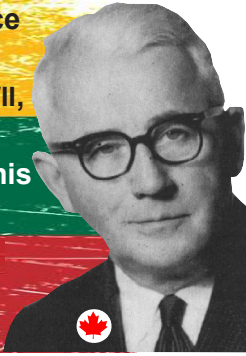


Lithuanian Canadian Community (LCC) and Lithuanian World Community (LWC)

After serving as finance minister for two Nazi puppet regimes in WWII, prominent Lithuanian banker Jonas Matulionis was welcomed with open arms by Canada. He then founded and led the LCC and LWC.



When the Lithuanian Canadian Community (LCC) was formed in Toronto, its founding president was Jonas Matulionis (1952-55).¹ As a top, Lithuanian banker before and during WWII, he served as Finance Minister in the pro-Nazi “Provisional Government of Lithuania” (PGL). It was created by the Lithuanian Activist Force, an antisemitic, anti-communist militia funded, armed and trained by Nazi military intelligence, the Abwehr. When the PGL was replaced by another puppet regime, over which the Nazis had even more control, Matulionis remained and was titled its “General Advisor for Finance.”²

During the Cold War, the LCC’s Matulionis also played a key role on the global stage. Active in the Supreme Committee for the Liberation of Lithuania (VLIK), he was its chairman from Nov. 27, 1955 until June 1, 1957.³ VLIK was a self-appointed, underground government that emerged in Lithuania’s second largest city, Kaunas, on Nov. 25, 1943.⁴ Earlier that year, after Germany’s defeat at Stalingrad, the Soviets began forcing the Nazis out of eastern Europe. VLIK was created when it was clear that the Red Army would liberate Lithuania from Nazi rule. Within months, most VLIK leaders fled to safety in Nazi Germany. To avoid the Soviets, VLIK moved its base of operations to Nazi Germany in 1944. VLIK moved again in 1955, this time to New York. By then the US had become the new centre of the global war against communism.

Throughout the Cold War, VLIK worked with its close friends and allies in the international network of Nazi collaborators, the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc of Nations.⁵

VLIK was also closely linked to the Assembly of Captive European Nations, which received CIA funds through its front, the National Committee for a Free Europe.⁶ After Lithuania’s 1991 independence, VLIK disbanded. It had outlived its Cold-War value as a tool of antiSoviet propaganda.

VLIK created a front called the Lithuanian World Community (LWC). Matulionis was its founding chairman (1958-61)⁷

and thereafter remained on its board. The LWC unites the world’s anticommunist Lithuanian émigré groups. For 40 years, its global congresses alternated between the US and Canada. Since the 1990s, these have been held in Lithuania’s capital, Vilnius.

Canada has one of the largest concentrations of Lithuanian émigrés. When the Red Army was about to free Lithuania from fascism in mid-1944, 70,000 Lithuanians fled to Germany with the retreating Nazis.⁸ In the Cold War’s first few years, 20,000 of them were given safe haven in Canada.⁹

Welcoming the Nazis as liberators

Many Lithuanians welcomed the Nazis as liberators when they invaded (June 22, 1941) during Operation Barbarossa. The Lithuanian Activist Front (LAF) timed its “June Uprising” to support this invasion by murdering Jews and communists before the Nazi occupation. LAF’s Berlin-based commander, Col. Kazys Škirpa, formed LAF in July 1940. His memoirs show that LAF was guided, supplied and trained by the German military intelligence agency, Abwehr.¹⁰

LAF’s ideological screed, issued from Berlin on May 10, 1941, asserted that “communism is directly rooted in Judaism.”¹¹ Rife with memes about a “Judeo-Bolshevik conspiracy” by “Jewish bankers and communists,”¹² LAF’s vile ethnonationalist diatribes, matched those of the Nazis and their “captive-nations” allies across eastern Europe. Bronys Raila, chair of LAF’s Propaganda Commission, masterminded its vitriolic support for ethnic cleansing. (Later, as an antiCommunist activist in the US, Raila was regularly heard on the CIA’s Radio Liberty and Radio Free Europe,¹³ 1975-89.)

LAF also created a Provisional Government of Lithuania (PGL) and, with Škirpa as prime minister, declared “freedom” on June 23, 1941. While LAF continued the killing sprees, its PGL front “allied itself with the Nazis and passed numerous laws depriving Jews of their rights, inciting violence and horrific murders.”¹⁴

While the PGL shared the Nazi hatred of “Judeo-Bolshevism,” its regime lasted only six weeks. While Germany expected utter subservience, the PGL wanted its ethnically-pure, anticommunist state to be *independent*. But, despite its brief life, said historian Algimantas Kasparavicius, the PGL’s “devilish machinery bore its fruit.”¹⁵

By war’s end, very few of Lithuania’s 208,000 Jews remained.¹⁶ As US-born, Lithuanian-based scholar Dovid Katz notes:

Around 96% of Lithuanian Jewry was

murdered during the Holocaust, the largest proportion in wartime Europe, and with massive local collaboration by “heroes” still celebrated by street names and an array of events.¹⁷

There are now only 3,000 Jews left in this country of three million.¹⁸ Besides killing some 200,000 Lithuanian Jews, the Nazis and their local partners also murdered vast numbers of other Soviets. The Nuremberg trial of Nazi war criminals stated that the “mass killings of Soviet citizens” in the Lithuanian SSR amounted to 286,000.¹⁹

Matulionis and the Holocaust

Among the fascist collaborators who fled to Nazi Germany in 1944 and later found refuge in Canada was Jonas Matulionis, a top Lithuanian banker. In the 1920s and again in 1940, he helped lead Lithuania’s Christian Democratic Party.²⁰ It was rabidly antisemitic.²¹ Matulionis was a top executive with Lietvas Bankas, Lithuania’s member of Switzerland’s Bank for International Settlements, which received gold looted by the Nazis.²² Until his death in 1980, Matulionis continued his antiSoviet activism from Toronto, where he led far-right national and international Lithuanian groups that still venerate and revere Nazi collaborators and Holocaust perpetrators as WWII heroes.

On June 25, 1941, the PGL resolved to “expand partisan activities in the countryside where” “gangs of Bolsheviks, Communists and Jews still remain.” On the next day, the PGL asked Nazi Gen. Robert von Pohl “to step-up ... the cleansing operation” and “allow our partisan units to operate more widely.” On June 27, the PGL recorded its “great joy” that the Nazis let them create their first police battalion.²³ Over the next five months it killed “26,000 Lithuanian and foreign (German, Austrian and Czech) Jews” held in Kaunas.²⁴ Other Lithuanian units murdered 110,000 Jews and 2,000 communists.²⁵ The Nazis reorganized Lithuania’s battalions into auxiliary police units that killed another 21,000 Lithuanian Jews before the Soviets regained control in 1944. These units also killed 50,000 Jews in neighbouring Belarus, and helped execute the Holocaust in Ukraine, Russia and Poland.

On June 30, PGL decided to fund its battalion under Kaunas military commander, Col. Jurgis Bobelis and to “approve the establishment of a Jewish concentration camp.” This was overseen by Bobelis and PGL deputy minister, Juozas Švilpa. The PGL also declared: “Property nationalized from Jews and Russians remains the indisputable property of the Lithuanian state.”

Further citing PGL cabinet minutes, Kasparavicius noted that:

Matulionis suggested opening the declaration not with a vague and notional phrase about the liberating mission of the Wehrmacht in Lithuania, but instead to place at the beginning a specific “statement underlining the role of the German military as Lithuania is freeing herself from the Bolshevik yoke.”²⁶

In early July, Matulionis met leaders of Kaunas’ Jewish community, such as Jacob Goldberg. He asked Matulionis to “try to prevail on his friends in the Lithuanian government to intervene to stop the killings.” Matulionis replied: “The wrath of the people is so great that there is no way to stop these acts. When you leave the city for good and confine yourselves in the Ghetto, things will quiet down.”²⁷ This was reported in the diary of Avraham Tory, who was secretary

of the Kaunas [Kovno] Ghetto’s Jewish council. Matulionis, he said, told them that: according to the most extreme view all the Jews in Lithuania must be exterminated; a more moderate view demands setting up a concentration camp where Jews will atone with blood and sweat for their crimes against the Lithuanian people. As for the third view, I am a practicing Roman Catholic; I ... believe that no person may take the life of another person.... Only God may do this.... [D]uring the period of Soviet rule I and my friends realized that we did not have a common path with the Jews and never will. In our view, the Lithuanians and the Jews must be separated from each other and the sooner the better. For this purpose, the Ghetto is essential. There you will ... no longer [be] able to harm us. This is a Christian’s position.²⁸

After this meeting, said Tory, “those

present decided that the state of affairs in the city gave us no option but to leave the city and move into the Ghetto.”²⁹ Matulionis’ memoirs, *Unquiet Days* (Toronto, 1975), are silent on this meeting. In fact, said political scientist Anatol Lieven, Matulionis “skates as quickly as possible over what was happening to the Jews.” One reason for this “silence of the exile community,” he said, was that “some of its original leaders, as well as a good many ordinary members, had ... been directly involved in the massacres.”³⁰

On July 2, as terror escalated, Matulionis attended a PGL meeting to grant themselves salaries (retroactive to the Nazi invasion) and to fund LAF. In a July-11 report, he said Poles in Vilnius were “supporting the Russian Bolsheviks, as the Jews do.”³¹

On Aug. 1, the PGL passed “Regulations on the Status of the Jews” which said

Lithuanian independence gave nationalists ‘freedom’ to glorify their Nazi heritage

At a nationalist rally of 500+ there were Nazi death heads, swastikas and SS symbols. The foreign minister and the capital’s mayor spoke from a stage festooned with the racist slogan: “Lithuania for Lithuanians.”



Julius Norwilla, “Eyewitness Report,” *Defending History*, March 12, 2020

March 11, 2020, Vilnius

One of Lithuania’s many postSoviet politicians with ties to Nazi collaborators and the Holocaust was Kazys Bobelis. A veteran of the proNazi Lithuanian Activist Force, he devoted his life to anticommunist causes. In 1979, he became chair of the Supreme Committee for the Liberation of Lithuania (VLIK) (see opposite page) and was highly praised by Yaroslav Stetsko, president of the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc of Nations.⁸ As chair until its final year, Bobelis was VLIK’s longest-standing leader.

His father, Col. Jurgis Bobelis, was the Nazi puppet regime’s army commander in Kaunas and oversaw the creation of its concentration camp. Returning from the US to Lithuania in 1992, Kazys, aided by the neofascist ‘Young Lithuania’ group was elected to parliament⁹ and was re-elected til 2006. As an MP, he repeatedly denied his father’s key role as a Nazi collaborator.¹⁰

During WWII, Lithuanian nationalists worked with their Nazi allies to kill almost every Jew in the country and to exterminate as many communists as they could. After the USSR’s NATO-led destruction in 1991, Lithuanian nationalists regained power. Their main goals were to continue fighting communism and to protect themselves by whitewashing history. To do this they portray their Nazi-linked forebears as heroic, antiSoviet “freedom fighters.



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Since gaining “freedom,” Lithuania’s antiSoviet/proNATO governments:

- Banned the communist party (1991).¹
- Exonerated thousands of war criminals (living and dead) who were convicted by the Soviets, including confessed mass murderers, and allowed them or their heirs to receive state subsidies and compensation (1991).²
- Endorsed, funded or otherwise aided annual proNazi rallies, often with government speakers. These ethnonationalist events use fascist symbols and chants to glorify Lithuanian “freedom fighters” who abetted the Holocaust.
- Did not prosecute any Nazis but *did* seek prosecution of *Jewish* partisans who had supported the Soviets by fighting German forces.
- Glorified Nazi collaborators by renaming parks, streets and a lecture hall after them.
- Created public monuments, plaques, inscriptions

- and museum exhibits to whitewash the fascist roots of Lithuanian ethnonationalism.³
- Created the “Red-Brown Commission” in 1998 to falsely equate Nazism with communism. This state commission has urged the EU parliament to rewrite textbooks and to sideline International Holocaust Remembrance Day (January 27, i.e., when the Soviet Red Army liberated Auschwitz in 1945) by instead commemorating August 23, i.e., the Canadian-created ‘Black Ribbon Day.’⁴
- Outlawed all communist symbols (2008).⁵
- Criminalized opposition to revisionist “double-genocide” Nazi=Soviet narrative (2010).⁶
- Legalized public display of swastikas (2010).
- Drafting law: “the Baltic nation nor its leaders participated in the Holocaust.”⁷ (2020)



After decades of refusing to investigate Nazi war criminals in Canada, the Deschênes Commission was created in 1985. Groups riddled with Nazi collaborators quickly launched a legal action to forbid use of any evidence from the USSR. **They succeeded.** It was a victory for ethnonationalist Lithuanian, Ukrainian, Latvian and Estonian groups. They prevented potential prosecution of their members, whitewashed the complicity of their heroic freedom fighters



Jews for whole centuries have exploited the Lithuanian people economically, ruined it morally and most recently covering themselves in the mantle of Bolshevism have engaged broadly in war against Lithuanian independence and the Lithuanian nation.

This new law, it said, would “stop...harmful activities of the Jews and ... protect the Lithuanian[s] ... from their harmful influence.”³²

On August 5, the PGL disbanded and the Nazis got new puppets. Although replacing “ministers” and “ministries” with “general advisors” and “boards,” some faces remained identical. Matulionis, the PGL finance minister became the Nazi’s “general advisor for Finance.”³³ He later said he was “in favor of active cooperation with the Germans, because, by taking this path, I thought it the best way to serve my country.”³⁴

The new regime did oppose a few Nazi policies, but it was still active in the Holocaust. “The most obvious fact of the collaboration of the Lithuanian local government with the Nazi invaders,” said historian Arunas Bubnys, “was its participation in the genocide of Lithuania’s Jews.”³⁵

The LAF and PGL laid the ground for genocide. Matulionis’ “Christian” solution, the ghetto, became a concentration camp. Most of its inmates were sent to death camps like Auschwitz and killed before the Red Army liberated it. When the Soviets liberated Lithuania in 1944, almost all 29,000 Jews in Kovno’s ghetto were dead. On one day, Oct. 29, 1941, there was what Nazi SS-Standartenfuehrer Karl Jäger called the “cleansing” of 9200 “superfluous Jews from the ghetto,” including “2920 Jewesses” and “4273 Jewish children.”³⁶ The SS man in charge, Helmut Rauca, who ordered the execution of 2379 Jews in August and September, escaped the Soviets by fleeing to safety in Nazi Germany. In 1950, he was given safe haven by the Canadian government.

Canada’s resolute refusal to investigate Nazi war criminals

After three decades in Ontario, Rauca became the first Nazi war criminal to be extradited from Canada. As David Matas, legal counsel for B’nai Brith said in 1986, the Government of Canada has been legally inactive on the issue of Nazi war criminals in Canada ever since the war. ... The RCMP had a policy of not investigating any allegations. The only exception to this policy of inactivity was the arrest in 1982 and the extradition to West Germany in 1983 of Albert Helmut Rauca.³⁷

But Rauca never made it to trial. He died of cancer on October 29, 1983, 42 years to the day after the Kovno massacre.

In 1985, after decades of pressure led by Jewish groups, Brian Mulroney’s Tories created the Deschênes Commission on Nazi War Criminals in Canada. Groups whose founders and leaders included Nazi collaborators, started a legal action to thwart its powers. This effort, led by the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, included the Baltic Federation of Canada, Lithuanian Canadian Community (LCC), Latvian National Federation and the Estonian Central Council.

Their “first priority,” said Matas, was to reject “out of hand ... as fundamentally tainted,” all the evidence amassed by the USSR about Nazi war crimes.³⁸ This included testimony by Soviet survivors who witnessed the atrocities, as well as thousands of documents recovered by the Soviets when they liberated Eastern Europe. All “evidence obtained from Soviet sources,” these émigrés argued, “could not be trusted” because “it would be falsified as part of a disinformation campaign” to “foment discord” among anticommunist émigrés, and to “denigrate” them. Not mentioning that 27 million Soviets had died because of the Nazi invasion, these groups argued that “Moscow was more interested in smearing them, creating dissent, and gaining a propaganda victory than in seeing that justice was served.”³⁹

These émigré groups went on the offensive. Launching a media war to smear Soviet evidence and malign the USSR, they portrayed themselves as the real victims. Their 1985 *Globe-and-Mail* ad, claimed that “Moscow” had a “vested interest in discrediting refugees ... forced to flee from Eastern Europe” and that “the memory and the history of our homelands are being defiled by Soviet allegations of [Nazi] war crimes.”⁴⁰

Papers also spread alarm by quoting the LCC’s Vida Zalnieriunas. She said the US had allowed Soviet evidence “to the detriment of American citizens” and that “Soviet witnesses whose credibility is doubtful ... and falsified evidence could seriously im-

pair fair legal proceedings” in Canada.⁴¹ She defended Lithuanian collaborators by arguing that many “joined the Nazi auxiliary-police battalion[s] ... to establish an independent Lithuanian army that could resist further Soviet incursions.” Omitting mention that these Lithuanians killed tens of thousands of Jews and communists, this LCC leader warned that in the “headlong rush ... to ease our collective Western conscience, we could unwittingly create a new set of victims.”⁴²

Joining the fray to protect Lithuanian Canadians from alleged victimization by the Soviets was Trent professor Ron Vastokas. He wrote of “a hysterical Naziphobia” aimed at Baltic and Ukrainian émigrés. Having a special unit seeking Nazi criminals in Canada, he said, “would only aggravate the emotions and conflicts already engendered.”⁴³ The LCC’s Zalnieriunas even doubted “the morality of accepting [Soviet] evidence” because “handing an Eastern European over to the Soviets would be tantamount to entrusting the care of a Jew to the Nazis.”⁴⁴ Canada’s largest, Jewish groups disagreed. They urged the commission to “look at all the evidence, wherever it might be found.”⁴⁵

In the end, the Deschênes Commission sided with the Nazi-linked émigré groups and refused to even look at any evidence from the USSR, where the Nazi’s crimes were committed. Saying this was a victory, Jaroslav Petryshyn, a Ukrainian-Canadian history teacher who wrote crime-fiction, said the “commission’s Final Report (*without Soviet input*) was received favourably by *all* ethnic groups when it was tabled in March 1987.”⁴⁶ (Emphasis added.)

The LCC rallied behind Canada’s support for US-led wars

During the Cold War, the Lithuanian Canadians promoted government support for US-led wars against communism. For example, in 1950, “the Lithuanian community of Canada” issued a hyperbolic “declaration” promoting the Korean war. It stated that:

The unprovoked, deceitful and pre-arranged aggression ... started by the Soviet Union under the disguise of North Korea, clearly shows to ... mankind that Soviet Russian Imperialism is resolved to take possession, step by step, of the whole globe and to introduce everywhere the Soviet tyranny and slavery.⁴⁷

In the weeks before issuing this statement, many Canadian papers had run stories about napalm; a hot, new weapon in the antiRed arsenal. Front page stories in two BC papers on July 10 were headlined: “Korean Flashes: Jelly-Like Explosive Burns Reds” and “Flaming Spray Hits Reds.”⁴⁸

As US General Curtis LeMay said:

“we... burned down every town in North Korea ...and some in South Korea too.... we killed off—what—twenty percent of the population of Korea.”⁴⁹ About three million died during this US-led, UN war.⁵⁰ Napalm was the West’s weapon of choice. Over 32,000 tons of it were used to ignite Korean cities during the 37-month war (1950-53). This was twice the napalm used by the US in its WWII firebombing of Japan.⁵¹

Despite daily news of this brutal war, Canada’s Lithuanian community said it was “with great satisfaction that we are hopeful of the resistance of the United Nations against the aggression in Korea” Urging total loyalty they wrote: “We are calling on all our countrymen and all Canadian inhabitants to support with all their might and means the Canadian government.”⁵² They also urged St. Laurent’s Liberal government to use the war as a way to crack down domestically and to “declare all progressive-Communist organizations in Canada as illegal and to suspend their activities.”⁵³

These Lithuanian Canadians were especially upset by the Canadian Peace Congress. It was seen as a traitorous enemy. Its crimes included leading a petition drive that gathered 300,000 signatures opposing NATO’s first-strike, nuclear-weapons policy. “We protest most vigorously,” said the Lithuanian community of Canada, against the communistic lie of the Fifth Column, an agency of Soviet Imperialism, to fool faithful people through press, meetings and collecting signatures for the so-called ‘Stockholm Peace Resolution.’⁵⁴

At that time, Foreign Minister Lester Pearson was also publicly accusing the Peace Congress of treason and sedition.

Years later, in 1965, the LCC defended then-Prime Minister Pearson when “peaceniks” criticised Canada’s support for yet another US war against communism. With Canadian assistance, this war in southeast Asia eventually killed 2.5 to 3.5 million. To aid Canada’s pro-war support, LCC-Alberta joined six other East-European émigré groups to “urge” Pearson’s “continued opposition” to what they called “communist aggression in Viet Nam.”⁵⁵ Three news stories covered these anticommunist groups’ “[s]upport for the Canadian government in favoring the United States Viet Nam policy.”⁵⁶ Behind this show of loyalty for Canada’s aid to this US war, was the profascist Anti-Bolshevik Bloc of Nations. Its secretary, Algimantas Dudaravicius, was the only person quoted in these articles. Not only was he “very active in the Lithuanian community of Edmonton,”⁵⁷ he was vice president of the Baltic Federation of Canada (Alberta).⁵⁸

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