

*Prof. MacDonald from I could hardly wait for the Germans to invade.*

Pursuant to his central thesis, Solzhenitsyn writes that without the high Jewish presence among the leaders and executioners of the Bolshevik dictatorship, Lenin's newly born Soviet state would have been at an end, at the latest, by the time of the Kronstadt Sailors Rebellion in 1921. Solzhenitsyn examines specific decisive questions, as for example: Why, in the period 1939-41, did such a large percentage of Jewry in eastern Poland, Galicia, and in the Baltic States collaborate with the Red Army, Stalin's secret police, and Bolshevism in general? And why did the pogroms in these regions take place under the slogan "Revenge for the Soviet Occupation"? Solzhenitsyn: "In eastern Poland, which had been incorporated in the Soviet Union in September 1939, the Jews, especially the younger generation, welcomed the invading Red Army with frenetic jubilation. Whether in Poland, Bessarabia, Lithuania, or Bukowina, the Jews were the main support of Soviet power. The newspapers report that the Jews are enthusiastically supporting the establishment of Communist rule." (p. 329)

In that fateful year a Polish Jew who had emigrated to France prophesied that the non-Jews who had been subjugated to Bolshevism would one day exact a fearful war of vengeance. In 1939 Stanislaw Ivanowich, a left socialist sympathetic to the Soviet Union, warned:

"Should the dictatorship of the Bolsheviks end one day, the collapse will be accompanied by the atavistic, barbaric passions of Jew hate and violence. The collapse of Soviet power would be a terrible catastrophe for Jewry; today Soviet rule equates to Judeophilia." (p. 310)

See here for a comment on the distortions of Jan Gross's *Neighbors* which attempts to blame the massacre solely on the irrational anti-Semitism of Poles. This compilation notes, among other things, that "There was significant collaboration on the part of some Jedwabne Jews with the Soviet invaders from 1939 to June 1941; the victims were primarily the town's Polish population, several hundred of whom were deported to the Gulag."

When a significant percentage of people from an alien ethnic group support an invader and collaborate in the deportation of people from one's own ethnic group, it is not at all surprising that there would be reprisals when there is a shift of power; nor would be surprising if the reprisals were directed all Jews, not just the ones known to collaborate or sympathize. That's how our evolved psychology of ethnic competition works.

I notice in my notes that Checinski (1982, 9) writes that "even then [in 1943] there was an attempt to rationalize this blind hatred [of Jews] by recalling the 'improper' attitude of the Jewish population in eastern Poland towards the Bolsheviks in September 1939 when the Soviet army, in connivance with the Nazis, occupied their territories." Checinski also notes that immediately after WWII Jews welcomed the Soviet army and the new regime "with favor if not with outright enthusiasm" and that "the small Jewish community was seen by friends and foes alike as one of the mainstays of the Soviet sponsored regime. This only further alienated it from the great majority of the Polish population" (p. 8). This comment is highly compatible with Jaff Schatz's (1991) treatment which I discuss extensively in Ch. 3 of *Culture of Critique*. It is interesting that American Jewish representatives visiting Poland after the war presented the new Polish regime as "a paragon of liberalism and tolerance, unequalled in Eastern Europe" (Checinski, p. 11).

To conclude, anti-Jewish attitudes in Eastern Europe had a basis in the real behavior of Jews. No doubt the events of 1939 and thereafter were influenced by traditional grievances between Poles and Jews, but actual Jewish behavior during this period is also relevant. Jews were correctly perceived as more welcoming to the Soviets after the 1939 invasion and as more loyal to the Communist regime and as willing executioners of the remnants of Polish

nationalism after 1945. (As I and others have noted, the common denominator of the behavior of Diaspora Jews in European countries has been to oppose nationalist movements; further, during this period, Jews throughout Europe and in America saw communism as good for the Jews at least partly because Jews had become an elite in the USSR and the USSR had outlawed anti-Semitism.)

The situation was exacerbated by the fact that Jews were also highly placed in the government and in the security forces. Under these circumstances, social identity theory predicts that Poles would develop the well-attested stereotype of "Żydokomuna" (Judeo-Communism) and exaggerate the differences between themselves and all Jews in Poland. It simply reflects typical ethnic conflict that has gone on throughout the ages — nothing more than a reflection of our evolved psychology.

In the West, Jewish activists have had a relatively easy time erecting the image of innocent Jews and evil Nazis as a complete explanation of the events of World War II. This message is much more difficult in Eastern Europe where there is a collective memory of collaboration of Jews with the horrors of communism and in the extermination of nationalist elements of the non-Jewish population. □

## Halting Holocaust obfuscation

*The Baltic ultranationalists rewriting east European history as an equal Nazi-Soviet 'double genocide' must be stopped*

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Britons who are proud of a parent or grandparent who fought in the second world war, proud of the Allies' defeat of Hitler, of Britain's valiant defence of freedom when Europe buckled and crumbled, have ample reason to be wary now. Wary, and disappointed, that one of this country's major political parties has entered into a rash alliance with the new far right of Eastern Europe.

One of the eastern far right's priorities, notwithstanding the current economic challenges, is to rubbish the Allies' triumph, and rewrite the history of the war to suit local ultranationalism. It boggles the mind that those who lead the party of Churchill and, yes, of Thatcher, would be duped into joining the far-right European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR), led by the controversial Polish MEP Michal Kamiński. If Cameron's Conservatives want your vote, they need to show the minimum courage required to exit rapidly from the ECR, and to utter the words that politicians in general have so much trouble with: "We made an honest mistake, we realise it, and we are today setting things right."

This is not just about the ECR group and Kamiński's equivocation about the Jedwabne massacre, or its Latvian and Estonian ECR partners who proudly endorse Waffen-SS celebrations. (It was, let's not forget, a Republican US secretary of state, Colin Powell, who once told them such behaviour must stop if they want to join Nato and the EU; of course, with membership in the bag, Nazi nostalgia re-emerged rapidly.) It also entails the ongoing campaign to rewrite second world war history by mitigating Nazism, insisting that communism's evils be proclaimed "equal" to Nazism by all of Europe, and trashing the Allied war effort as one that did nothing but replace one tyranny with another "equal" one in the east.

Make no mistake, the peoples of eastern Europe suffered enormously under communism for decades after the war, while we westerners were enjoying unbridled freedom and prosperity. It is absolutely right that they should now call for thorough investigation of the crimes committed by communist regimes. But the demand that the entire EU declare Nazism and communism to be "equal" is something else entirely.

Perhaps you must actually live in eastern Europe to appreciate the nuances. Let it be stressed that none of this is about the fine,

tolerant, welcoming and hardworking people of the region, among whom I have lived happily for over a decade, in Vilnius, the Lithuanian capital. It is rather about the abuses of power elites, in government, academia, media, the judiciary and so forth, whose agendas are often opaque even to locals, and all the more inscrutable to unsuspecting foreigners.

The new ultranationalists are neither skinheads nor toughs. On the contrary, the elites are suave, silver-tongued, charming and highly educated, especially about history. But not in the open-minded sense of relishing civic debate between competing ideas, but in the sense of insisting upon a single, uniform history as a product for export.

In 2009, the Lithuanian parliament actually debated proposals to impose two - or three-year prison sentences on people who would disagree with the "double genocide" model of the second world war and who would question, for example, whether Soviet misrule constituted "genocide". Even if it is never passed into law, the debate itself has intimidated citizens from speaking their minds freely in this part of the European Union.

**But what actually is the ultranationalist version of history?**

In the case of the countries in the far east of the European Union, the Baltics (Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia), there is a reluctance to own up to any complicity with the Holocaust. The percentages of their Jewish populations killed (mid-90s) were the highest in Europe. Further west, collaboration had meant ratting to the Gestapo or taking neighbours to the train station to be deported. In these countries, it meant something different. Many thousands of enthusiastic local volunteers did most of the actual shooting of their country's Jewish citizens, whose remains lie scattered in hundreds of local killing pits. In Lithuania and Latvia, the butchery started before the Nazis even arrived. Of course we acknowledge, too, the exceptions and honour the inspirational courage of those Baltic citizens who risked their and their families' lives to rescue a Jewish neighbour.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union and the rise of democratic states in the region, individual citizens hailing from each country's majority made spirited strides toward unearthing the truth. Some remarkable NGOs were set up. But near the turn of the millennium, the three Baltic governments colluded to set up state-financed commissions to study "as a single topic" the Nazi and communist legacies (known informally as "red-brown commissions"). The most notorious of these bodies has been Lithuania's International Commission for the Evaluation of the Crimes of the Nazi and Soviet Occupation Regimes in Lithuania. Built into the name of the inquiry are the foregone conclusions: first, the desired equivalence of Nazi and Soviet crimes; and second, the limitation to consider the crimes of "occupation regimes", leaving little scope for investigation of the genocide committed by local forces, in some cases before the occupation began. The commission is cosily housed in the prime minister's office, turning history into a PR department of the government.

To "fix" the region's unfixable Holocaust history, an array of cunning ruses was brought into play. The very definition of "genocide" was broadened by local legislation in this part of the world to include wrongful deportation, imprisonment or attempts to rid society of a certain class, thereby "legally" placing communist oppression in the same category as Nazism. The state-funded Genocide Museum on the main boulevard of Vilnius does not mention the word "Holocaust"; it is all about Soviet crimes; and even flaunts anti-Semitic exhibits. It is widely repeated locally that the Soviets and their Jewish supporters committed genocide first, in 1940 (when the Baltic states were wrongfully incorporated into the USSR, less than a year after the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact), and that this was followed by some kind of opposite and equal reaction in 1941, when the German invaders and Balts began their genocide of the Jewish population.

According to this narrative, all is equal; everybody is even. All that remained was to sell this new history to the naive westerners whose mind is on other things these days.

But here in Lithuania, the process went further. State prosecutors, egged on by the anti-Semitic press, opened "war crimes investigations" against Holocaust survivors who are alive today only because they managed to flee the ghetto and the murder awaiting them, to join up with anti-Nazi partisans in the forests who were, yes, supported by the Soviet Union (there were, alas, no US or British forces in these parts).

One of the accused survivors, Dr Yitzhak Arad (born 1926), a gentle scholar who was founding director of Jerusalem's Yad Vashem Holocaust museum, was duped into joining the Lithuanian red-brown commission (to give it legitimacy) before being absurdly accused himself. Then, in May 2008, at the low point of modern Lithuanian history, armed police came looking for two incredibly valorous women veterans: Fania Yocheles Brantsovsky (born 1922), librarian of the Vilnius Yiddish Institute, and Rachel Margolis (1921), a biologist and Holocaust scholar. Margolis is especially loathed by proponents of the "double genocide" industry because she rediscovered, deciphered and published the long-lost diary of a Christian Pole, Kazimierz Sakowicz.\* Sakowicz, witness to tens of thousands of murders at the Ponar (Paneriai) site outside Vilnius, recorded accurately that most of the killers were enthusiastic locals. Now resident in Rechovot, Israel, she is unable to return to her beloved hometown in Lithuania for fear of prosecutorial harassment.

Why would prosecutors, who have yet to level a single charge, go after the victims instead of the perpetrators? In fact, this has been all about defamation and manipulation of history, not prosecution. When it comes to perpetrators, there is no initiative or energy per Dr Efraim Zuroff, director of the Wiesenthal Centre's Israel office.

Since they obtained independence in 1991, the Baltic countries' record vis-a-vis the prosecution of local Nazi war criminals has been an abysmal failure. Not a single such person has ever been punished for their crimes.

But worse, with unbridled audacity, the Baltic states, working closely with far-right parties in other "new accession states" (Poland and the Czech Republic among them), have found "useful idiots" in the European parliament for spreading their underlying view that the Nazis were, in effect, liberators of their countries from the yoke of communism.

The east European cabal's greatest success to date is the Prague Declaration of June 2008, which demands that the entire European Union recognise communism and fascism [Nazism] as a "common legacy", and that "all European minds" think that way. Its practical demands include a new Nuremberg-type tribunal for trying the criminals of communism and, unbelievably, a demand for the "overhaul of European history textbooks" to reflect the revisionist history.

One of the reasons that all this progressed without scrutiny can be found in the Prague Declaration's list of signatories. They include some major anti-Soviet icons who stood up bravely for their nations' independence as the USSR crumbled, and subsequently helped forge solid democracies. The heroic roles of Vaclav Havel of the Czech Republic and Vytautas Landsbergis of Lithuania in their nations' re-emergence remain undiminished. But that does not mean that, two decades later, we must be afraid to disagree with them when, following the general political trend in the region, they veer rightwards or unwittingly give succour to the ultranationalists.

These cardinal questions of 20th-century European history, and the current issues to which they are intimately related in eastern Europe — 21st-century racism, anti-Semitism and homophobia — should not have to become a party-political issue in Britain. It was the valiant Conservative MEP, Edward Millan-Scott, who stood up to the east European heirs to fascist thinking and defeated Kamiński for the vice-

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