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# Shoah denial is being replaced by an illusive and delusive evil

WHEN SOMETHING factual is denied, evidence can be mounted successfully. That's precisely what happened in London when Lord Justice Gray ruled in favour of Professor Deborah Lipstadt, an American scholar specialising in Holocaust denial, when she was sued by British denier David Irving in 2000. In one fell swoop, denial was purged from the mainstream and relegated to far-right fringes.

But around the same time, an incredibly sophisticated plan to attack the historic narrative was quietly underway. It was hatched with state budgets by a number of governments and elites in East European states that were in the process of winning admission into the European Union and NATO. But why would "changing" Holocaust history be so important to them?

First, ultranationalists don't like having stains on their history (all nations have them, in fact), and in the Baltics, participation in the actual killing (not just "collaboration") led to these three states – Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia – having the highest percentage of annihilation (around the 95 percent mark) of their Jewish population.

Second, these nations suffered enormously from Soviet occupation when the war ended, and frankly have good reason to fear a resurgent Putinist Russia today. What went awry was the idea of tackling the issues by trying to make Soviet crimes "equal" to Nazi crimes in the eyes of the world, thinking they could knock off two targets with one sling: downplay their own pro-Nazi wartime records, while settling scores with the Russians. An added "bonus" was that for many in this region, communism is identified with Jews "anyway". The new history is part of the New Far

Right in Eastern Europe that has learned to pose for naive westerners as centre-right. Further symptoms of the malady include glorification of local Nazi collaborators who are now, in the 21st-century, recast as "anti-Soviet heroes". In Estonia and Latvia, events are held honouring those countries' Waffen SS units. The Lithuanian government reburied with full honours and glorified the 1941 Nazi puppet prime minister who had presided over the initiation of the Holocaust in his country.

A number of British and Irish voices have stood in the forefront of opposition to the "Double Genocide" movement that insists, nonsensically, on the equality of Nazi and Soviet evils. (In this part of the world, the Soviets were the only credible force standing up to Hitler. Without them, the war and Europe would have been lost).

After the Prague Declaration in 2008, which used the word "same" five times to equate Nazi and Soviet crimes, MP John Mann called it a "sister document". By contrast, American legislators have, thus far, failed to speak up.

And when the Lithuanian government incredibly accused Holocaust survivors of "war crimes" (without an iota of evidence), MP Denis MacShane exposed the charade in his book *Globalising Hatred*. The then Irish ambassador to Lithuania, Dónal Denham, gallantly organised a banquet in his residence to honour one of the women survivors being accused.

A second woman survivor was honoured by Gordon Brown in a column in the *Independent* last year. Both women are over 90 and neither has been publicly cleared. It is verily the first episode since the fall of the Iron Curtain where Western leaders reach out to honour East European citi-

zens being rubbished by their own state.

In 2010, the then British ambassador to Lithuania, Simon Butt, mobilised six other European envoys to sign a letter to leaders of Lithuania that included the remarkably forthright sentence: "Spurious attempts are made to equate the uniquely evil genocide of the Jews with Soviet crimes against Lithuania, which, though great in magnitude, cannot be regarded as equivalent in either their intention or result." For some reason, the UK government won't release the full text.

Earlier this year, London human rights activist Monica Lowenberg played a key role in the counter demonstration against the Waffen SS march in Riga. She also mounted a petition against it that garnered thousands of signatures.

Lord Janner, who had worked closely with the Wiesenthal Center's Dr Efraim Zuroff on the prosecution of Nazis, was at the heart of efforts to mobilise British support for the first counterattack in the European Parliament. That historic new effort is the *Seventy Years Declaration*, published in January, on the 70th anniversary of the Wannsee "Final Solution" conference. The signatories (MPs, MEPs and Lords) include 15 Britons – seven Labour, four Conservative, three Liberal Democrat and a crossbencher.

Yet again, a nefarious branch of anti-Semitism cloaks itself in bogus history. Between the lines of it all is the calumny of the Christ-killer reinvented as the eternal Communist-like enemy of the "pure" nation states of (Eastern) Europe. The new battle for the history of the Holocaust, and the implications for human rights for generations to come, is just getting underway.

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