



ANGLO-SAXON ANTI-BELARUSIAN PROVOCATIONS AND THE MUSLIM CONSPIRACY

Online monitoring of anti-Belarusian propaganda
in April-June 2021

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The Ryanair incident as a “Western provocation”

Ryanair’s emergency landing in Minsk and the arrest of blogger **Roman Protasevich** (Raman Pratasevich) and his partner **Sofia Sapega**, became one of the most important foreign policy events in the second quarter. Ultimately, this incident marked a turning point for the imposition of significant Western sanctions. Naturally, pro-Kremlin propaganda outlets could not ignore such an important event.

The dozens, if not hundreds, of propaganda stories on this topic boil down to two main messages: Roman Protasevich is a (neo)Nazi who killed civilians in the Donbas and the landing of the plane was a provocation either by Western special services or by Roman’s former colleagues.

“A Nazi will give up anyone” is the [headline of one of the stories](#) on the Sonar2050 website. “And who is being protected today? A Nazi. And this is perhaps the most revealing,” [writes Regnum](#). “The most remarkable thing in this story is the fact that the governments of Western countries are once again protecting and justifying a member of a neo-Nazi armed group,” [says Ukraina.ru](#). Another article from the same site [calls](#) Protasevich “a mercenary of the ‘Azov’ Nazi battalion.”

“Biden will come home from this meeting with little to show for it. And, therefore, after this meeting, the second scenario for the development of events is inevitable; that is, to orchestrate new problems for Russia. Ukraine 2.0., as represented by Belarus. The groundwork for this scenario is now being prepared through a carrot-and-stick method with tough sanctions under the pretext of the arrest of Protasevich, whom the West planted as bait for **Lukashenko** that he swallowed,” [claims](#) the Inforuss website.

It is interesting that many stories are not limited to pointing the finger at Western countries in general, but rather name a specific country – for some reason, Great Britain.

“The entire chain of logistics of Protasevich’s movements was controlled by the British. Is it possible they have bailed on him?” [asks](#) Imperianews rhetorically.

“It is curious that they are trying to make a martyr out of Protasevich, whom the British sent with a provocation in the Belarusian airspace. This “Savchenko 2” clearly stated his guilt in organizing protests with Polish and British funds and that he was being purposefully framed,” [wrote Sputnik Belarus in promoting this conspiracy theory](#).

One of the propaganda columns [hints directly](#) at Svetlana Tikhanovskaya (Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya) as a source of provocation with the plane:

“The relationship between the ‘leaders’ in the opposition camp is like in a terrarium. During his stay in Greece, Protasevich met with Tikhanovskaya and

even conducted a 'photo session' for her. At the same time, Tikhanovskaya represents the Vilnius opposition group, whose relations with the Warsaw team of the extremist Telegram channel are, to put it mildly, tense."

Rubaltic also [plays on the supposedly](#) insurmountable disagreements within the Belarusian democratic movement: "Zmagars' are a grappling ball of snakes that hate each other and are ready to gnaw each other's throats in their struggle for funding sources, betraying their comrades-in-arms at a snap of the fingers."

It is worth noting another entertaining conspiracy theory: that it was Lukashenko's [inner circle](#) that set him up so cleverly:

"Makei skillfully played on Lukashenko's wishes in setting up the blogger. But it seems that, judging by the steps that the West began to take towards the country, Lukashenko took the bait and he himself was set up. And whoever in Belarus facilitated this, let the newly appointed Security Council of Belarus work it out."

Many propaganda articles stand out for their degree of schadenfreude over the arrest of Protasevich. "And these bastards from NEXTA, riding around Warsaw-Vilnius-Athens and fattening themselves on honoraria from overseas Pinocchio-puppets, should have gotten what's coming to them," [writes Imhoclub](#).

Some of the stories [glorify Lukashenko](#) for such an extraordinary event, supposedly while opposing the "Anglo-Saxons":

"The most important thing is that Minsk in this case played 'by the book'; that is, strictly according to the rules. It was assumed that only the Anglo-Saxons could afford to do this, but no. And, of course, the shouts and screams will stand, and even, quite possibly, they will introduce new useless 'sanctions.' Very scary, for sure. How was it with Krylov in the fable? 'But Father listens and eats?'"

A separate set of propaganda focused on moments from the "interview" of Protasevich on state television and his participation in the Foreign Ministry briefing. For example, regarding Protasevich's statement on the Austrian court's harsh sentences in the **Monika Unger** case, [Imhoclub wrote](#) the following:

"Essentially, in this example Protasevich once again nudged the European Union into its own excrement... Sooner or later we will have to admit that the Western king is completely naked: there is no beautiful democratic and human rights suit. In its place there is the disgusting and foul-smelling shame of lies and double standards."

Since Protasevich was previously the editor of the largest Belarusian telegram channel Nexta, he also received additional attention from propaganda sources. For example, RuBaltic [calls the Telegram channel](#) "a command post under the leadership of special services from NATO countries."

An aggressive Ukraine under the Western lash

With each passing month, pro-Kremlin propaganda increasingly speaks of not only Western, but also Ukrainian aggression against Belarus. This follows logically from popular propaganda messages about Ukraine as a puppet of the West, about “Nazi” neighbors of Belarus (except Russia), and about Belarus as an intermediate link in a Western attack on Russia.

“Why Ukraine, Zelensky of the West, Biden and the U.S.? There is indisputable value. Alas, our brotherly country has become an instrument of attack and irritation for Russia. This is the whole value,” [explains Imhoclub](#).

In other words, in the propaganda light show Ukraine has already been captured by the West, while Belarus has successfully fought it off and continues to fight back. As one [expert commented](#) on Sputnik radio, Belarus and Ukraine are only parts of Russia, and therefore the new Belarusian constitution would not hurt to serve as “an indication of the geopolitical orientation towards the restoration of Russia as a whole, and not cut up, as it is now, into two dozen pieces.”

In the end, [according](#) to another Sputnik commentator, Ukraine is a totalitarian country led by the Anglo-Saxons, and the territory of historical Rus is “the ancestral home of European civilization.” Therefore, the just reunification of the triune people and the further salvation of the Europeans are the overarching goal of Russian civilization.

In the meantime, why shouldn’t the Kremlin create the Kharkiv People’s Republic, which would be reunited with Russia, [argues](#) another frequent Sputnik guest. He describes the tasks of the Russian leadership for the near future as follows: “Russia must step up its efforts to eliminate the Russophobic pro-Western regime in Ukraine – the real junta, headed by unknown officers of the American special services, including Avakov and Zelensky.”

“Together with Poland and the Baltic states, Ukraine has become a springboard for carrying out special operations aimed at destabilizing the political and economic situation in Belarus,” [writes](#) Imhoclub. The same story followed in the footsteps of the STV television channel and attributed statements to the Ukrainian ambassador in Minsk that [he did not make](#). Allegedly, he told Belarusian protesters at the embassy that in Odessa “it was not people who burned down buildings, but *kolorads* [offensive term for pro-Russian separatists] and *vatniks* [jingoistic followers of Russian government propaganda], so there was no need to raise a fuss.”

“After the presidential elections in Belarus in August last year, Kyiv’s policy towards Minsk underwent a wild mutation, as a result of which Ukraine attacked Belarus completely unprovoked and without cause,” Ukraina.ru [exaggeratedly claims](#).

Belarus compared to Myanmar and Yugoslavia

Pro-Kremlin propoganda makes all sorts of inappropriate analogies and comparisons when it comes to “color revolutions.”

One Sputnik Belarus [assumed the task of teaching](#) the audience “similar technologies of color revolutions” in Belarus and Myanmar, saying, “I had a chance to visit the hotbed of two ‘color revolutions’ in less than a year.” And [a story on the same resource](#) brought together all kinds of propoganda and misinformation regarding the events in Myanmar and drew an additional parallel in the spirit of Belarus-Myanmar, Russia-China:

“In this case, we are not talking about Russia, but about China. Let us not forget that for 30 years everything that has been happening around Myanmar is aimed at breaking off its relations with China. Without this there is no way. After all, I remember in the 90s and later the West imposed sanctions against the country’s latest military regime, but then China began pouring investments into Myanmar. Instead of being stifled by the sanctions it turned into a small economic miracle.”

Incidentally, China is more and more confidently taking its place in the picture of the world of pro-Kremlin propoganda as a loyal ally of Russia in the fight against the aggressive West and as a partner in satisfying different countries and regions of the world. [For example](#), the Middle East:

“China will play an increasing role as a trade and investment partner for the region, and Russia will serve as a political guarantor (and arbiter) and military partner, allowing the Arabs to reduce their dependence on the U.S.”

Promoting the achievements of China, the propoganda outlets [sometimes make](#) completely outlandish statements:

“By the way, this is a typical phenomenon: brain drain from the West to China has been observed for a couple of decades in all professions – architects, technicians, musicians, and even political scientists. You cannot tell right away why this is happening. Money is important as is the opportunity to freely express one’s thoughts, especially in English, for a wide audience; thoughts for which elsewhere they could seriously offend people, choose not to print, or subject to “cancellation” or boycott.”

Another already defunct country with which pro-Kremlin propoganda is increasingly drawing analogies to the Belarusian situation is Yugoslavia. As one commentator from Sputnik Belarus [said](#), “The U.S. and its NATO allies destroyed Yugoslavia. If Belarus were not an ally of a nuclear-capable Russia, they would have destroyed it too.”

“If you go back 20-30 years ago, there was at that time in Europe the most terrible dictator – the so-called Balkan fascist and maniac, Slobodan Milosevic... If we just look at the Western press 25-30 years ago and replace the portraits of Milosevic with Lukashenko, the names and slogans will be almost identical,” [echoes](#) another Sputnik commentator.

Military-sexual police in the U.S. and other signs of Western decline

Messages about the imminent and inevitable socio-economic decline and the moral decline of the West that has already occurred are a long-standing method used by pro-Kremlin (and before that, Soviet) mass media. In the propaganda stories directed at Belarusian audiences, the most frequent targets of imminent disintegration are the European Union and the U.S. It has even been stated that against the background of the coronavirus epidemic, some European countries would disappear altogether from the political map of the world.

Since mid-2020, in connection with the outbreak of protests after the assassination of George Floyd, the number of articles about the “imminent collapse” of the U.S. began to increase. The presidential elections and the riots at the Capitol became additional news feeds for playing up the messages about the decline of the U.S. and its impending disintegration.

In the second quarter of 2021, Sputnik Belarus published several predictions and conspiracy theories about the U.S. One editorial discusses division, racism, and authoritarianism in the U.S. Democrats are represented as a political force that distorts and falsifies U.S. history to suit their destructive ideological goals. The Republicans, accordingly, are supposedly on the side of the world. “In the U.S., meanwhile, the Republicans are firmly moving toward ‘Russian’ positions – that is, respect for their own history,” [the article claims](#).

A massive migration crisis is raging on the southern border of the U.S., massive unemployment is sweeping across the country, tens of millions of Americans are chronically malnourished, and the Democratic Party will continue to rig elections, another Sputnik Belarus column stated. “Of course, the massive Democratic propaganda and the organized terror of Black Lives Matter put monstrous pressure on voters’ psyche. However, the real life of Americans under Joe Biden is deteriorating at an unprecedented rate, regardless of their political orientation,” [the article says](#). The takeaway here is that Donald Trump has a serious chance of re-taking the presidency.

“The U.S., like the Titanic, has already stumbled onto a British mine. I think it struck not an iceberg, but a British mine,” says [one Sputnik Belarus audio commentary](#)

citing a vivid metaphor. According to the speaker, the white population is being destroyed in the U.S. “as if it were the main terrorist threat” and the destruction of statehood is in full swing. As for the American army, it has supposedly disintegrated and a “military-sexual police force” is being created in the country.

A frequent addition to claims about the decline of the U.S. is the message that to divert public attention the country is deliberately destabilizing other countries and regions. Another story by Sputnik Belarus cites a slew of assumptions and misinformation designed to convince people that the coronavirus originated from an American and not from a Chinese laboratory. The author argues that this can be [seen in the behavior of governments](#):

“However, if you can imagine the possibility of global government sabotage – purely theoretically, of course – this is not the style of China, which prefers a slow and inexorable move forward. Such impulsive gestures have recently been characteristic of our American partners who are wreaking havoc around the world and destroying governments in a vain attempt to slow down their own decline.”

[Here also](#) are old conspiracy theories about testing a toxic drug in a Georgian biological laboratory on humans and about American laboratories that surround Russia and China:

“The glaring difference in the scale of laboratory research is also not in favor of American partners. The PRC does not have biological laboratories abroad. The U.S. has more than a hundred located in 25 countries. By some strange coincidence, most are concentrated along the borders of Russia and China. There are 16 American biological laboratories in Ukraine alone.”

Pro-Kremlin propaganda cannot wait for the collapse of the West as a whole, following the example of the USSR. One of the absurd parallels from a column in RIA Novosti [reprinted by Sputnik Belarus](#) warrants special attention:

“The politics of Western countries are now phantasmagorically blending the Soviet realities of the times of stagnation and, simultaneously, of perestroika. On the one hand is ideological determinism [...] and restriction of the rights and freedoms of citizens and command management methods. On the other hand is the state’s purposeful support of the most destructive socio-political forces and concepts that split the nation from within: from migration policy to outrage at its own history and culture.”

The article ends with the profound instructive conclusion that the USSR has outlived its own, and now “it is necessary to see how France, Europe, and the West as a whole will cope with the challenge.”

The Muslim-Catholic conspiracy against Belarus

Conspiracy theories about the destructive activities of the Vatican and the Catholic Church in relation to Belarus is, although not one of the key subjects, but still a not uncommon topic for pro-Kremlin propaganda. Stories along these lines continued to be published during the period under review.

For example, the [Teleskop website writes](#) about “Catholic expansion into Russian lands” and lays out a big anti-Russian conspiracy:

“Here we see that the history of Catholic expansion has not ended. It cannot be completed until its main goal is achieved – the separating of part of the Russians from the Russian World at all levels and the fragmentation and weakening of Russia.”

Similarly, [RuBaltic talks about](#) the centuries-old “Russian identity of the inhabitants of Belarus, preserved throughout the Polish-Lithuanian period,” which, to the extent possible, fought against Catholicization. In this way, the period of the Renaissance and the popularity of Protestantism and the Uniate Church as the offspring of the Union of Brest in 1596 are removed from the history of Belarus. Before the Russian Empire’s special operation with the Polotsk Cathedral in 1839, the dominant Christian denomination in Belarus was the Uniate Church. However, the article paints a false black-and-white picture in which on the historical Belarusian stage only a foreign Catholic church and the “true” for Belarusians Orthodox Church were supposedly fighting.

Something entirely new to the propaganda was the idea that NATO countries have begun to nudge Belarusian Muslims towards anti-Belarusian and anti-Russian activities. [EADaily claims](#) that “lately there have been signs of systematic work by the governments of Turkey and Poland to involve Belarusian Muslims in illegal activities aimed at destroying the Union State of Russia and Belarus while reorienting Belarusian society towards anti-Russian sentiment.”

The story does not produce a single fact confirming such a scandalous statement. Nevertheless, it also writes that “pro-Turkish Islamists, the Mejlis, the Ukrainian authorities, and the *zmagar* opposition are allied in their overthrow of Lukashenko and Assad, who is recognized by the Belarusian government.” EADaily concludes that Minsk should not wait for “Muslim citizens to be drawn into the process of destabilizing the situation in the country by Turkey and Poland,” but should quickly recognize Crimea as a part of Russia and provide all possible assistance to both Russia and the unrecognized LPR/DPR.

The Anglo-Saxons and a host of puppets

In the second quarter, stories continued that depicted half the world and all countries neighboring Belarus, except Russia, as puppets of the West and the so-called “Anglo-Saxons.” Most, as usual, were devoted to Ukraine, the Baltic countries, and Svetlana Tikhanovskaya and the whole of the Belarusian pro-democratic movement.

And again, as the monitoring for the first quarter of 2021 describes in detail, a chain is being promoted that links “the U.S. and the Anglo-Saxons to Ukraine, the Baltic states, and Poland” through which the latter “destabilize” Belarus by order of the U.S., while the most important provocations (as with the Ryanair flight) are made by the “Anglo-Saxons” themselves.

“Ukraine is the most disgraceful in terms of its relations with Belarus(sia). It is the most disgusting player of the collective West and is, by the way, neither a NATO nor EU member,” [writes](#) Ukraina.ru.

[According to](#) one commentator from Sputnik Belarus, “Vilnius – and we understand that there are ‘bigger brothers’ behind Vilnius (both London and Washington) – needs their own networks and agents of influence within Belarus, so they will only pull out those who are already in a bind.”

“If the U.S. proposes digging a canal along the Belarusian-Lithuanian border and filling it with sulfuric acid, then Vilnius will consent to it quickly and without compromise,” [continues](#) another frequent guest of pro-Kremlin media.

RuBaltic [believes](#) that the incident with the official Belarusian flag in Riga was instigated by the U.S.:

“This fact demonstrates not so much the external governance of Latvia – as no one doubted its existence before – as it does the nature of this external governance. The Americans do not care about the interests of their satellites, their historical ties with neighbors, or their economic development.”

“According to my sources, even her inner circle is already thinking about bringing her back to Belarus, where she will be immediately sent to prison to somehow boost the protest.”

[According to EADaily](#), Tikhanovskaya intends to supplant the Russian language and “encourage the LGBT community” and that “all these projects are funded by Poland.” The plans of the Belarusian movement for free elections mean nothing other than, the story concludes, “the transformation of Belarus into an appendage of the EU countries – primarily Poland – and the U.S. and into a springboard for a subsequent attack on Russia.”

“As a politician, she is nothing without a baton, and this baton is held by Western gentlemen in uniform, calling the music and dancing to the glorious Belarusian housewife,” says the website of the Regnum agency, [disparaging](#) Tikhanovskaya in an article about foreign “coordinators.”

“Yes, perhaps the Belarusians have questions for Lukashenko, but they are not going to solve them with Western puppets,” [echoes](#) an editorial on the RIA FAN agency website about Tikhanovskaya. Here there are also entertaining conspiracy theories:

«According to my sources, even her inner circle is already thinking about bringing her back to Belarus, where she will be immediately sent to prison in order to somehow cheer up the protest.»

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As part of the description of the events around the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline in the period under review, pro-Kremlin media have repeatedly represented Germany as a puppet of the Anglo-Saxons. From the Sputnik Belarus [column](#):

“Yes, Germany’s position on Nord Stream 2 does not depend on the name of the chancellor as protecting the gas pipeline meets German geopolitical interests. But does the support of the Anglo-Saxon game with Ukraine and the promise of its European integration and transatlantic cooperation meet these interests? Of course, not. But neither Berlin nor Paris are able to oppose it.”

Another column regarding Germany and the pipeline [concludes](#) the following:

“We are talking about two different Europes. They want to continue to see one dependent on the Anglo-Saxon helmsmen, and the other will gradually regain its independence. The first is doomed to confrontation with Russia and the second will not be without normal cooperation with its great eastern neighbor.”

Regarding Western aggression and the fate of Belarus

In the propaganda picture of the world, peace-loving Russia is opposed by the evil Nazi West, which does not hesitate in demonstrating its aggression with or

without cause. Russia invariably serves as the primary target for Western countries with the countries surrounding it seen as bargaining chips.

No joke. [According](#) to one of the commentators for radio Sputnik, the next stage for the West of the “psycho-historical war with the Slavs and Russian civilization” was the situation concerning the Slavianski Bazaar(!). Mass appeals in social networks by artists to ignore the song festival in Vitebsk as a major propaganda event turned into yet another Western provocation.

“Russia is the obvious enemy and victim of the U.S. ‘Pax Americana’ plan. For this, information operations have been conducted, public opinion has been prepared, and all the prerequisites are in place for the war to take place,” says a commentator for Sputnik Belarus, [foreshadowing](#) the “big war.”

“Other front-line states in the borderlands of Russia and NATO – Belarus, Moldova, and the Baltic countries – are becoming candidates for becoming ‘hot spots,’” [writes](#) RuBaltic.ru.

“We see how the degree of conflicts is intentionally escalated in the belt of puppet states: Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, and the Czech Republic. It is worth just reading the recent headlines... In this situation, a sacrifice was needed that would completely destabilize the entire situation. It is logical that it could be Alexander Lukashenko, whose murder, according to the plan of overseas strategists, could lead to chaos in Belarus, and possibly in Russia,” Ukraina.ru [imagines](#).

«The U.S. continues its dirty game of weakening Russia, where Belarus is one of the squares on a large chessboard. But why Minsk has a static role in this game, when, under the guise of ‘dialogue,’ they are leading them to the scaffold is completely incomprehensible,” [says the original article](#) on the Sputnik Belarus website, which attributes the “August uprising” to the intrigues of the CIA and Western foundations.

There are even [speculations](#) on the possible division of Belarus between the West and Russia:

“Russia will be put in a situation where it either agrees to a partition where the West will still call it an ‘illegal occupier’ and poison it with sanctions, and that piece of Belarus(sia) instead of the full country will be much more difficult, longer, and more expensive to develop. Or – which is more likely and logical – Moscow will have to defend the borders of the ‘unified state’ with an armed hand.”

Some stories go even further and [consider](#) victim states planned by the West during a military conflict with Russia:

“Perhaps Washington and Brussels are comfortable with a ‘little catastrophe’ in Eastern Europe, if in the end it leads to the consolidation of allies and the strengthening of the ‘containment’ of Russia. In the event of military conflict with Russia in the Black Sea region, the U.S. and NATO may sacrifice Bulgaria and Poland. What awaits Ukraine, Georgia, and Moldova, aside from an approving pat on the shoulder and the collective role of an ‘Anti-Russia?’ Nothing good.”

An absurd interpretation of history and modernity was presented by [RIA Novosti](#) and [Sputnik Belarus](#) on the eve of May 9. “Two hundred years ago, the first architect of a united Europe – who decided to subjugate Russia – died, and eighty years ago a united Europe attacked the USSR,” the article says. It promotes the ridiculous Napoleon-Hitler-West chain, as if Nazi Germany did not occupy a dozen European countries, but they together attacked the USSR. The story presents modern Western countries as successors to the Third Reich, with EU countries serving as subordinates to the “Anglo-Saxons”:

“The Anglo-Saxons need a united Europe only as their geopolitical vassal or junior partner; however, the German-French center is gradually preparing for independence... But even here Europe is marching towards Russia. Not with fire and sword (which, in principle, is impossible due to the presence of nuclear weapons), but by systematically taking first Eastern Europe and then the former Soviet republics.”

Another column from [RIA Novosti](#) and [Sputnik Belarus](#) continues the same absurd line about a “lesson” for the West from Russia and the state entities that preceded it:

“In fact, the West has not understood anything and has not learned anything. In any event, it has firmly forgotten the lessons that Russia has repeatedly taught it to it in previous historical epochs. But this calculation turned out to be a strategic miscalculation, because in a systemic crisis and a rapidly changing world, time is not on the side of the West, but against it, in favor of Russia, China, and its other opponents.”

Against the backdrop of a distraught West, a dozen propaganda stories offer a single possibility for Belarus’s survival – a closer alliance with Russia:

- If the multi-vector approach continues, there will be no union with Russia, no Lukashenko, and no [independent Belarus](#).
- The unity of the peoples of Belarus and Russia in the Union State is a natural and [logical historical course](#).
- The choice for Belarus is between civil war and [joining Russia](#).
- Only Eurasianism and the Eurasian political project can restore our Union

in a new form and give the peoples of Russia and Eurasia a [worthy Future](#).

- The Chinese still cannot understand why Belarus remains a separate state from Russia and continues to [suffer because of this](#).

The propaganda is partial to fatalism: the West is foreseen, sooner or later, to attack Russia and lose completely, and in case of non-aggression it will simply perish through socio-economic and moral decline. And Belarus is supposedly destined to become a part of Russia, or at least to build a much closer union with it.