

WORLD NEWS

Lithuania attacked over Shoah retort

JC REPORTER

► THE LITHUANIAN government has met intense opposition after its Foreign Minister criticised eight of his country's parliamentarians for signing a declaration which rejects the "Double Genocide" theory — that Jews were as culpable for atrocities during the Second World War as the Nazis.

On January 20, the 70th anniversary of the Wannsee Conference that codified the "Final Solution", 70 European parliamentarians from 19 EU states signed the Seventy Years Declaration, which explicitly rejects attempts to "obfuscate" the Holocaust.

Lithuania's Foreign Minister, a member of the right-wing nationalist government, called the eight Lithuanians who signed the document "pathetic". He went on to say that "Hitler's moustache was shorter", implying that there was no other difference between the two dictators.

This week, British MP Denis MacShane sent letters of support to the eight parliamentarians.

He says in the letter: "I know it must be lonely to take a stand on such a con-

troversial subject but wanted to write to you to say you are not alone and every decent British and European citizen stands with you."

And Dr Shimon Alperovich, the 83-year-old head of the Jewish Community of Lithuania said at a Holocaust Remembrance Day event last week: "Even today there are people who adhere to the Double Genocide theory, that Jews murdered Lithuanians, and so Lithuanians therefore murdered Jews. An absurdity. One should not even have to enter into discussion with such people."

The Seventy Years Declaration rejects the "Double Genocide" theory inherent in the 2008 Prague Declaration championed by East European nationalists. It also attacks the policy in a number of East European states of using state resources to honour Hitler's local collaborators and, in some cases, actual Holocaust murderers, for being "anti-Soviet" heroes.

The declaration also rejects the Prague Declaration demand to have European textbooks rewritten to treat Nazi and Soviet crimes "the same way". It also praises the "nobility of Jewish partisans who survived ghettos or camps and went on to fight the Nazis and their allies".

Paper rejects attempts to obfuscate the Shoah



PHOTO: AP

Suffering in the Jewish ghetto of Slobodka in a suburb of Kovno, Lithuania, taken between 1941 and 1945

A fight over history's tragic truth

ANALYSIS DOVID KATZ

► SEVENTY YEARS is the lifespan for latterday humans. It is also the years that have passed since Hitler's "Final Solution" Wannsee Conference. In the half year beforehand, the Nazis saw how easy it was to find enthusiastic local killers in the parts of Eastern Europe they invaded in June 1941.

Around a million Jews perished by bullets there. Here in Eastern Europe, denial, never viable, has been replaced by a new ruse: Holocaust obfuscation. Deflate Nazi crimes, inflate Soviet crimes, redefine "genocide" by law, and find ways to turn local killers into heroes to fault Jewish survivors. In 2008, a group of East European members of the European Parliament proclaimed the "Prague Declaration". It has the word "same"

five times, equalising Nazi and Soviet rule. Its demands: overhaul of textbooks, a single commemoration day, and a "Nuremberg" process for communists.

But 70 parliamentarians from 19 EU states have now signed the Seventy Years Declaration. A bold new reaffirmation. The legacy of the Holocaust shall not be undermined. *The writer is editor of defendinghistory.com*