

OPINION: DOVID KATZ



Dovid Katz

defendinghistory.com

You cannot praise fascists and be pro-human rights

THE LEGACY of the Second World War has long inspired, and may it in perpetuity inspire, an uncomplicated core consensus between the mainstream parties in Western democracies. By way of unfathomable sacrifices and indomitable determination, the Allies together defeated the worst scourge the world ever knew, one that had enslaved most of Europe and murdered millions of European Jews, and so many others.

From Poland in the east to France in the west, Europe crumbled. Only Great Britain, later joined by the Americans and others — and after Hitler's 1941 attack on the USSR, by the mammoth allied Soviet war effort — finally brought an end to Nazi Germany. That is not to say that there is no room for debates and new research.

But alarm time is at hand when European Union partners make heroes out of the Nazis and their local collaborators, a particularly pernicious policy in the Baltics, where many of the actual Holocaust killers were local "nationalists" and now adulated. The real heroes were the few who risked all to save a neighbour.

Nowadays, the racist, anti-Semitic and homophobic hate exhibited by neo-Nazis is inseparable from their adulation of Hitlerism and its trappings. Meanwhile, their suave upmarket cronies play with rewriting history. The new challenge has hurled sandbags of confusion, a veritable "postmodernist mental mush", into the line of sight. It comes primarily from polished political leaders, compelling cultural attachés and silver-tongued academics from the new easterly EU and

NATO democracies. Sure, when Western countries set out on freedom and prosperity after war's end, these lands were trapped into Stalin's misrule. They have every right to ask the world to memorialise the victims of communism.

Where it gets out of hand is the insistence that Nazi and Soviet crimes be made "equal" by diktat. What nonsense to claim that those who liberated Auschwitz are equal to its mass murderers. Just such drivell was in effect proclaimed by the Prague Declaration in 2008. Enormous credit is due to the UK's MP John Mann. He was among the first to call it what it is: "a sinister document".

Then came a series of missteps by UK Conservatives, who were misled by smooth operators out of the east. Like politicians of any stripe, they have a tough time uttering the word "mistake". It's easier to fool someone than convince them they've been fooled.

In 2009, David Cameron made his alliance-dalliance with the East European rightists in the European Parliament, abandoning the Tories' centre-right partners of France and Germany. Then there was Poland's Michal Kaminsky, finally eased out of his party leadership in 2011. There is Latvia's Roberts Zile and his support for the annual Waffen SS parades in his capital's city centre.

In Lithuania, where I have enjoyed living among the welcoming everyday people of the capital, Vilnius, for years, state agencies have been "investigating" Holocaust survivors who joined the anti-Nazi resistance, while honouring the "Lithuanian Activist Front" butchers, who

unleashed the Holocaust in dozens of locations before the Germans even came.

As reported in this newspaper, one such agency was recently welcomed by London's Imperial War Museum. This year, the Lithuanian government repatriated from Connecticut the remains of the 1941 Nazi puppet prime minister Juozas Brazaitis, who signed the documents ordering the Jews of Kaunas (Kovno) into the ghetto. It is all whip-creamed over with an endless roll-out of jovial conferences on Jewish history and the Holocaust itself. Spineless Western academics and dignitaries line up to receive accolades, medals, trinkets and junkets. Recently, folly has risen anew, incredibly in Churchill's party. He is unquestionably turning in his grave.

Martin Bright has boldly brought up in the *Spectator* and the *Jewish Chronicle* the valiant one-woman campaign waged by Londoner Monica Lowenberg against Latvia's honouring the Waffen SS. Conservative MEP Daniel Hannan (for South East England) has just replied at length, insisting that Latvian politicians who adore the Waffen SS are "absolutely committed to human rights and pluralism."

No, sir. You cannot adulate Hitler's forces and be committed to human rights and pluralism. The far right that poses as centre-right for the benefit of naive westerners grows ever-craftier. It is time to oppose state glorification of Nazi collaborators. For the party in power here, it will be a particularly easy thing to do. And the right thing.

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