

World

Tories must reject 'Double Genocide' proponents

Alliance with those who would downgrade the Holocaust is a grave mistake



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From here in Lithuania, it is painful and baffling to see Jews in the freedom of the UK defending both a Polish politician who suggests “the Jews” should apologise for “participation in communism” in return for any apology for Polish participation in the Holocaust in specific locations like Jedwabne, and a Latvian party that showers honour on Waffen SS officers.

But these British Jews — and the Conservatives whom they believe they are helping — are neither evil nor stupid. They have, rather, succumbed to the art of sophisticated obfuscation (a kind of Soviet-in-form, nationalist-in-content phenomenon).

Having been based in Eastern Europe for more than a decade, I have been treated exceptionally well, and have found the people of Vilnius, where I work, to be delightful — open, generous and tolerant. This is not about the people of Eastern Europe. It is about the ultra-nationalist elites — politicians, academics, media types — who have perfected their disturbing message.

The sanitised version goes like this: “We love Israel and Israelis. We love American, British and other foreign Jews who come here to seek out their ancestral roots, and we hope they will continue to support our commemoration and study projects of the grand heritage of Jewish culture in our country.

“The problem is the local, remaining Jews. In their hearts, they are all communists. And, by the way, what they and their fellow communists did to us is exactly the same as what happened to

them in their ‘Holocaust’, so now we teach Europe the truth about the two equal genocides while having the best relations with Western and Jewish leaders abroad.”

The tiny and shrinking numbers of local Jewish people here remember very well (personally or via parents’ and grandparents’ accounts) that it was the Nazis and (particularly here in the Baltics) local “nationalist patriots” who murdered nearly the entire Jewish population.

In the vast majority of cases, the tiny remnant that survived made it thanks to the Russians, either because they fled eastward and played their part in the anti-Nazi war effort of the Soviet army, or joined the Soviet anti-Nazi partisans, or because they were liberated by the Russians at the war’s end.

But the revisionist politicians (masquerading as centrists but actually of the far right) have made progress in their efforts to persuade the European Union into adopting a revised model of history that deletes the Holocaust as a category (without denying a single death), and goes for the model of “Double Genocide” (Nazi and Soviet “equality”).

Currently, their major document is the “Prague Declaration” which human-rights champion and British MP John Mann correctly described recently in the JC as “sinister”. Here in Lithuania, incidentally, parliament is discussing a law that would impose up to two years’ imprisonment on anyone who disagrees with the new double-genocide model of history.

All this insults anyone who cherishes the Allies’ noble war effort against Hitler, or the upholding of human rights in today’s Europe. The Conservative party should do the decent thing: admit that they have made a mistake and break with their new, far-right Euro-allies.

Dovid Katz is professor of Judaic Studies at Vilnius University and research director of the Vilnius Yiddish Institute; www.holocaustinthebaltics.com; www.dovidkatz.net

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