The Prague Declaration is Europe’s New Anti-Semitic Poison

by Dovid Katz, Vilna and Clemens Heni, Berlin

Your open opponent is your friend. He or she states a clear position that you can accept or dissent from. That is the spirit of robust debate in a democratic society. The real enemy is the camouflaged trick-speak of Orwellian parable. In a one-to-one fair fight, it can be overcome by a well-deliberated counter-position.

Much more difficult to come to grips with what is happening in Europe now at the odious nexus of Holocaust revisionism and a special kind of elitist antisemitism. One of its versions: “We love Israeli, American and British Jews,” they said, “but they know the local Jews because they continue to think that we helped Hitler while the Russians saved them or their parents or grandparents. Time to mix it all up in a trendy new model of ethnic solidarity that the westerners will buy into.”

A condensed version of a complex narrative: Instead of coming to terms honestly with their Holocaust histories (highest percentages of Jews killed — mid 90s in all of Europe), which various individual Baltic scholars boldly tried to do, these states’ elites took the basest antisemitic version (The Jews were all communists and got what they deserved) and transformed it into sophisticated Eurospeak.

The Equal Evaluation of Totalitarian Regimes, or, as it is best known, Double Genocide. First, the word genocide is legally redefined to refer to any kind of evil (particularly; Soviet deportations and deprivation of freedoms). Second, the imaginary “Jewish Bolshevists” image cherished by antisemites is revived and polished up. Then, the “two genocides” are legally made to be “equal” — and shockingly, here in Lithuania — prosecutors started to defend and investigate the war crimes of Holocaust survivors in their late 80s who are alive because they escaped the ghetto to join the anti-Nazi resistance. They are heroes of the free world. One, Fania Yocheles Bruntsovsky, 87, is librarian of the Vilnus Yiddish Institute. Another, Dr. Rachel Margolis, 88, cannot return to Lithuania for fear of prosecutors’ harassment. (She is detected by the state-run “Genocide Industry” for having rediscovered and published a Christian Pole’s eyewitness diary of tens of thousands of murders.)

The most dangerous success the history-twisters have had to date is the so-called “Prague Declaration” issued at a conference there in June 2008. It proclaims “Communism and Nazism as a common legacy” and demands that Communism be assessed “in the same way Nazi crimes were assessed by the Nuremberg Tribunal.” Just ask any Holocaust Survivor on the planet if the perpetrators of Genocide are “the same” as those who offered refuge to the small number who could flee and indeed, those who liber of the few survivors at war’s end.

But the distortion doesn’t stop at proclaiming one true Revisionist history for all Europe. The Prague Declaration calls for “the overhaul of European history textbooks so that children could learn and be warned about Communism and its crimes in the same way as they have been taught to assess the Nazi crimes.” There is demand for a Europe-wide mix-and-match commemoration day for Nazi and Soviet crimes that would in practice supplant Holocaust Memorial Day. The intrepid human rights champion John Mann MP of the UK parliament has very rightly condemned the Declaration a “sinister document.”

One of the founding signatories of the Prague Declaration, Jana Hybážková, is announced as a speaker at a Berlin conference, on Iran, this weekend, entitled “Time to act.” Why are good willed people letting the neo-Nazi movement, while supporting other form of antisemitism. It is not just a mistake of Mrs. Hybážková, which can easily be corrected. She, like the other signatories can simply say that they made a mistake and disown the Prague Declaration, and that’s the end of the matter.

But there is an inherent problem in professing support for Israel while obfuscating the Holocaust by comparing that unprecedented genocide with the crimes of the Soviet Union (which certainly merit separate and serious ongoing scrutiny). In the actual current climate in Eastern Europe, where antisemitism is inextricably linked with Holocaust obfuscation, and where Holocaust survivors are pursued and defamed, the red-equals-brown movement is today’s elitist antisemitism par excellence. Nobody knows that better than the small, embattled and often vanishing Jewish communities of Eastern Europe who bear the brunt of the local antisemitic campaigns that are the unspoken accompaniment of the old anti-Zionist poison. And no one can do it better than the Prague Declaration.

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of responsibility than Demjanjuk allegedly had. Demjanjuk is accused as having served as a “Wachmann” or guard, the lowest rank of the so-called “Hitflüssige” or “Hwii” volunteers who were subordinate to German SS men.

For example, Karl Streibel, commandant of the SS Trawniki training camp, where Demjanjuk is alleged to have trained, was tried in Hamburg but acquitted in 1976 after the judges ruled it had not been proved that he knew what the guards being trained would be used for.

Today’s judges grew up in the 1950s and 60s and recently have approached war crimes cases differently from their predecessors. In August, for example, the same court that would hear Demjanjuk’s case convicted Josef Scheuringer, a former German officer, for murder of the massacre of 10 civilians in Italy in 1944, even though no witnesses saw him give the order.

The AP in a telephone interview, adding that his father suffers from a bone marrow disease and could only have months to live.

“If they wanted to try him, they should have done it 30 years ago,” the younger Denjanjuk said. Schrimm said he was not until 2008, when his department found documents that says he worked at Sobibor.

He claims to be a victim of mistaken identity—a Red Army defector from Ukraine captured during the battle of Kerch in the Crimea in May, 1942, who himself was held prisoner until joining the so-called Vlasov Army of anti-communist Soviet POWs and others, formed to fight with the Germans against the encroaching Soviets in the final months of the war.

Demjanjuk, being tried in Munich because he lived in the area briefly after the war, emigrated to the United States in 1952 and gained citizenship in 1958.

He was extradited to Israel in 1986 after the U.S. Justice Department’s Office of Special Investigations, or OSI, said it had found no basis for the charges.

Next week, OSI is expected to announce its decision on whether to seek Demjanjuk’s extradition again. That will likely be followed by a hearing in a German court before a final decision can be made.