получится погром. Но вопрос существует.

The response by navalny reminds me of putin's speech in 2005: "For the russian people, [the collapse] became a real drama. Tens of millions of our citizens and countrymen found themselves outside Russian territory." putin likes using "split people" too.



navalny rose to prominence in 2013. That year he decided to stop attending the ethnic russian marches and "go mainstream." He ran against sobyanin in the moscow mayoral elections. navalny was allowed to run despite the concurrent kirovoles case against him

Timber embezzlement case against Navalny

Whistleblowing blogger turned opposition leader Alexei Navalny is charged with the theft of over 10,000 cubic meters of timber, which was allegedly stolen from Kirovles company between May and Septem...

https://rapsinews.com/trend/kirovles/

The russian far-right was not pleased with navalny's non-attendance of the marches in 2013. sputnik & pogrom, a russian far-right outlet, published their analysis of navalny's potential reasons behind his decision to stop attending the marches.

https://sputnikipogrom.com/politics/6055/navalny_russian_march/



The first reason according to them is the "radicalization of the marches" that pushed navalny away. Let me be clear here: the ethnic russian marches were radical starting from their inaugural event in 2005. Again, scroll up and read the Der Spiegel piece from 2007 if you haven't.

The second reason according to sputnik & pogrom is hypothetical by their own admission: on the one hand, navalny could be a fake nationalist; on the other hand, he is a "technologist, who understands that contemporary russia without nationalism will get nowhere."

Hence, navalny tamed his rhetoric to make his nationalism appeal to wider audiences. I am more inclined to believe the latter reasoning, wider audiences had to be won over not only domestically but also abroad if he is ever to have a chance for the kremlin crown.

However, make no mistake, navalny never retracted his far-right outbursts, nor has he ever apologized for them.

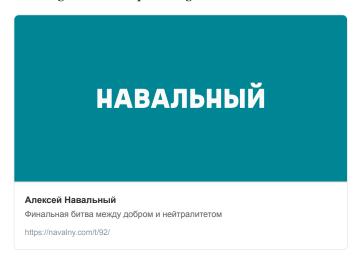


Navalny's Failure To Renounce His Nationalist Past May Be Straining ...
An assassination attempt made Aleksei Navalny into a globally recognized dissident, a Russian opposition leader whom German Chancellor Angela Merkel visited in the hospital and who collaborated with ...

 $https://www.rferl.org/a/navalny-failure-to-renounce-nationalist-past-support/31122014.h.\dots\\$

But the man who for more than a decade has challenged President Vladimir Putin and deftly exposed corruption among officials, earning widespread support in Russia and sparking repeated waves of anti-government protests, has also faced criticism in the country and abroad for nationalist comments that he has repeatedly declined to disavow.

In fact, navalny continued to exhibit his xenophobic ethnonationalist nature. In 2015 he published posts decrying russia's immigration policies allowing "Islamists" into the country. He does not hide his disgust with mosques being allowed in russia.



Fun fact: Muslims are native to the Northern Caucuses and Middle and South Povolzhye in russia. That's 14% of russia's population.



Alright, let's shift back to navanly's stance on Ukraine.

Not only he was against sending weapons to Ukraine in 2015 as I mentioned earlier, but he also shares the kremlin's imperialist views on Crimea: Crimea is russia according to navalny. https://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/17/world/europe/navalnys-comments-on-crimea-ignite-russian-twittersphere.html

Worse yet, in 2017 navalny had a "debate" with strelkov-girkin a war criminal, one of the key commanders of the russian invasion of Ukraine in 2014, and one of the men responsible for the MH17 shootdown. navalny was unimpressive in the "debate." Details:

 $\frac{https://imrussia.org/en/the-rundown/media-must-reads/2826-navalny-strelkov-debate,-putin\%E2\%80\%99s-new-image,-stalinism-without-stalin$

I will not discuss in detail navalny's FBK or his team's youtube channels (popular politics, navalny live). However, I'll make a few subjective observations. First, they do say that the war is illegal. However, they keep chirping about the russian army's pervasive corruption.

As far as I am concerned it is wonderful that the russian army is so corrupt. navalny's team does not share my views. I also cannot recall them mentioning the genocide of Ukrainians being perpetrated by russia. I could be wrong. Do let me know.

However, credit where credit is due: in April 2022, navalny called the West to open an "information front" against the current kremlin regime. "One Javelin shot costs \$230K. For such money, we could get 200M views," navalny said.



"Один выстрел из Javelin стоит \$230 тыс. За эти деньги мы получи...
Осужденный в России оппозиционный политик Алексей Навальный призвал лидеров западных стран, в частности президента...

https://gordonua.com/news/worldnews/odin-vystrel-iz-javelin-stoit-230-tys-za-eti-dengi-..

I tried to dig into FBK's financial backing. Their current financing is broken down largely into two categories: donations and ad revenue. According to FBK's Volkov 30K people donate to the foundation on a regular basis and 200K on a one-off, the average donation size is 500RUB.

Overall FBK's financing is not transparent. There are multiple RT articles on FBK's financing. I refuse to cite them, but I thought that you should know. If you are interested, go look for them; they are easy to find (they are in russian).

Alright, let's move on to what other russians politicians had to say about navalny.

First, I found Nemtsov's phone call intercepts. If you do not know who Nemtsov was, here is a brief overview of his political career:

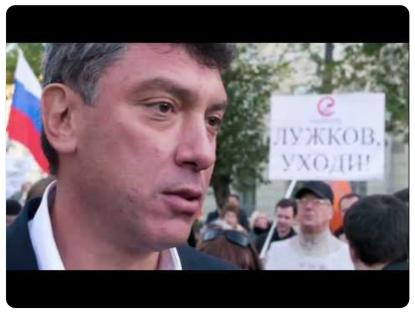


The man who dared to criticize Putin – DW – 02/27/2020

Russian opposition leader Boris Nemtsov was killed not far from the Kremlin in February 2015. Five years later, the motive for his murder remains a mystery.

 $https://www.dw.com/en/boris-nemtsov-the-man-who-dared-to-criticize-vladimir-put in/a-\dots and the properties of the control of the properties of the properti$

In the intercepts, Nemtsov calls navalny "a specialist in online crowd manipulation." Moreover, it seems that at the behest of navalny multiple journalists were running a defamation campaign against Nemtsov.



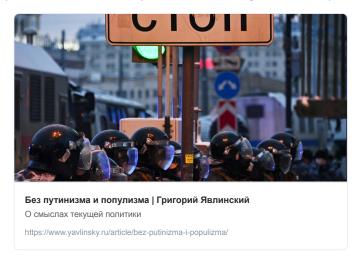
https://www.youtube.com/embed/9ZyvwK1BAnM

I was unable to verify the authenticity of the intercepts, but it does sound like Nemtsov's voice.

Second, Yavlinsky published a long opinion piece on his personal website. Yavlinsky was a prominent opposition figure in the 1990s and early 2000s. However, he is now largely retired. Here is a brief overview of his political career:



In his February 2, 2021 article Yavlinsky wrote the following about navalny:



- "As a whistleblower blogger, a "revizorro" of the upper echelons of russian government and business, navalny served as an indicator that made it possible to judge...
- "...the behind-the-scenes struggle within the elites by the nature of broadcasted information. But since almost everyone in russia is convinced of the existence of gigantic corruption, navalny's revelations were received positively, and the economic recession and...
- "...impoverishment of the population in the past ten years made it possible to successfully play on a widening gap in the level of wealth, turning into an abyss ("Peace to the huts, war to the palaces!"). Moreover, political populism, degenerating into nationalism,...
- "...as a result, often leading to violent clashes, is a dangerous global trend nowadays. russia is no exception here.

Navalny's investigations, unfortunately, did not and cannot have practical results for society. All exposed remain in their places and with their money."

Yavlinsky also cites Novodvorskaya. Here is a brief look into her career and why her opinion matters:



Valeria Novodvorskaya: Russia's 'Don Quixote' Of Democracy, Human ...
On July 12, longtime Soviet and Russian political oppositionist Valeria
Novodvorskaya died in Moscow at the age of 64. The passionate controversies she stirred up during her lifetime raged again with...

https://www.rferl.org/a/obituary-novodvorskaya-russia-rights/25456847.html

Novodvorskaya on navalny in 2011: "Navalny may become the future leader of crazed crowds with a Nazi inclination...

- "...The fight against corruption can lead to what it has already led to in Belarus. Lukashenka seduced the people by talking from morning to evening about the fight against corruption. And he easily bought gullible Belarusians. And the unthinking intelligentsia supported him,...
- "...deciding that they could manipulate him as they pleased. Well, we see the Belarusian [political] landscape today... Arrests are not a political indulgence. The bolsheviks also did hard labor, and dzerzhinsky spent 10 years in prison. hitler was also imprisoned...
- "...It is a pity that not for 15 years. Maybe there would be no World War II... If the crowds follow navalny, fascism awaits the country in the future... The wave that is now rising is rising not only against putin. It rises for an undemocratic future for russia...
- "...It rises for past communism or for future fascism. And navalny is one of the potential leaders of this new death."

So Novodvorskaya warned us of navalny's fascist nature back in 2011. Yavlinsky seems to agree in 2021. However, Yavlinsky also alluded to something interesting.

"navalny served as an indicator that made it possible to judge the behind-the-scenes struggle within the elites by the nature of broadcasted information," Yavlinsky writes. This sentence is loaded and indicates two things.

First, russia's ruling elites are not a unified monolithic block that they present to the world. There are power struggles within their circles and we only get to see glimpses of them. The most notable example is probably sergei ivanov.



ivanov was once an influential and popular man in russia. During the Second Chechen War, he was russia's minister of defense. russia's successes in that war added to his clout. In 2007 he was appointed first deputy prime minister starting rumors that he was to replace putin.

However, ivanov is himself from the FSB circles - he was putin's deputy while putin headed the FSB. It seems that ivanov leveraged his new first deputy prime minister position too quickly, creating his own circle. putin took note, as he intended to do a switcharoo...

... and come back as russia's president in four years. The switcharoo was required as russia's constitution at the time did not permit more than two consecutive terms as president. ivanov showed himself as someone who would not surrender the presidential position without a fight.

So putin chose someone with little to no political capital for his switcharoo scheme -- medvedev.

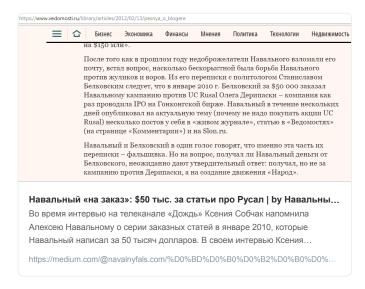
In 2016 ivanov was dismissed as putin's chief of staff and appointed as a special representative...on the issues of environment, etc. A significant demotion https://www.nytimes.com/2016/08/13/world/europe/sergei-ivanov-putin-russia.html

Second, Yavlinsky's statement suggests that navalny is either used or employed by russia's elites for their internal struggles. He does not say it directly as such a claim would be a serious accusation requiring substantive evidence.

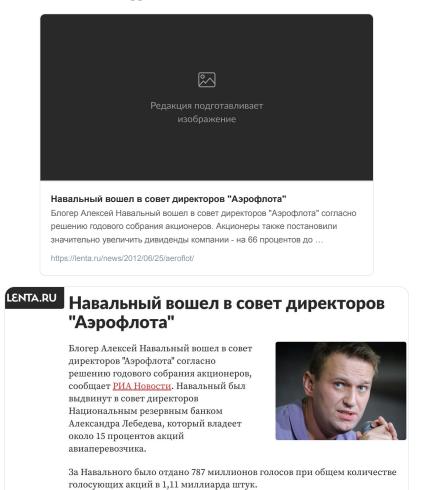
However, we are not in the court of law. Do we have any evidence suggesting that navalny is used by the kremlin elites? We do, but it is not conclusive.

First, you already saw the Nemtsov phone call intercepts. Again veracity is unconfirmed, but it seems that navalny ran a defamation campaign against Nemtsov, a prominent kremlin critic who always provided documented support to his claims.

Second, in 2010 navalny was allegedly paid \$50,000 to run a defamation campaign against UC Rusal ahead of their IPO. The company belongs to deripaska, a russian oligarch and putin's ally. The article below shows navalny's hacked emails as evidence.



Third, navalny joined aeroflot's board of directors. The article below indicates that navalny's candidacy was offered and approved by alexander lebedev, a russian oligarch and former KGB and SVR officer. He also happens to be s. ivanov's close associate.



There are other pieces that I found that seem to be a bit of a stretch. But to conclude, all I can say is that navalny is an ethnonationalist with troubling extreme far-right inclinations. He also has a shady past. And finally, he is most definitely not a sausage sandwich.

• • •