



## Alexei Navalny: An Unsavory, Manufactured Product of the West

*This transcript may not be 100% accurate due to audio quality or other factors.*

**Glenn Greenwald (GG):** It'd be one thing if Alexei Navalny were some sort of gigantic figure in Russia. The only reason you know the name Alexei Navalny now is because the West has turned him into this mythological figure. There was a documentary made about him. It won the Academy Award for Best Documentary in 2022. All of Hollywood stood and cheered for this documentary about the hero Navalny. In Russia he's a minuscule figure. He's not some giant of the Russian political stage. He is useful to the West for propagandistic purposes, and that is why you have this incredibly inflated imagery of what he is. Here's Reuters on February 21st of 2018: *Putin nemesis Navalny, barred from the election, tried his political siege*. Remember when the proof of Russia's totalitarianism was that the opposition leader was barred from the ballot and then imprisoned? Isn't that a situation similar that we have the United States? Isn't it the case that the primary political opponent of the current government in Washington is in the process of being stricken from the ballot as a result of judges and Democratic Party leaders bringing cases to have them struck from the ballot? And is in the process of being criminally prosecuted by Democratic partisan prosecutors like Fani Willis in Georgia and Alvin Bragg in New York and the Obama DOJ? Why is it that when we hear that Russia is banning from the ballot, the primary political opponent of Vladimir Putin and then trying to imprison him we make one conclusion, but then we hear in the United States the exact same thing is happening?! But an actual significant political figure. Not like Navalny, but Donald Trump, who was actually the president already. Narrowly loss in 2020. Is leading almost every opinion poll for 2024. When he is struck from ballots, when he is threatened with imprisonment, a completely different narrative about that is presented, even though they're the same acts. And I know a lot of people just intuitively believe this is what propaganda does, this is what tribalism does, is that we just inherently believe that when it seems like the two things are the same, the fact that one is happening in the United States and the other is happening in Russia means they're completely different. Question, though, whether or not that's what you believe, because you're an American, because you were born in the United States, because you've been told from childhood that that's how you should see

the world. Here is Reuters. Now this is not RT. This is not Sputnik. This is not Tucker Carlson; whoever you want to dismiss as some sort of pro-Russian source. This is Reuters in 2018 which said the following, quote: "Opinion polls put Navalny's support at less than 2% and many Russians, who still get much of their news from state TV, say they do not even know who he is." He's incredibly more famous and more notable and more popular in Western and political capitals than he is in Russia. The idea that he's a threat to Vladimir Putin in any way is laughable.

Let's try and remember as well a couple of things about who Alexei Navalny is, the new hero of Western liberals. From Yahoo News in February of this year; actually, yesterday: *Alexi Navalny's quote 'far-right racist' past brought back in spotlight after Putin-critic's death*: As world leaders pay tribute to Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny, some have drawn attention to some inconvenient aspects of his past. Really what's inconvenient? Quote: "As Western politicians pay their respects, some more uncomfortable aspects of Navalny's career have been brought back to the surface." Quote, "Navalny took part in the Russian March, an annual demonstration that draws ultranationalists, including some who adopt swastika-like symbols". Oh my, that is uncomfortable. Quote, "He has never apologised for his earliest xenophobic videos or his decision to attend the Russian March". "Rahman appeared to be referring to a notorious video from 2007 in which Navalny appears to compare Muslim immigrants in Russia to 'cockroaches' as he advocated for gun ownership." "In another video, he is dressed as a dentist and appears to compare migrants in Moscow to tooth cavities, Radio Free Europe reports. He says, quote, 'I recommend full sanitisation. Everything in our way should be carefully but decisively removed through deportation'. Shortly before releasing both clips, Navalny was expelled by the liberal Yabloko party over his, quote 'nationalist activities', having participated in the Russian March, an annual rally associated with ultra-nationalist far-right groups chanting slogans such as 'Russia for ethnic Russians'."

Now anyone in the United States who has a past like that, who called immigrants cockroaches, who advocated handing out guns as a way to exterminate them, as cockroaches should be exterminated, who attended an actual neo-Nazi march, I don't think they would be described as having an inconvenient or uncomfortable past. And yet it is amazing, just like we find in Ukraine with all the neo-Nazi militias in Ukraine, that the American liberals love and want to arm that if you're somebody who doesn't love the Democratic Party in the United States, you will get called a Nazi and a fascist and a white nationalist, and American liberals and Western liberals kind will try to have you barred from the internet and fired from your job and basically expelled from decent society in every way. And then Western liberals encounter actual Nazis. People with actual neo-Nazi ideology with actual overt ties to white supremacist, neo-Nazi groups and they want to embrace them. They want to arm them. The hero Navalny. Here's the hero Navalny in 2007.

**Alexei Navalny:** Hello! Today we talk about insect control. No house is safe from cockroach infestation.

**GG:** So just for the people listening, I'm going to just read the screen. It says: "Background left: Alexi Navalny Certified Specialist. Hello! Today we talk about insect control. No house is safe from cockroach infestation.

**GG:** "Eww! Or a fly gets in through an open window". And there's all kinds of demons being shown as he says this. "We all know the cure: against flies - a fly swatter, a slipper against a roach. But what to do, if cockroaches are too big, and flies - too aggressive? In such cases, I recommend a handgun" - as he shows a handgun. "Yes, to allowing firearms". Now, anybody involved in an ad like that in the United States would be deemed a Nazi for the rest of his life. The Western media looks at this, and because of his propagandistic value, they turn him into some kind of civil liberties leader. And of course, the same exact thing has been happening for the last two years in Ukraine, for the last decade in the Western press. Every time the Azov battalion has been referenced, it has been described as a neo-Nazi group, as a group with Nazi ideology. And to this day, you see, the Azov battalions and their leaders and their soldiers, and they have all kinds of neo-Nazi insignia on them.

Here's how The New York Times tried to grapple with this in June of 2023. *Nazi Symbols on the Ukraine's Front Lines Highlight Thorny Issues of History*. Do you love these words? Oh, uncomfortable, inconvenient, thorny, when they're talking about actual neo-Nazis. Quote: "The troops' use of patches bearing Nazi emblems risks fueling Russian propaganda and spreading imagery that the West has spent a half -century trying to eliminate". "So far, the imagery has not eroded international support for the war. It has, however, left diplomats, Western journalists and advocacy groups in a difficult position: Calling attention to the iconography risks playing into Russian propaganda. Saying nothing allows it to spread. Even Jewish groups and anti-hate organisations that have traditionally called out hateful symbols have stayed largely silent. Privately, some leaders have worried about being seen as embracing Russian propaganda talking points". Now that is, how The New York Times has grappled with the fact that we are arming actual neo-Nazi militia groups in Ukraine.

Now, as I said at the start, there is a similar case to Navalny dying in prison. Although this was a case where the person who died in prison was an American citizen, his name is Gonzalo Lira. We covered this case on last week's show when we interviewed his father. And you may recall that Gonzalo Lira was in Ukraine. He married a Ukrainian woman in 2016, and he was an outspoken opponent of President Zelensky and of the war. And because of that, he was twice arrested. The US government never once uttered a word of protest about this American citizen being arrested, even though he posted a video pleading for the government to help. And he warned that if he were arrested a second time, he would die in Ukrainian prison. And he did die in an Ukrainian prison, just as he predicted, at the age of 55. And he was in prison solely because he criticised President Zelensky and the NATO-US narrative about the war. Now, you would think that when it happens to an American citizen who dies in a Ukrainian prison after criticising President Zelensky, that all these people who are so deeply concerned with civil liberties in Russia might have something to say about that. After all, this is not a Russian citizen, this is an American citizen, and it's not done at the hands of a foreign government on the other side of the world who is our enemy, but an allied state that we are

funding and financing. And they killed an American citizen for the crime of speaking out against the war. And there's barely any media coverage of this. It happened just last month. Because that has anti-propagandistic value because it shows what a joke it is the claim that Ukraine is a democratic state.

One of the very few outlets that covered the death of Gonzalo Lira in prison was the liberal tabloid Daily Beast. And they ran this article in January of 2024. And there you see the headline. It's a repulsive, repugnant headline designed to justify Gonzalo Lira's death: *US Finally Confirms American Dating Coach-Turned-Kremlin Shill Died in Ukraine*. Quote, "Gonzalo Lira, a blogger who pushed Kremlin propaganda in Ukraine, died after apparently coming down with pneumonia. Lira was arrested in Ukraine's Kharkiv region in May of 2023 and charged with spreading Russian propaganda by posting videos that cheered on the Kremlin's act of aggression against Ukraine. After being released under house arrest, he was jailed again in July after fleeing while out on bail, though he claimed in hysterical tweets to followers at the time that it was all part of an attempt by Ukrainian authorities to 'disappear' him. Right-wing pundits back home in the US soon seized on his unfounded claims to criticise the Biden administration's support for Ukraine, holding Lira up as a, quote, 'journalist' they said had been unfairly persecuted by authorities in Kyiv." In other words, Gonzalo Lira deserved to die in a Ukrainian prison, because he had the wrong views about the war in Ukraine. He was a pro-Russian propagandist and therefore he deserved to die. And if you think I'm exaggerating, even though I just showed you this repulsive Daily Beast headline that was obviously designed to stir up hatred and contempt for Gonzalo Lira, here is Mark Thiessen, who used to work in the Bush White House and is now a columnist for the Washington Post; classic warmongering neocon, the kind that cheered the Iraq War and the War on Terror and every single war since – you know that type. He was one of the few people in the media who actually acknowledged the Gonzalo Lira case, and this is what he said to distinguish it from what happened in Russia. Quote, "Gonzalo Lira was not a journalist, he was a pro-Putin propagandist who was spreading Russian disinformation inside Ukraine during wartime – praising the Russian invasion and denying the Bucha massacre. No country which has been invaded would allow that in its territory. He was arrested and released on bail and then re-arrested after violating his bail. He was not killed in jail, he died of pneumonia. There is no comparison to Navalny. None."

How is it that the people who pretend to be so upset, so angry, so enraged by the fact that Vladimir Putin imprisoned somebody for their political views and then allow them to die in prison can turn around and justify the same exact thing when done by Ukraine, but this time to an American citizen. He's essentially saying Gonzalo Lira deserved to die in prison because during wartime he criticised the government. That's exactly what Vladimir Putin's view of Navalny is. We're in war time, and we're not going to allow people to criticise the government or war effort. After all, says Mark Thiesson, no country could possibly allow during wartime any free speech. These people do not care in the slightest about civil liberties. They don't care about that at all. It is a pretext, a tool to bludgeon foreign countries that we want to demonise, to continue wars against. And the way you know that it's a pretence that there's no sincerity or authenticity, is the belief is that they will turn around and justify the

same exact acts by the United States government or our allies, as I just showed you. They'll either ignore it because they don't care about it or they'll say Gonzalo Lira deserved to die because he had the wrong views. Exactly what Vladimir Putin says about Alexei Navalny.

Thanks for watching this clip from System Update, our live show that airs every Monday through Friday at 7 p.m. eastern exclusively on Rumble. You can catch the full nightly shows live or view the backlog of episodes for free on our Rumble page. You can also find full episodes the morning after they air across all major podcasting platforms, including Spotify and Apple. All the information you need is linked below. We hope to see you there.

**END**

---

**Thank you for reading this transcript. Please don't forget to donate to support our independent and non-profit journalism:**

<b>BANKKONTO:</b> Kontoinhaber: acTVism München e.V. Bank: GLS Bank IBAN: DE89430609678224073600 BIC: GENODEM1GLS	<b>PAYPAL:</b> E-Mail: <a href="mailto:PayPal@acTVism.org">PayPal@acTVism.org</a>	<b>PATREON:</b> <a href="https://www.patreon.com/acTVism">https://www.patreon.com/acTVism</a>	<b>BETTERPLACE:</b> Link: <a href="#">Click here</a>
---	--	--	---

The acTVism Munich e.V. association is a non-profit organization with legal capacity. The association pursues exclusively and directly non-profit and charitable purposes. Donations from Germany are tax-deductible. If you require a donation receipt, please send us an e-mail to: [info@acTVism.org](mailto:info@acTVism.org)