

SUBSCRIBE TO HAARETZ DIGITAL EDITIONS

Haaretz.com הארץ TheMarker עכבר העיר TheMarker Café

Aliyah | Car Rental

Sukkot Arab-inspired comfort food



Not a member? Register now

Saturday, October 06, 2012 Tishrei 20, 5773

Search Haaretz.com

NEWS | OPINION | JEWISH WORLD | BUSINESS | TRAVEL IN ISRAEL | CULTURE | WEEKEND | BLOGS

ISRAEL NEWS UN General Assembly | Iran | Anti-Islam film protests | U.S. elections | Sukkot

Like 51k Follow

BREAKING NEWS 14:52 Israeli Air Force fighter jets shoot down unmanned drone south of Hebron (Haaretz)

More Breaking News

Home Print Edition Opinion

Lithuanian hypocrisy

In recent years, the government of Lithuania has been making considerable efforts to improve the country's image in Israeli public opinion. The discussions in Jerusalem were part of this attempt, which is entirely fraudulent and deceptive.

By Dov Levin Feb.24, 2009 | 3:18 AM

0 Tweet 0 Recommend Send Be the first of your friends to recommend this.

Get HAARETZ on iPhone Get HAARETZ on Android Get HAARETZ on iPad

Last week I was caught in a debate with myself: whether or not to appear, despite the feeling of nausea, in a discussion with Lithuanian historians, writers and poets at the International Book Fair in Jerusalem. The idea made me so sick that in the end I decided to stay away and I also convinced my friend, former partisan and former chairman of Yad Vashem Yitzhak Arad, to excuse himself from the discussions.

In recent years, the government of Lithuania has been making considerable efforts to improve the country's image in Israeli public opinion. The discussions in Jerusalem were part of this attempt, which is entirely fraudulent and deceptive. Lithuania's policy is two-faced. One of the faces is smiling and demonstrating ostensible friendship with Israel. The other is doing all it can to deny the horrors of the Holocaust and harass partisans and Holocaust survivors in Lithuania and Israel.

With utter gall, the Lithuanian prosecutor tried to summon Arad for questioning in 2007, on the grounds that he had committed "war crimes" during World War II. I don't know what the prosecutor's father did during the war, but I do know that Arad and I, and many other good people, were partisans and we fought the Nazis and their Lithuanian collaborators. Similar "investigations" are still underway in Lithuania against a number of other partisans.

All this is going on in the context of the "rehabilitation" and the granting of wholesale clemency to Lithuanians who collaborated with the Nazis, a policy that began shortly after Lithuania declared its independence in the early 1990s.

At the end of World War II, when Lithuania was annexed to the Soviet Union, these same collaborators were sent to prison for war crimes. The policy of the post-Soviet Lithuanian government has been to treat the Nazis' crimes and the "crimes" committed by the Red Army that fought the Nazis and their Lithuanian collaborators as equivalent.

Text size **A+** **A-**

Comments (0)

Print Page

Send to friend

Share on Facebook

Share on Twitter

Share

THIS STORY IS BY
Dov Levin

RELATED TAGS

- [Holocaust](#)
- [Israel news](#)
- [Israel war crimes](#)

HAARETZ SELECT



Modi'in Anglo skeptical of anti-Haredi park policy in Israeli city
 'The policy is nothing but thinly veiled anti-Haredi bigotry,' says resident Elli Fischer, about the decision to bar non-residents from entering the city's public park.
 By Mordechai I. Twersky | Anglo File

At 90, master violinist wants to bestow his knowledge onto a new generation
 By Noam Ben Zeev | Week's End

The documentary that should make every decent Israeli ashamed
 By Gideon Levy | Twilight Zone

A writer's advice: Listen to your passions, sooner than later
 By Ayelelt Shani | Magazine

When Lithuanian president Algirdas Brazauskas came to Jerusalem in 1993, I, as a Holocaust survivor, had a bitter argument with him about the sweeping pardons he had granted to tens of thousands of Lithuanians who had murdered Jews, some of whom had even taken over the property of those who were murdered.

In response, Brazauskas delivered a flowery speech in which he said that he bowed his head before the 200,000 Jews of Lithuania who perished in the Holocaust and asked their forgiveness, "for the deeds of those Lithuanians who cruelly killed, shot, deported and robbed."

In hindsight, it appears these were empty words. The policy of pardons has only accelerated. Its real purpose is to cleanse Lithuanians of their responsibility for the murder of Lithuanian Jewry and thus downplay the Holocaust and its significance.

To my regret, because of their desire to maintain good diplomatic, trade and security relations with Lithuania, the governments of Israel have kept quiet about this policy. Instead of protesting and condemning it and perhaps even lowering the level of diplomatic relations, they fawn over the country.

This ingratiation reached its peak over a decade ago, when the Foreign Ministry agreed that Israeli representatives would participate in committees of historians that would discuss Lithuania during the war. The letter of appointment for the committees was based on a starting point of "equality" between the crimes committed by the Nazis and their Lithuanian collaborators and "the crimes committed by the Soviet Union" after it occupied Lithuania.

Now, the government of Lithuania is trying, by means of its embassy in Israel, to blur and conceal the disgrace with the help of collaborators of a new sort: obsequious intellectuals who came to Israel for discussions that bear no relation at all to intellectual integrity and cultural discourse.

The author is a former partisan, a member of the board of Yad Vashem and a professor emeritus at Hebrew University.



Feeding Israel's phobias

There are no nuances in Zvi Yehezkeili's series about Islam's supposed takeover of Europe, broadcast on Channel 10; it seems that nothing lifts the spirits of Israelis more than images of torched cars in Parisian suburbs.

By Benny Ziffer | Week's End

How children became a consumer product

By Alon Kian | Magazine

Following the dream of a Third Temple in Jerusalem

By Shany Littman | Magazine | 3

The tragedy of the Aleppo Codex

By Yuval Ebashan | Books

MORE FROM HAARETZ.COM



Jewish conspiracy theories and anti-Semitism
(Haaretz - Jewish World)



Ari Shavit's final countdown: Iran is here
(Haaretz)



One thing Ahmadinejad got right
(Haaretz - Opinion)



Romney's real competition
(Haaretz - Opinion)

FROM AROUND THE WEB

Tony Blair: Reaction To Anti-Islam Film Innocence Of Muslims Is...
(The Huffington Post)

Why You Shouldn't Trust Google
(FairSearch)

Iran: Israel's Existence 'insult To All Humanity'
(National Memo)

Behind the Scenes of Archimedes' Discovery
(Goodnet)

Israeli military moves major operations to south
(Mesh Nation)

[?]

COMMENTS

Name
Subject

Your comment here

By adding a comment i agree to this site's [Terms of use](#)

headlinealley

Instantly access the latest headlines from top news providers - right from your browser!

DOWNLOAD NOW!



ONLINE MASTER DEGREES

Management, Technology, Medicine

NEW PROGRAMMES:
 Master of Science in Project Management
 Master of Science in Corporate Finance



LEARN MORE NOW

Now the cards are on the table

By Raymond Tanter, Ivan Sascha Sheehan | 12:16 PM

When a prime minister plays kingmaker

By Don Fullerman | 12:16 PM | 2

The right not to worry

By Amira Hass | 06:38 AM

Viva Catalonia, Viva Israel

By Adar Primor | 06:38 AM



FACEBOOK

ACTIVITY	RECOMMENDATIONS
<p>Recent Activity</p> <p>You turned off the ability to use Facebook platform. In order to see your friends' recent activity, you need to turn it back on.</p> <p>Turn On Platform</p> <p>No recent activity to display.</p> <p>Put some Like buttons on your website to engage your users. Details can be found here.</p>	
<p>Facebook social plugin</p>	

NEWS: Diplomacy and Defense | National | World | Middle East | Features | Opinion | Israel weather

JEWISH WORLD: News | Rabbis' Round Table | The Jewish Thinker **CULTURE:** Books | Food and Wine | Arts & Leisure

HAARETZ.COM BLOGS: A Special Place in Hell | West of Eden | Diplomania | Routine Emergencies | East Side Story

The Axis | Stronger than Fiction | Modern Manna | The Fifth Question | Focus U.S.A.

HAARETZ.CO.IL: הארץ | חדשות | מזג אוויר | גלריה | חדשות חוץ | ביקורת סרטים | בחירות 2012 | ביקורת מסעדות | ספורט | ספרים

FAQ | Contact us | Terms and Conditions | Privacy Policy | Employment Opportunities | Advertise on Haaretz.com | People and Departments | Haaretz News Widget

Design by Roni Arie | Accelerated by cotendo

Haaretz.com, the online edition of Haaretz Newspaper in Israel, and analysis from Israel and the Middle East. Haaretz.com provides extensive and in-depth coverage of Israel, the Jewish World and the Middle East, including defense, diplomacy, the Arab-Israeli conflict, the peace process, Israeli politics, Jerusalem affairs, international relations, Iran, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, the Palestinian Authority, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, the Israeli business world and Jewish life in Israel and the Diaspora.

© Haaretz Daily Newspaper Ltd. All Rights Reserved