

# **EUROPEAN EXTREMIST MOVEMENTS: Who's Who and What's What**



*Photo: Greece's extreme right Golden Dawn party*

**A SIMON WIESENTHAL CENTER REPORT**

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# INTRODUCTION

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In Europe—western civilization’s heartland—hate movements are once again on the march.

From the UK and France, to Norway and Sweden, to Germany and Austria, to Spain and Greece, to Hungary and Poland and Ukraine and Russia, the resurgence of extremist movements is a common theme with variations.

History teaches us again and again that societies, which are oblivious to the past, are destined for disaster. A generation after Auschwitz, Hitler’s aura still looms. New generations of Europeans are targeted by the siren song of extremist movements on both the right and the left that distort and deny history in the name of destructive visions of the future rooted in hatred.

According to the most recent ADL polls, Jew hatred in the U.S.—with 15 percent of Americans “unquestionably anti-Semitic”—is still too high, though down two thirds from what it was during the Depression and World War II. Yet America is in good shape compared with Europe where a reasonable estimate of hard-core anti-Semites would be 30 percent.<sup>1</sup>

In today’s “post-modern” Europe, the continent’s oldest disease—Jew hatred—is metastasizing. Those who claim that the elimination of Israel would “solve the problem” are not only hateful but are wrong: just ask the anti-Semites who tell pollsters they would still be anti-Semites even if the Jewish state ceased to exist.

The rising tide of hate crimes across Europe during the last decade—four times as likely to target Jews as Muslims—demonstrates the inextricable connection of prejudicial beliefs and anti-Semitic behavior. Equally disturbing are the convergence of extreme right and left around an anti-Semitic political agenda, and the internationalizing of hate movements in transnational alliances.

The closer one moves to fascism’s and Nazism’s historic heartland, the less evidence there is of the extreme right’s supposed abandonment of anti-Jewish, anti-Israel themes. In many central and Eastern Europe countries, far-right-wing parties and movements have generally remained true to their anti-Jewish animus and aversion toward Israel.

While the European right’s ongoing anti-Semitism comes as no surprise, the descent into Jew-baiting as well as Israel-baiting by many on the European left has been particularly shocking because of its break with history. While the Soviet Union spent decades vilifying Israel to further its cynical alliance with Arab nationalist regimes and Palestinian militants, it never quite embraced the goal of annihilating Israel that now has become a leftist commonplace.

Today’s temptation is to focus tunnel-vision fashion on solving economic problems to regain lost momentum. But history teaches us that societies rushing headlong into the future oblivious to the past are destined for disaster. A generation after Auschwitz, Hitler’s aura still looms large, even in Europe. The western world either confronts evil now or we will watch our grandchildren march to new totalitarian hymns.

### UNITED KINGDOM:

In the UK, anti-Semitic sentiment is on the rise from previously low levels.<sup>2</sup>

The British National Party (BNP) split off from the National Front in 1982 under the leadership of John Tyndall who declared “Mein Kampf is my bible.” Since 1999, it’s been led by Nick Griffin who shifted the party’s stance from forced to “voluntary” deportation of “nonindigenous” Britons, and toned down at least in public its rhetoric hostile to Jews and the Jewish state as well as to Sikhs and Hindus. Officially, the BNP lessened its incitement of violence, but the Guardian newspaper exposed hardline fascists who were planning a campaign of “violence and intimidation” and swapping information on bomb-making and details of possible targets under the slogan: “Remember places, traitors’ faces, they’ll all pay for their crimes.”<sup>3</sup>

The central focus of the BNP remains opposition to immigration and “the Crescent Horde—the endless wave of Islamics who are flocking to our shores to bring our island nations into the embrace of their barbaric desert religion.” The BNP won 6 percent of the vote in the 2009 European parliamentary elections, in which Griffin won a seat, but fell to under 2 percent of the vote in the 2010 general elections. Internationally, the BP has sent representatives to the French Front National “First of May Joan of Arc Parade,” and cultivated ties with Germany’s National Democratic Party (NDP), Hungary’s Jobbik Party, Italy’s Forza Nuova Party, and Sweden’s National Democrats.<sup>4</sup>

The fastest growing far-right movement in the UK is the English Defence League (EDL) whose anti-Islamic street demonstrations have attracted football hooligans. It has attempted to branch out on the Continent through an umbrella European Defence League.<sup>5</sup>

The British Communist Party and Trotskyist Social Workers’ Party have institutionalized an alliance with the Muslim Association of Britain (MAB)—a front for the Egyptian Brotherhood—around an extreme anti-Israel, anti-American platform.<sup>6</sup>

In the 2012 local elections, “Red Ken” Livingston representing the extreme left of the British Labour Party, who in 2005 had invited to London Egyptian “terror sheikh” Yussuf Youssef al-Qaradawi, failed to win back the mayoralty during a campaign that continued his long history of slurs against Jews as rich, corrupt, and somehow unEnglish.<sup>7</sup>

“Bishop” Richard Williamson, the self-styled leader of British “traditional” Catholics, continues to hold Jews collectively responsible for the crucifixion of Jesus while supporting Holocaust Denial.<sup>8</sup>

Fronts for Muslim extremism such as the Palestinian Relief and Development Fund (Interpal) and Muslim Aid continue to operate with the blessings of the British Charity Commission while silencing critics with libel suits.<sup>9</sup>

Among the academic fellow travelers of Muslim extremism is Tariq Ramadan, Professor of Contemporary Islamic Studies in the Faculty of Oriental Studies at Oxford University. Ramadan runs away from the past rather than acknowledging virulent Jew-hatred by telling his readers that Toulouse mass murderer Mohamed Merah was “a pathetic young man” and “victim of a social order that already doomed him” who was not “driven by racism and anti-Semitism” in his choice of victims.<sup>10</sup>

### FRANCE:

The sincerity of Marie Le Pen and the Front National (FN) in distancing from an anti-Semitic past and converting to “selective” (i.e., pro-Jewish but anti-Muslim) tolerance is highly suspect. In Paris, far-rightists joined pro-Saddam Muslim street demonstrators shouting “Death to Jews! Death to Israel!” during the buildup to the Iraq War, and Jean Marie Le Pen kept up his anti-Israel vitriol through the Lebanon War of 2006. After the elder Le Pen’s surrender of party leadership, Bruno Gollnisch—a supporter of Holocaust Denier Robert Faurisson—remained the FN’s second-in-command under new leader Marine Le Pen. Former FN leader Jean Marie Le Pen in 2012 refused to recant his description of World War II gas chambers as “an insignificant detail.”<sup>11</sup>



In 2012—the year that Muhammad Merah murdered three school children and a teacher in Toulouse and unidentified assailants seriously injured three Jews in Villeurbaine near Lyon—the extreme right and left parties won, respectively, 18 percent and 11 percent of the vote in the first round of the presidential elections, casting a shadow over the second-round victory of François Hollande over Nicolas Sarkozy. There are doubts whether moderate Socialist Hollande will be able to navigate France’s ship of state safely through the rising tide of economic woes and dangerous extremist movements on both right and left.<sup>12</sup>

Speaking for French traditionalist Catholics who follow the breakaway sect of Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, Father Regis de Cacqueray of the Society of Saint Pius X (SSPX) attacked the Vatican for reaching out to Jews and Judaism: “How is it conceivable that a pope should call upon the representatives of false religions in their official capacity, to participate in a day of personal prayer? . . . How can anyone entertain the thought that God will be pleased with the Jews who are faithful to their fathers, who crucified the Son of God and deny the Triune God?”<sup>13</sup>

Established as a leftist think tank and publishing house but now appealing to both extremes, Réseau (Network) Voltaire markets anti-Semitic and anti-American conspiracy theories, including the “thesis” of 9/11 Truthers that Israel and the U.S. government were responsible for the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.<sup>14</sup>

In Paris, revolutionary communists make common cause with Muslim militants. The Union of Islamic Organizations of France (UOIF) continues to play a double game—ostensibly partnering with the French government to keep the lid on the country’s disaffected banlieus while at the same time acting as (in the words of the Conseil d’État, France’s highest administrative court) “a federation of . . . extremist movements.”<sup>15</sup>

### **BELGIUM:**

In Belgium, the former Foreign Minister and EU Trade Commissioner Karl de Gucht stated on Flemish public radio VRT that most Jews thought they were right all the time and that it was hard to convince them with rational arguments. Gucht subsequently apologized.

Considered more moderate than the Flemish separatist and openly anti-Semitic Vlaams Belang Party, the New Flemish Alliance (NVA), led by Bart De Wever, has been able to emerge as a powerful force despite De Wever's outrageous criticism of official apologies by Antwerp's Mayor Patrick Janssens for the role of Belgians in the deportation of their Jewish neighbors during the Nazi occupation in World War II. According to De Wever, "those who led Antwerp at the time had to make delicate decisions in difficult circumstances"; he added that, in the occupied Palestinian territories, "some use techniques which recall to me a dark past."<sup>16</sup>

### **HOLLAND:**

While EU members observed Holocaust Remembrance Day, a Dutch government rejected calls for an apology for Holland's "indifference" the fate of over 100,000 Jews murdered in the Holocaust. A small Dutch Jewish organization, the Federation Jewish Netherlands, had to ask a judge to ban the mayor of the town of Vorden from commemoration of Germany's Nazi soldiers on Dutch National Memorial Day, May 4, by visiting their graves. For a number of years, become the German anthem is played at the official commemoration for the dead on the island of Schiermonnikoog.<sup>17</sup>

Despite disclaimers, the Dutch Defence League (DDL), modelled on the English Defence League, has been characterized as Neo-Nazi and repudiated by Gert Wilders. Wilders leads the controversial VVD (Freedom and Democracy Party), which campaigns against the Islamization of the country and calls for a restriction on immigration as well as the defense of the Judeo-Christian tradition. Comparing the Quran to Mein Kampf, and declaring "I don't hate Muslims. I hate Islam," Wilders has also called on the Dutch people to report "the sins and wrongs" perpetrated on Dutch soil by persons from Central and Eastern Europe. Ian Buruma criticized Wilders in an op-ed in the New York Times, but also warned against prosecutions of him as a threat to free speech.<sup>18</sup>

### **DENMARK:**

The Danish People's Party (DF) successfully pushed for restrictive immigration policy as a member for a decade of a minority coalition. Under the direction of Pia Kjaersgaard—often voted Denmark's most powerful woman, ahead of the queen—the DF has broadened its demands to the prohibition of mosques.<sup>19</sup>

### NORWAY:

In Norway, the newspaper, *Adresseavisen*, which earlier withdrew its publication of a cartoon satirizing Muhammad, published a cartoon—"Anti-Semitism Is Advancing Disturbingly in Europe"—that depicted Palestinian president Abu Mazen kneeling before a skull-capped Israeli prime minister Netanyahu sitting at a desk with the sign: "The new Jerusalem is Being Built Here." A construction zone was shown featuring the sign that hung over the entrance to Auschwitz: *Arbeit Macht Frei* ("Work Liberates").<sup>20</sup>

Founded in 1998 and dissolved in 2009, the Neo-Nazi Vigrid Party—which denounced the Holocaust as "HoloCa\$h" and the United States as "Jew\$A"—was among a number of far-right extremist movements to fail to gain much political traction. In 2011, 77 people including 69 teenage Socialist campers were murdered by Anders Behring Breivik—a self-styled Knight Templar purportedly crusading for "Christian civilization" and "Norwegian culture." Tore Tvedt, the founder of the far-right group Vigrid testified in Breivik's behalf, telling the court: "When they get their will, the Nordic race will be exterminated" by Muslim immigrants. Breivik also claimed to have contacts with the English Defence League (EDL), which it denied. His outrageous crime showed the danger of intolerant anti-immigrant ideologies in the hands of a genocidal mind.<sup>21</sup>



Thugs are escalating Anti-Semitic attacks in Norway's schools with minimal resistance. In Oslo at a senior class school barbecue in June, 2012, a 16 year-old teenager, stigmatized because his father is Israeli, was "fire branded" when a red-hot coin was placed on his neck by a fellow student (photo). The coin made very visible burns on the boy's neck.<sup>22</sup>

### SWEDEN:

A Swedish Christian Art exhibition depicted Israelis as gun-toting rats devouring the "Holey [sic] Land." In its protest, the Wiesenthal Center commented: "Depicting Jews as animals was perfected by the Nazi propaganda machine and was an effective way to dehumanize Jewish citizens in the eyes of their German neighbors." The Swedish far right was suspected in the assassination in 2003 of Foreign Minister Anna Lindh. Trying to live down their Neo-Nazi reputation, the Swedish Democrats (SD) entered Parliament for the first time after the 2010 elections. The SD is demanding a halt to immigration and views Islam as the greatest threat to Sweden since the end of the Second World War. The party's television commercials pictured a group of Muslim women veiled and covered standing ahead of Swedish pensioners, all pushing prams (with babies). The party has also come out against homosexuals and is known for its reservations about Europe.<sup>23</sup>

### SWEDEN (cont.):

Ilmar Reepalu, leftwing mayor of Malmö, Sweden's third largest city with a growing Muslim minority, marked Holocaust Remembrance Day by warning local Jews that they must condemn Israel to avoid harassment. Reepalu is careful not to attack Muslims, but he stereotypes the Roma (Gypsies) as social dregs. As the Roth Institute points out, "[There] has been a recurring pattern in virtually all debates about anti-Semitism in Sweden in the last decade, in which leftist politicians, intellectuals, academics, and pundits refuse to acknowledge the existence of anti-Semitism except among neo-Nazi groups."<sup>24</sup>

In 2010, a group of Swedish Muslims in Malmö shouted "Sieg Heil" and "Hitler, Hitler" and threw rocks and bottles at a small group of Jews who were peacefully demonstrating in support of Israel. In 2009, the Malmö City Council had voted 5 to 4 hold the scheduled Davis Cup Match between Israel and Sweden behind closed doors in response to a campaign by "Stop the Match" coalition, which prevailed on the Council's Socialist-Left majority to quarantine Israelis and Jews behind a police cordon sanitaire. The spectacle of Israeli athletes forced to perform under what amounts to apartheid conditions and Jewish fans barred from attending events to root for them recalled nothing so much as the 1936 Berlin Olympics.<sup>25</sup>

Sweden remains home to Radio Islam, a radio station and now web site that Radio Islam was a Swedish radio channel, now a website that the EU's racism monitoring organization has called it "one of the most radical right-wing anti-Semitic homepages on the net."<sup>26</sup>

### GERMANY:

There has been a German nexus between Neo-Nazi and Islamist violent anti-Semitism for over a decade. In 2003, 10 Neo-Nazis were arrested for a planned attack on the construction site of a new Munich synagogue. The arrests coincided with the arrest of three members of the Islamist terrorist Al Tawahid for planning other attacks on Jewish targets. Ostensibly non-violent, but in reality a Muslim Brotherhood front, the Islamic Community of Germany plays the same role in that country as the Muslim association of Britain and UOIF in France.<sup>27</sup>

The extreme right National Democratic Party (NPD) has kept itself in the headlines in recent years by denouncing in 2008 Barack Obama's elections as the result of a pernicious "alliance of Jews and Negroes," holding a "holocaust vigil" in 2009 in solidarity with Gaza's Palestinians, and successfully fighting a legislative attempt to outlaw it in 2011 following revelation of links between NPD officials and Neo-Nazi "terror cells belonging to the so-called National Socialist Underground (NSU)."<sup>28</sup>

Despite economic success, all it not well with the German body politic. Chancellor Angela Merkel's moderate Christian Democrats are in retreat before opposition parties including right and left wing extremists. German political and cultural elites are at the cutting edge of a new nihilism rooted in the Nazi past. Iconic author Günter Grass—an SA member as a teenager—has reverted to form in his old age by scapegoating Israel for all the world's ills. Grass also is busy repackaging World War II history with Germans in the role of victims not victimizers. Such Revisionism feeds on the ignorance reflected in a new Stern magazine poll showing that most young Germans are vaguely aware that Auschwitz was "a concentration camp," but that 21 percent of those 18 to 29 years old do not know that Auschwitz was a death camp.<sup>29</sup>

### GERMANY (cont.):

And now, as Michael C. Moynihan reveals in *The Tablet*, comes avant-garde artists who not only celebrate the death of Holocaust Memory but also mock Hitler's victims. In addition to exhibits treating Palestinian terrorist attacks on Israel as "performance art," the Berlin Biennale Art Show features Polish artist and agent provocateur Artur Zmijewski's *Berek*, a short film showing a group of smiling, naked people playing a game of tag in a Nazi gas chamber.<sup>30</sup>

In 2011 during Berlin's celebration of Iranian-inspired anti-Israel al-Quds Day, the Neo-Nazi German People's Party urged its followers to join the festivities. At about the same time, Ken Jebsen was fired by Berlin's publicly funded station RBB for declaring in an e-mail that "I know who invented the Holocaust as PR." Anti-Semitic activist Hermann Dierkes was seen in a YouTube video in 2010 at a Berlin Conference, entitled "Marx Is a Must," calling Israel's demand for the right to exist as "petty" when compared to demands to end the former Apartheid state of South Africa. The Anti-Israel vitriol of Hilde Scheidt, the "Green" Party mayor of Aachen, is only the tip of an iceberg in a party permeated by such attitudes. German as well as Austrian observers have coined a new phrase for the convergence of burgeoning right-wing and left-wing anti-Jewish, anti-Israel extremism: *Querfront* or "crossover" anti-Semitism. Another example is the support by the local NPD of a campaign to boycott Israeli goods proposed by the German city of Jena's Social Democratic Mayor Albrecht Schröter and the left-wing Roman Catholic NGO Pax Christi.<sup>31</sup>

The German BDS movement won an unprecedented victory when Deutsche Bahn, the German railway operator, announced that it would pull out of a project to build a high-speed rail line from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem because the line would cut through six kilometers of disputed territory in the West Bank.<sup>32</sup>

### AUSTRIA:

In Austria, Jörg Haider became more—not less—overtly anti-Semitic and anti-Israel as he moved from the leadership of the Austrian Freedom Party (FPÖ) to that of Alliance for the Future of Austria before his death in a car accident in 2008. The political beneficiary of Haider's demise was the ultra-Nationalist Heinz-Christian Strache. To coincide with this year's International Holocaust Remembrance Day, Vienna's right-wing student fraternities held a ball—condemned by critics as "dancing on the graves" of the Holocaust's victims—attended by Strache. He was overheard complaining that: "We are the new Jews," while the anti-fascist demonstrators picketing the event were "like the Reichskristallnacht," i.e., Nazi thugs' responsible for the notorious anti-Jewish pogroms in November 1938.<sup>33</sup>

Strache has visited Israel, but his foreign policy passion is cultivating ties to Hungary's Jobbik Party.<sup>34</sup>

The Karl Lueger Ring—a portion of the main belt of boulevards that encircles Vienna's city center—is named after the late nineteenth century mayor who inspired Hitler. The ruling coalitions of Greens and Social Democrats have decided to remove Lueger's name from the Ringstrasse. "It's a scandal," thundered Strache: "The socialists in Vienna are building a memorial to a foreign mass murderer, Che Guevara, but an outstanding mayor of Vienna is being wiped from the street names."<sup>35</sup>



### SWITZERLAND:

A decade ago, Swiss politics shifted when Interior Minister, Ruth Dreyfuss, left the government, and Christoph Blocher, leader of the far-right Swiss People's Party (SVP), a controversial anti-immigrant populist, who formerly headed the Federal Department of Justice and Police as a member Swiss Federal Council. The Swiss extreme right and left compete in denouncing Israel. Anti-Semitism is on the rise in both Francophone and German-speaking cantons. Despite prosecutions for Holocaust Denial, Neo-Nazism is legal and attracts skinheads who are organized Partei National Orientierter Schweizer and the Bund Oberland. A massive, sometimes violent Animal Rights Movement protested the lifting of the 100-year long ban on Jewish and Muslim ritual slaughter.<sup>36</sup>

### ITALY:

The xenophobic Northern League and the post-fascist National Alliance entered a right-wing coalition with Silvio Berlusconi's governing party following general elections in 2001. The Forza Nuova (FN) is an Italian far-right political party, founded by Roberto Fiore and Massimo Morsello, and inspired by Mussolini's example. The Italian right is attuned to international right-wing anti-Semitic movements. Anti-Israel demonization and reinforcement of the libel that Jews are "Christ killers" are both on the rise.<sup>37</sup>

On the eve of the Holocaust Remembrance Day, in the left-wing Manifesto newspaper, political candidate Fiamma Nirenstein was portrayed with the Star of David and with the fascist symbol (Fascio littorio) on her chest. Reacting to protest, the newspaper began describing Nirenstein as "Frankenstein"—a slur on her "Jewish" name. The film, Sarah's Key, about the mass detention of the Jews of Paris by the French policemen in 1942, had difficulty finding an Italian distributor. Then, the film's main European distributor complained: "Several users have posted shameful anti-Semitic comments on our YouTube channel" defining the Palestinian Nakbah as "the real Holocaust" and the Palestinians as "the real Semites."<sup>38</sup>

### SPAIN:

Over two thirds of the Spanish population answer "probably true" to at least three of four stereotypical statements about Jews posed in the latest ADL poll. España 2000, led by José Luis Roberto, is a small far right party with influence in Valencia. More significant, the Socialist Party, ousted in the 2011 elections, is shot through with anti-Israel hostility and indifference to the deep roots of anti-Semitism in Spanish society.<sup>39</sup>

### GREECE:

The extreme right-wing, violently anti-immigrant Golden Dawn Party exploited economic chaos to make an electoral breakthrough in 2012, winning respectively 21 and 18 parliamentary seats in the May-June elections. Golden Dawn's flag closely resembles the Nazi swastika. It campaigned heavily on an anti-immigrant platform under the slogan: "So we can rid this land of filth." Golden Dawn's leaders proudly unleash the Nazi salute and its charter limits membership to "only Aryans in blood and Greeks in descent." According to Golden Dawn's Nikolaos Michaloliakos, "There were no ovens. This is a lie. I believe that it is a lie," said Michaloliakos. "There were no gas chambers either."<sup>40</sup>



## WESTERN EUROPE (cont.)

### GREECE (cont.):

The Jewish community joined the Greek Helsinki Monitoring Group in having to defend against baseless charges for perjury and libelous defamation brought by the self-declared Nazi Kostas Plevris. His book, *Jew—The Whole Truth*, recycles every anti-Semitic lie of the last 100 years. Significantly, Plevris has already succeeded in subverting the Greek legal system by convincing the prosecutor of the Court of Appeals to support his libel action that has been dragging through the courts for three years. In effect, the Greek court so far has exonerated Plevris of anti-Semitic bigotry while forcing the Greek Jews and other human rights activists he is persecuting to appear in court in order to repeatedly “prove”—contrary to Plevris—that the Holocaust really happened.<sup>41</sup>

## EASTERN EUROPE

### HUNGARY:

The latest ADL poll shows Hungary shares top billing with Spain as among the most anti-Semitic countries in Europe.<sup>42</sup>

The Movement for a Better Hungary (Jobbik) is Hungary’s third largest. Its chairman, Gabor Vona, sometimes dresses in a uniform modelled on the fascist Iron Cross and is paranoid about Israel. The party hates homosexuals and Gypsies as well as Jews, while carrying on a flirtation with the legally banned “arrow” military group.<sup>43</sup>



Photo: Poster widely visible throughout Hungary, showing an Aryan-like Hungarian shaking the money out of an evil Jew’s pockets

Soon before the May 2012 desecration of Budapest’s Raoul Wallenberg Monument Jobbik MP Márton Gyöngyösi in an interview with the London Jewish Chronicle whether Jews “have the right to talk about what happened during the Second World War,” given Israel’s “Nazi system.” When he was asked about the 400,000 Hungarian Jews deported to Auschwitz, Gyöngyösi exploded: “Me, should I say sorry for this when 70 years later, I am still reminded on the hour, every hour about it? Let’s get over it, for Christ’s sake.” He added: “It has become a fantastic business to jiggle around with the numbers” of dead Jews. As for Holocaust Survivors seeking restitution for their families’ stolen property, he retorted, “This money-searching is playing with fire in Hungary.”<sup>44</sup>

A Nazi war criminal Dr. Sandor Kepiro—facing trial after his return to Budapest from Buenos Aires for involvement in the 1942 massacre of 1,200 Jews, Serbs and Gypsies—decided that the best defense was a legal counteroffensive in the form of a libel suit. Before his death in 2011, Kepiro sued Nazi hunter Ephraim Zuroff of the Simon Wiesenthal Center who tracked down Kepiro and reported his whereabouts to the Hungarian prosecutors before revealing the story to the media. Fortunately, Judge Viktor Vadasz recently acquitted Zuroff, but the fact that the Nazi had the chutzpah to bring a lawsuit in a land where hundreds of thousands of Jews were deported to their deaths at Auschwitz reflects the growing audacity and popularity of Hungary’s growing fascist movement that supported Kepiro’s courtroom stunt.<sup>45</sup>

Demonstrators wearing a Yellow Star with the word “Jude” protested the desecration of the Szekesfehervar cemetery, located southwest of Budapest, as well as an attack on Jozsef Schweitzer, a former chief rabbi in Hungary.<sup>46</sup>



Photo: Raoul Wallenberg Monument, defaced with bloody pig’s feet Budapest May 2012

### POLAND:



*Photo:* Jedwabne -Vandals scrawl 'they were flammable' at spot where hundreds of Jews were burned alive during World War II

The neo-fascist Polish Nationalist Union, the NOP movement under the leadership of Adam Gmurczyk, and Niklot, founded by Tomaz Szczepanski, have all been active in recent years. The ultra-Catholic Radio Maryja station broadcasts a Slavic supremacist message tinged with anti-Semitism. According to the ADL, Poland has harboured the fifth highest number of skinheads after Germany, Hungary, the Czech Republic and the U.S.<sup>47</sup>

### UKRAINE:



*Photo:* Euro 2012 soccer fans in Poland

In Kiev, Odessa and Lviv, hundreds marched to mark the birthday of Ukrainian nationalist hero Stepan Bandera, who headed the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN), which collaborated with the Nazis and actively participated in the mass murder of Jews following the German occupation of Ukraine in 1941. In 2010, the Simon Wiesenthal Center condemned President Viktor Yushchenko for posthumously awarding the “Hero of Ukraine,” one of the country’s highest honors, to Bandera. The far right All-Ukrainian Union Svoboda is a force in local politics.<sup>48</sup>

In Ukraine’s 2010 presidential election campaign, two right-wing candidates, Oleg Tyagnibok and Sergiei Ratushniak, used “Jew” and “Zionist” interchangeably in their campaign rhetoric. Ratushniak accused incumbent president Viktor Yushchenko (who lost the election) of being a Jew in disguise. Tyagnibok’s party, Svoboda, ran strongly in western Ukrainian cities. Neo-Nazis and extreme Nationalists were chiefly responsible in 2011 for anti-Semitic attacks. In Poland, fascist symbols and slogans were displayed 56 times in and around football games during an 18-month period. There was a widespread anti-Semitic campaign in Uman (Cherkasskaya oblast) targeting Hasidic pilgrims to the burial place of one of the great Jewish tsaddiks, founder of the Bratslav branch of the Hasidic movement, Rabbi Nachman.<sup>49</sup>

### LITHUANIA:



*Photo:* The Choral Temple of Vilnius after it was vandalized with green paint

Despite the visit to Israel of Lithuanian Prime Minister Andrius Kubilius, Lithuanian institutions continue to promote a false equivalency between Communist crimes and those of the Nazis to undermine the status of the Holocaust as a unique historical tragedy. The so-called Genocide and Resistance Research Center in Vilnius does not even mention the Holocaust or the mass murder site of Ponar, but stresses the Jewish origin of Communist officials in blatantly anti-Semitic cartoons in its permanent exhibition. As far as Lithuanian universities are concerned, not a single one has a Holocaust research center, nor are there any courses on Holocaust history. Several elderly

Holocaust survivors who fought with the Soviet anti-Nazi partisans have been falsely accused in the local nationalist press of committing “war crimes” against innocent Lithuanian civilians. The local authorities have done everything possible to prevent any of the real criminals from actually being punished, turning the entire judicial process in these cases to a total farce.<sup>50</sup>

In 2012, the Simon Wiesenthal Center strongly condemned a neo-Nazi march in the city center of Kaunas (Kovno), Lithuania’s second-largest city and its interwar capitol. In a statement issued by its chief Nazi-hunter, Israel director Efraim Zuroff, the Center called the demonstration “a disgraceful way to observe Lithuanian Independence Day,” and harshly criticized the public support of the march by five Lithuanian members of parliament, and the total absence of any public criticism by Lithuanian elected leaders or officials or foreign ambassadors . . . . [The] march of several hundred primarily young people wearing white armbands with Lithuanian swastikas and other fascist symbols sends chills down the spines of the small remnant of Kaunas’ once-thriving Jewish community.”<sup>51</sup>

### LATVIA:

In March 2012, there were marches of Latvian SS veterans in Riga. Despite protests, the marches have continued to the consternation of the Russian residents of Latvia and those who oppose the honoring of individuals who fought alongside the Nazis to achieve a victory of the Third Reich. The marches exploited the symbols of renewed Latvian independence were exploited to honor the service of the members of the Latvian Legion—thereby reinforcing the myth that they were freedom fighters for their country’s independence, as opposed to fighters in the service of Nazi Germany. Staging the ceremony at the Freedom Monument, probably the most cherished symbol of Latvian independence and opposition to the Soviet occupation, and incorporating the use of current Latvian flags, gave the event an aura of ostensible official recognition even though no government officials participated. However, the march enjoyed the unofficial support of Latvia’s ruling coalition—an alliance of Conservatives with the far right For Fatherland and Freedom movement. Latvia’s foreign minister Maris Riekstins issued a statement in which he attacked the Wiesenthal Center’s criticism of the march and attempted to equate the suffering of all the victims of the Second World War, as if there was no difference between those supporting Nazism and those opposing it.<sup>52</sup>

### **ESTONIA:**

While welcoming the opening of a new, privately funded synagogue in central Tallinn, Ephraim Zuroff of the Simon Wiesenthal Center complained that Estonia was not doing enough to track down Estonian Holocaust collaborators who escaped abroad after the war. Estonian security police units played a part in the Holocaust in Belarus and Poland, as well as helping murder Jews in their own country. Since gaining independence from the USSR in 1991, Estonia has convicted 11 people of Soviet-era crimes, particularly the mass deportation of 1949, but has not prosecuted any suspected Nazi-era war criminals. In 2001, the police investigated an Estonian expatriate who was a police official under the Nazis, and was identified as a Holocaust suspect by the Wiesenthal Center. The case, apparently rejected by the KGB itself in the 1960s for lack of evidence, was dropped by the Estonians for the same reason.<sup>53</sup>

Foreign Neo-Nazis have attended Estonian parades. In 2006, Roman Ilin, a Jewish theater director from St. Petersburg, was attacked by neo-Nazis in Estonia. That year, the government passed a law banning the display of Nazi symbols, yet it also relocated a World War II Soviet War Memorial, causing the member states of Inter-Parliamentary Union's geopolitical group Eurasia to pass a resolution in 2007 expressing their collective "deep concern over the neo-Nazi sentiments in Estonia."<sup>54</sup>

### **KOSOVO:**



*Photo: Vandals desecrated the recently restored Jewish cemetery in Pristina, Kosovo*

### **CROATIA:**

In 1999, Croatia extradited Dinko Šakić from Argentina, one of the commanders of the Jasenovac concentration camp, and he was subsequently tried and sentenced to 20 years in prison, at the time the highest penalty under Croatian law. Croatia's conservative parties such as the pro-Ustashi Croatian Party of Rights (HSP) and the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) are ideologically hard right. Ivo Sanader of HDZ initially viewed himself as a disciple of General Mirko Norac and Croatia's refusal to accept any responsibility for war crimes during the breakup of Yugoslavia and the war for independence. In power as prime minister after 2003, however, and under pressure from the European community Sanader endorsed Norac's war crimes prosecution.<sup>55</sup>

In December 2011, memorial masses were held in Zagreb and Split to mark the anniversary of the death of death in 1959 of Ante Pavelic, Croatia's fascist Ustashi leader during the Nazi era. Despite the Wiesenthal Center's satisfaction with the extradition from Argentina and prosecution conviction of Croatian camp commandant Dinko Šakić, the Center was extremely critical of Croatia's Jasenovac Death Camp Exhibit for failing to recognize the centrality of the Holocaust or to identify individual perpetrators of "The Auschwitz of Croatia."<sup>56</sup>

### **FINLAND:**

The Freedom Party—Finland's Future (VP) is a far right party represented in Parliament demanding a ban on construction of mosques and minarets, removal of beggars from the streets and reduction in foreign aid.<sup>57</sup>

It has become clear in recent years, thanks to the research of Elina Sana, that Finland does not deserve its reputation for protecting all its Jews during the Holocaust except for eight Central European Jewish refugees who were handed over in November 1942 to the Gestapo in Estonia. The more than three thousand foreigners turned over to Nazi Germany during World War II also including a considerable number of political officers of the Red Army and Soviet Jewish prisoners of war. Finnish soldiers who were Jewish were fully protected at least until the Germans began applying pressure after 1942, but refugees were unsafe and Russian POWs were maltreated and in grave peril. Unfortunately, despite assurances from President Taria Halonen "to do research on the subject," progress has been slow toward justice for the victims and punishment for those responsible for these wartime crimes against Jews and others.<sup>58</sup>

Investigator Serah Beizer tentatively concludes that of 500 to 600 Jewish soldiers captured by the Finns, at least seventy were transferred to the Gestapo. These were not "political prisoners" much less communist "political commissars." Among these Jews were "barbers, carpenters, a photographer, postal workers, a decorator, and a musician . . . I have little doubt that the Finnish authorities who themselves extradited Jews to the Germans were fully aware at the time what their fate would be. Even today, the commission maintains that the Jews were not handed over because they were Jews. As they cannot find out what happened to POWs, nobody can prove that they were killed." So far, the Finnish government has refused to replace the current investigatory commission that "generates a lot of information but reveals very little" with a "truth commission." In Beizer's view, "much of Finland's tarnished war record will never be revealed."<sup>59</sup>

### **ROMANIA:**

Noua Dreaptă is a nonelectoral extremist movement modeled on Romania's fascist Iron Guard. Strongly anti-Semitic in ideology, it's noted for violent demonstrations aimed at ethnic Hungarians, homosexuals, and Gypsies.<sup>60</sup>

### **BULGARIA:**

Bulgaria's Ataka Party primarily targets the Turkish minority, and has won 10 percent of the vote since 2005.<sup>61</sup>

### **SLOVAKIA:**

The Slovak National Party (SNP), led by Jan Slota, is strongly anti-Hungarian. It has won seats in every Slovak parliament but one since 1990 and been part of the government since 2006. <sup>62</sup>

### **RUSSIAN FEDERATION:**

In the Russian parliamentary elections, the Russian Nationalist Liberal Democratic Party—neither liberal nor democratic—appeals to extreme nationalists. It campaigns against minorities. It was formed in 1989, with the rabid anti-Semite Vladimir Zhirinovskiy subsequently becoming chairman, and enjoys over 10 percent voting support. Holocaust Denial websites thrive, and a Denier, known as Israel Shamir (as well as by other aliases) has been revealed as a Russian distributor for WikiLeaks. <sup>63</sup>

There was widespread desecration in 2011 by Neo-Nazis and extreme nationalists of synagogues, cemeteries, and community centers. The authorities took little action, while removing the name of Jewish Holocaust victims from a memorial in Rostov. <sup>64</sup>

## **CONCLUSION**

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Speaking at a university in the American Midwest in 1980, Simon Wiesenthal was asked whether Nazis could ever come to power again. The aging Nazi hunter, who had lost 89 members of his family in the WWII Nazi genocide, responded. “When you have hate plus technology plus a major crisis, anything is possible.” He then added: “Remember, freedom is not a gift from heaven: You must fight for it every day.” In Europe, the forces of darkness are once again openly marshaling their forces. Let us hope and pray that defenders of freedom, on both sides of the Atlantic, are up for the battles ahead.

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