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To the death of Navalny

16 February 2024

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## Such a mysterious Russian soul

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Since the full-scale invasion of Ukraine, many people, including our collective, had hope that Russian society would not forgive Putin for such actions and would be able not only to stop the invasion, but also to destroy Putin's regime. Yes, 2 years later such thoughts look naive, and our hope for Russian society has completely melted away. In such an atmosphere, Navalny's murder seems like a logical step in stabilizing Putin's dictatorship – if the horrors of the war and the hundreds of thousands of murdered Ukrainians were accepted by Russian society, then they will accept a dead Navalny and continue to keep silent.

To be surprised by Navalny's murder today is to ignore the years of Putin's rule in Russia. Murders of opponents, mass repressions and police lawlessness.... Take the murder of Prigozhin, who was potentially supported by so many "determined vatniks". Obviously, the successful sabotage of support from the US and the military's advancement on various fronts in Ukraine, has somewhat emboldened the Kremlin dictator. Instead of defeat in Ukraine in 2023, we see that Russian industry has been able to rebuild itself on a military footing and continues to exist quite successfully despite

Western sanctions and expert predictions of the imminent collapse of the empire.

Will Russians do something about Putin this time? All this time, society has not responded with explosions of rage neither to political assassinations nor to the mass extermination of entire peoples. Maybe the assassination of one of the most popular opposition politicians will finally stir the minds of those who disagree with the regime but have been doing so quietly and at home until now? Not likely. If Russians do rise up, let's all be pleasantly surprised instead of constantly disappointed....

If Navalny's death becomes just news, it will be another confirmation of the stability of the Putin regime itself and its readiness to escalate repression against the remaining opponents of the war and dictatorship in the country itself.