

Canadian parliament's applause for Nazi war criminal exposes NATO war against Russia

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The standing ovation Friday by the entire Canadian parliament for a member of Adolf Hitler's Waffen-SS has exposed before the whole world the nature of the US-NATO war against Russia in Ukraine.

The scene of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and all MPs, without exception, rising to their feet to acclaim Yaroslav Hunka, a member of the Waffen-SS Galicia Division, demonstrates that the United States and NATO are waging war on Russia in alliance with the most reactionary political forces in the world.

The fact that this war criminal, drenched in the blood of tens of millions of victims of Nazi Germany, was welcomed as the symbol of NATO's war against Russia is entirely in keeping with the war's predatory aims.

This is a war which the imperialist powers, Canada included, are pursuing in collaboration with the political descendants of war criminals like Hunka, and the Nazi regime for which he fought, to subordinate Russia to the status of a semi-colony.

Canada's ruling elite, supported by the media at home and abroad, is in full damage control mode as it tries to cover up this reality. The resignation of Speaker Anthony Rota Tuesday became the occasion for a doubling down on the absurd narrative that he alone decided to feature Hunka prominently during Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky's high-profile state visit to Canada, without having full knowledge of his political past.

Speaking to the *New York Times*, Professor Lori Turnbull asserted that it would have been "inappropriate and unusual" for Rota to inform the government about who he was inviting to parliament due to the "independence" of the Speaker.

This is preposterous. Friday's event was not a routine parliamentary session, but a visit by the head of the Ukrainian state, which Ottawa has backed to the hilt with over \$9 billion in military and financial assistance in the war against Russia. Each stage of the proceedings would have been carefully planned and scripted in advance. To suggest otherwise is to take one's readers for fools.

In introducing Hunka, Rota stated:

We have in the chamber today a Ukrainian war veteran from the Second World War who fought for Ukrainian independence against the Russians and continues to support the troops today, even at his age of 98. His name is Yaroslav Hunka but I am very proud to say he is from

North Bay and from my riding of Nipissing-Timiskaming. He is a Ukrainian hero, a Canadian hero, and we thank him for all his service.

Even without any forewarning, these remarks should have made clear to all but the politically illiterate that Hunka was a Nazi. This is especially true in Canada, where it is a well documented fact that tens of thousands of Ukrainian fascists and up to 2,000 members of the Waffen-SS were welcomed into the country after World War II.

Yet all MPs without one single exception, the head of the Canadian military Gen. Wayne Eyre, Trudeau and Zelensky rose to their feet and applauded. Behind the prime minister and Ukrainian president stood Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland, whose maternal grandfather Mykhailo Tschomiak was the publisher of the Ukrainian-language fascist newspaper *Krakivski visti*, which celebrated the creation of the Galicia Division and incited antisemitism throughout World War II.

Karina Gould, the government's House Leader, met personally with Hunka. She later claimed to the *Times* that she would "have never in a million years stood and applauded someone who aided the Nazis." But the fact of the matter is that she did. Pleading ignorance, as the saying goes, does not excuse a crime.

Even the *Globe and Mail*, the voice of the Canadian bourgeoisie, admitted in a Wednesday editorial that precisely how Hunka was invited to take a bow during Zelensky's visit in parliament remains "yet unexplained." The *Globe* is nervous because the propaganda mask of a war for Ukrainian "democracy" has well and truly been torn off. The ovation for Hunka follows a series of events in Canada and the United States in which fascists of the Azov Battalion have been prominently featured, such as in a June 29 event at Stanford University.

The desperate attempts to deny the obvious—that the celebration of Hunka was a deliberate political provocation which backfired spectacularly—are driven by the fact that the standing ovation given to a Nazi war criminal explodes the propaganda used to sell the US-led war on Russia in Ukraine. Politicians, media outlets and academics have contrived a thoroughly ahistorical narrative to justify the war based on a denial of everything that happened prior to February 24, 2022. This is summed up in the incessant talk of "Putin's war of aggression," against which Ukraine's "sovereignty" and "democracy" must be defended.

This cynical operation involved not simply overlooking the eight years of war in eastern Ukraine that followed the 2014 Western-backed coup in Kiev that was spearheaded by fascist forces. It also entailed blacking out the 30 years of uninterrupted war waged by US imperialism since the Stalinist bureaucracy's dissolution of the Soviet Union, including the millions who died as a result.

Drunk on their own war propaganda, the ruling elites would now like everyone to forget the most horrific events of the 20th century, above all the Nazis' war of annihilation against the Soviet Union and extermination of six million Jews in the Holocaust. As Trudeau told MPs from his Liberal caucus Wednesday, according to a CBC report, "(T)hey should avoid speaking to the press about Hunka's invitation and the subsequent fallout, and that the media frenzy would die down if they stay tight-lipped."

Trudeau did not even bother to apologize to Russia, whose citizens made up the bulk of the close to 40 million people killed as a result of the war of annihilation against the Soviet Union that was carried out by the Nazi regime for which Hunka fought. Instead, he directed his public apology Wednesday to Zelensky. In fact, Zelensky, who knew perfectly well who Hunka was, applauded him in the Canadian parliament because, not in spite of, the fact that he is a Nazi war criminal. Zelensky's actions have completely exposed all of those who have used the Ukrainian president's Jewish background to deny his connections to fascist forces.

The "accidental" invitation to and standing ovation for Hunka are rooted in the historical necessity of the war. Friday's events could only have taken place in the context of the dramatic escalation by the imperialist powers of the war against Russia in alliance with fascists.

Hunka, for his part, is a genuine representative of Ukrainian nationalism, which has been steeped in fascism and antisemitism since the early 20th century. During the 1930s and 1940s, the Ukrainian nationalists aligned themselves with German fascism and fought with the Nazis as they launched their "drive to the east" in World War II after the June 1941 invasion of the Soviet Union. Today, they support American, German, and Canadian imperialism in a conflict aimed at toppling the Putin regime, breaking up Russia and seizing control of its natural resources. This strategy finds unanimous support within Canada's political establishment, which is why they all applauded Hunka.

The blatant exposure of their fascist allies provided by the standing ovation for Hunka in Canada's parliament could not have come at a worse time for the imperialists. Zelensky's trip to Canada, coming after his visit to Washington for talks with US President Biden, was aimed at laying the groundwork for a drastic escalation of the war following Ukraine's disastrous spring/summer offensive. This has been underlined by strikes on the Russian Black Sea Fleet headquarters and other targets in Crimea using long-range precision missiles provided by Britain, and the sending by the US of the ATACMS long-range missile capable of striking targets hundreds of miles inside Russia.

The response of the media in the US and Europe to Friday's standing ovation for a Nazi is to downplay it with perfunctory reports. The same publications that celebrate the tearing down of statues of revolutionary leaders of the 18th and 19th centuries due

to their supposed lack of zeal in abolishing slavery have virtually nothing to say when a Nazi involved in the extermination of European Jewry is lauded in the parliament of a major Western power.

The sickening sight of a veteran of one of the most vile and despicable organizations in human history—the Waffen-SS—receiving unanimous acclaim in the parliament of one of the major "democracies" has been made possible by corrupt and cynical layers of the affluent upper-middle class, who have swallowed the imperialists' war propaganda hook, line and sinker.

The vast majority of academics, including even those involved in Holocaust research, have maintained a scandalous and shameful silence on the gross falsifications of history that have accompanied the US/NATO war on Russia. These include the cover-up of the fascist traditions of Ukrainian nationalism and the relativization of the worst crimes in human history perpetrated by the Nazis. Lacking any commitment to historical truth, the pro-war academics have exchanged serious scholarship for blather about "human rights" and "democratic values," which always correspond to the geostrategic and economic interests of imperialism.

It is high time for those within the academic fraternity who retain any shred of political principle to reconsider their position and speak out forcefully against pro-Nazi war propaganda of the kind displayed in Canada's parliament.

The working class, however, cannot wait for them. The standing ovation by an entire "democratic" government for a Nazi war criminal is a warning to working people all over the world. The social forces responsible for the greatest crimes in human history are being rehabilitated alongside the escalation of a war whose potential death toll is incalculable. The US-NATO war against Russia, and its accompanying promotion of openly fascist forces, must be stopped!



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