

# Canada's Honoring of Nazi Vet Exposes Ottawa's Longstanding Ukraine Policy

By [Max Blumenthal](#)

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*By celebrating a Waffen-SS volunteer as a "hero," Canada's Liberal Party highlighted a longstanding policy that has seen Ottawa train fascist militants in Ukraine while welcoming in thousands of post-war Nazi SS veterans.*

*Canada's second most powerful official, Chrystia Freeland, is the granddaughter of one of Nazi Germany's top Ukrainian propagandists.*

In the Spring of 1943, Yaroslav Hunka was a fresh-faced soldier in the 14th Grenadier Division of the Waffen-SS Galicia when his division received a [visit](#) from the architect of Nazi Germany's genocidal policies, Heinrich Himmler. Having presided over the battalion's formation, Himmler was visibly proud of the Ukrainians who had volunteered to support the Third Reich's efforts.

80 years later, the Speaker of Canada's parliament, Anthony Rota, also beamed with pride after inviting Hunka to a reception for Volodymyr Zelensky, where the Ukrainian president lobbied for more arms and financial assistance for his country's war against Russia.

"We have in the chamber today 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," Rota declared during the September 22 parliamentary event in Ottawa.

"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," Rota continued.

Gales of applause erupted through the crowd, as Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, Zelensky, Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland, Canadian Chief of Defense Staff Gen. Wayne Eyre

and leaders of all Canadian parties rose from their seats to applaud Hunka's wartime service.

Canada's parliament gives a standing ovation to a 98-year-old Ukrainian Nazi collaborator likely to keep a music box at home stuffed with grainy black and white execution photos

If John Demjanjuk had lived a little longer he too could have been a hero  
<https://t.co/WXYBYCwuXr>

— Max Blumenthal (@MaxBlumenthal) [September 23, 2023](#)

Since the exposure of Hunka's record as a Nazi collaborator – which should have been obvious as soon as the Speaker announced him – Canadian leaders (with the notable exception of Eyre) have rushed to issue superficial, face-saving apologies as withering condemnations poured in from Canadian Jewish organizations.

The incident is now a major national scandal, occupying space on the cover of Canadian papers like the Toronto Sun, which quipped, "[Did Nazi that coming.](#)" Meanwhile, Poland's Education Minister has [announced plans](#) to seek Hunka's criminal extradition.

The Liberal Party has attempted to downplay the affair as an accidental blunder, with one Liberal MP [urging](#) her colleagues to "avoid politicizing this incident." Melanie Joly, Canada's Foreign Minister, has [forced](#) Rota's resignation, seeking to turn the the Speaker into a scapegoat for her party's collective actions.

Trudeau, meanwhile, pointed to the "deeply embarrassing" event as a reason to "push back against Russian propaganda," as though the Kremlin somehow smuggled an nonagenarian Nazi collaborator into parliament, then hypnotized the Prime Minister and his colleagues, Manchurian Candidate-style, into celebrating him as a hero.

NEW – Justin Trudeau blames Russian propaganda for Canadian Parliament honoring a Nazi.

"Obviously, it's extremely upsetting that this happened... this is something that is deeply embarrassing to the Parliament of Canada...

It's going to be really important that all of us push...  
[pic.twitter.com/Zvk5ytkxmC](https://pic.twitter.com/Zvk5ytkxmC)

— KanekoaTheGreat (@KanekoaTheGreat) [September 25, 2023](#)

To be sure, the incident was no gaffe. Before Canada's government and military brass celebrated Hunka in parliament, they had provided diplomatic support to fascist hooligans fighting to install a nationalist government in Kiev, and oversaw the training of contemporary Ukrainian military formations openly committed to the furtherance of Nazi ideology.

Ottawa's celebration of Hunka has also lifted the cover on the country's post-World War Two policy of naturalizing known Ukrainian Nazi collaborators and weaponizing them as domestic

anti-communist shock troops. The post-war immigration wave included the grandfather of Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland, who functioned as one of Hitler's top Ukrainian propagandists inside Nazi-occupied Poland.

Though Canadian officialdom has worked to suppress this sordid record, it has resurfaced in dramatic fashion through Hunka's appearance in parliament and the unsettling contents of his online diaries.



Yaroslav Hunka, front and center, as a member of the Waffen-SS Galicia division

"We welcomed the German soldiers with joy"

The [March 2011 edition of the journal of the Association of Ukrainian Ex-Combatants in the US](#) contains an unsettling diary entry which had gone unnoticed until recently.

Authored by Yaroslav Hunka, the journal consisted of proud reflections on volunteering for the 14th Grenadier Division of the Waffen-SS Galicia. Hunka decribed the Nazi Wehrmacht as "mystical German knights" when they first arrived in his hometown of Berezhany, and recalled his own service in the Waffen-SS as the happiest time in his life.

"In my sixth grade," he wrote, "out of forty students, there were six Ukrainians, two Poles, and the rest were Jewish children of refugees from Poland. We wondered why they were running away from such a civilized Western nation as the Germans."

The [Jewish Virtual Library details](#) the extermination of Berezhany's Jewish population at the hands of the "civilized" Germans:

"In 1941 at the end of Soviet occupation 12,000 Jews were living in Berezhany, most of them refugees fleeing the horrors of the Nazi war machine in Europe. During

the Holocaust, on Oct. 1, 1941, 500–700 Jews were executed by the Germans in the nearby quarries. On Dec. 18, another 1,200, listed as poor by the *Judenrat*, were shot in the forest. On Yom Kippur 1942 (Sept. 21), 1,000–1,500 were deported to Belzec and hundreds murdered in the streets and in their homes. On Hanukkah (Dec. 4–5) hundreds more were sent to Belzec and on June 12, 1943, the last 1,700 Jews of the ghetto and labor camp were liquidated, with only a few individuals escaping. Less than 100 Berezhany Jews survived the war.”

When Soviet forces held control of Berezhany, Hunka said he and his neighbors longed for the arrival of Nazi Germany.

“Every day,” he recalled, “we looked impatiently in the direction of the Pomoryany (Lvov) with the hope that those mystical German knights, who give bullets to the hated *Lyakhs* are about to appear.” (*Lyakh* is a derogatory Ukrainian term for Poles).

In July 1941, when the Nazi German army entered Berezhany, Hunka breathed a sigh of relief.

“We welcomed the German soldiers with joy,” he wrote. “People felt a thaw, knowing that there would no longer be that dreaded knocking on the door in the middle of the night, and at least it would be possible to sleep peacefully now.”

Two years later, Hunka joined the First Division of the Galician SS 14th Grenadier Brigade – a unit formed under the personal orders of Heinrich Himmler. When Himmler inspected the Ukrainian volunteers in May 1943 (below), he was accompanied by Otto Von Wachter, the [Nazi-appointed governor of Galicia](#) who established the Jewish ghetto in Krakow.



“Your homeland has become so much more beautiful since you have lost – on our initiative, I must say – those residents who were so often a dirty blemish on Galicia’s good name, namely the Jews...” Himmler reportedly [told](#) the Ukrainian troops. “I know that if I ordered you to liquidate the Poles ... I would be giving you permission to do what you are eager to do anyway.”

“Hitler’s elite torturers and murderers have been passed on RCMP orders”

Following the war, Canada’s Liberal government classified thousands of Jewish refugees as [“enemy aliens”](#) and held them alongside former Nazis in a network of internment camps enclosed with barbed wire, fearing that they would infect their new country with communism. At the same time, Ottawa placed thousands of Ukrainian veterans of Hitler’s army on the fast-track to citizenship.

The Ukrainian Canadian newsletter [lamented on April 1, 1948](#), “some [of the new citizens] are outright Nazis who served in the German army and police. It is reported that individuals tattooed with the dread[ed] SS, Hitler’s elite torturers and murderers have been passed on RCMP orders and after being turned down by screening agencies in Europe.”

The journal described the unreformed Nazis as anticommunist shock troops whose “‘ideological leaders’ are already busy fomenting WWII, propagating a new world holocaust in which Canada will perish.”

In 1997, the Canadian branch of the Simon Wiesenthal Center [charged the Canadian government](#) with having admitted over 2000 veterans of the 14th Volunteer Waffen-SS Grenadier Division.

That same year, 60 Minutes released a special, [“Canada’s Dark Secret,”](#) revealing that some 1000 Nazi SS veterans from Baltic states had been granted citizenship by Canada after the war. Irving Abella, a Canadian historian, told 60 Minutes that the easiest way to get into the country “was by showing the SS tattoo. This proved that you were an anti-Communist.”

Abella also alleged that Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau (Justin’s father) explained to him that his government kept silent about the Nazi immigrants “because they were afraid of exacerbating relationships between Jews and Eastern European ethnic communities.”

Yaroslav Hunka was among the post-war wave of Ukrainian Nazi veterans welcomed by Canada. According to the [city council website of Berezhan](#)y, he arrived in Ontario in 1954 and promptly “became a member of the fraternity of soldiers of the 1st Division of the UNA, affiliated to the World Congress of Free Ukrainians.”

Also among the new generation of Ukrainian Canadians was Michael Chomiak, the grandfather of Canada’s second-most-powerful official, Chrystia Freeland. Throughout her career as a journalist and Canadian diplomat, Freeland has advanced her grandfather’s legacy of anti-Russian agitation, while repeatedly [exalting wartime Nazi collaborators](#) during public events.



During a March 2, 2020 rally, Canadian Deputy PM Chrystia Freeland proudly displayed a banner of the Ukrainian Partisan Organization which fought alongside Nazi Germany during WWII.

## Canada Welcomes Hitler's Top Ukrainian Propagandists

Throughout the Nazi German occupation of Poland, the Ukrainian journalist Michael Chomiak served as one of Hitler's top propagandists. Based in Krakow, Chomiak edited an antisemitic publication called *Krakivs'ki visti* (Krakow News), which cheer-led the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union – "The German Army is bringing us our cherished freedom," the paper proclaimed in 1941 – and glorified Hitler while rallying Ukrainian support for the Waffen-SS Galicia volunteers.

Chomiak spent much of the war living in two spacious Krakow apartments that had been seized from their Jewish owners by the Nazi occupiers. He [wrote](#) that he moved numerous pieces of furniture belonging to a certain "Dr. Finkelstein" to another aryanized apartment placed under his control.



Michael Chomiak at a party with Emile Gassner, the Nazi media chief for Occupied Poland

In Canada, Chomiak participated in the Ukrainian Canadian Committee (UCC), which incubated hardcore nationalist sentiment among diaspora members while lobbying Ottawa for hardline anti-Soviet policies. On its website, the [UCC boasted](#) of receiving direct Canadian government assistance during World War Two: “The final and conclusive impetus for [establishing the UCC] came from the National War Services of Canada which was anxious that young Ukrainians enlist in military services.”

The UCC’s first president Volodymyr Kubijovych, had served as Chomiak’s boss back in Krakow. He also played a part in the establishment of the 14th Grenadier Division of the Waffen-SS Galicia, [announcing](#) upon its formation, “This historic day was made possible by the conditions to create a worthy opportunity for the Ukrainians of Galicia, to fight arm in arm with the heroic German soldiers of the army and the Waffen-SS against Bolshevism, your and our deadly enemy.”

#### Freeland Nurtures Media Career as Undercover Regime Change Agent in Soviet-era Ukraine

Following his death in 1984, Chomiak’s granddaughter, Chrystia Freeland, followed in his footsteps as a reporter for various Ukrainian nationalist publications. She was an early contributor to Kubijovych’s Encyclopedia of Ukraine, which [whitewashed](#) the record of Nazi collaborators like Stepan Bandera, referring to him as a “revolutionary.” Next, she took a staff position at the Edmonton-based Ukrainian News, where her grandfather had served as editor.

A 1988 edition of Ukrainian News (below) featured an article co-authored by Freeland, followed by an ad for a book called [“Fighting for Freedom”](#) which glorified the Ukrainian Waffen-SS Galician division.

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**FIGHTING FOR FREEDOM:**



**FIGHTING FOR FREEDOM: THE UKRAINIAN VOLUNTEER DIVISION OF THE WAFFEN-SS** by Richard Landwehr. 128 pictures (many are published here for the first time), 8 maps. The first English language account in detail of the Ukrainian SS 14th Waffen-Grenadier Division der SS (Ukraine Nr. 1). The cover design is in full color. In this classic work Mr. Landwehr delineates how and why the Ukrainian Division of the Waffen-SS was formed, what it did on the battlefield and what eventually happened to it. 224 pages, deluxe hardback library ed. \$24.95.

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## Memory of Ukraine's famine emerges from official historic amnesia

by David R. Marples  
and Chrystia Freeland

The famine of 1933 in the Soviet Union, which led to the death of millions of citizens, predominantly Ukrainians, has become a burning issue in that country today.

While Western scholars began to study the topic seriously five years ago (the 50th anniversary) and the Washington-based Famine Commission has just published its Report to Congress on the subject, the Soviets maintained an unyielding silence until last December, when it was mentioned briefly in a speech by Ukrainian party chief, Volodymyr Shcherbytsky.

There has followed a partial analysis of the main events. In January, the Ukrainian historian Stanislav Kulchytsky published an account in the Kiev newspaper *Silski Visti* (Village News). He maintained that mismanagement of the grain collection campaign in the Ukrainian villages had contributed directly to famine. The grain, he wrote, was measured in the fields rather than after collection. Mr. Kulchytsky denied that there was any deliberate attempt to starve Ukrainian peasants as a nation, the conclusion reached by Western scholars Robert Conquest and James E. Mace.

In issues of *Ogonyok*, edited by the Ukrainian Vitaliy Korotych, and the weekly *Nedelia*, eyewitnesses to the famine have given harrowing accounts of what occurred. Contributors to both *Moscow News* and

Dr. Marples is adjunct professor of Slavic and East European studies, University of Alberta. Ms. Freeland is a student in Soviet studies, Harvard University.

*Literaturna Ukraina* (the weekly organ of the Ukrainian Writers' Union) have referred to Stalin as a "monster," for his part in collectivization of the countryside.

In June 1988, in a speech to the 19th Party Conference, writer Borys Oliynyk demanded an end to what he called "blank spots" in Ukrainian history. Those responsible must be brought to justice, he stated.

Recently, an in-depth article on the subject was published in the Kiev daily *Radianska Ukraina*, featuring an interview with Ukrainian historians M. Panchuk and D. Dibrova. Dr. Panchuk, who notes that some 70 million people across Ukraine and the Caucasus were affected by famine, lists five major reasons for its outbreak.

First, there were problems with the initial collectivization campaign, particularly in the villages where the authorities were inexperienced. Second, the famine period coincided with a major administrative reorganization, when contact between Moscow and the village was impeded by the establishment of provincial authorities. Third, there was a lack of party cells on the collective farms, which were unpopular from the first. Fourth, "serious mistakes" were made in the collection of grain; and fifth, an old canard, there was kulak sabotage.

Only the latter two reasons merit serious examination as potential causes. For, as the authors point out, the most intensive period of collectivization occurred not in 1933, at the height of the famine, but in 1930. Moreover, the focus on administrative changes did not affect the formidable presence in the villages of Stalin's officials, police forces and

(Continued on page 13)

During Freeland's time as an exchange student in Lviv, Ukraine, she laid the foundations for her meteoric rise to journalistic success. From behind cover as a Russian literature major at Harvard University, Freeland collaborated with local regime change activists while feeding anti-Soviet narratives to international media bigwigs.

"Countless 'tendentious' news stories about life in the Soviet Union, especially for its non-Russian citizens, had her fingerprints as Ms. Freeland set about making a name for herself in journalistic circles with an eye to her future career prospects," the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) [reported](#).

Citing KGB files, the CBC described Freeland as a de facto intelligence agent:

"The student causing so many headaches clearly loathed the Soviet Union, but she knew its laws inside and out - and how to use them to her advantage. She skillfully hid her actions, avoided surveillance (and shared that knowledge with her Ukrainian contacts) and expertly trafficked in 'misinformation.'"

In 1989, Soviet security agents rescinded Freeland's visa when they caught her smuggling

“a veritable how-to guide for running an election” into the country for Ukrainian nationalist candidates.

She quickly transitioned back to journalism, landing gigs in post-Soviet Moscow for the Financial Times and Economist, and eventually rising to global editor-at-large of Reuters – the UK-based media giant which today functions as a [cutout for British intelligence operations](#) against Russia.

## Canada Trains, Protects Nazis in Post-Maidan Ukraine

When Freeland won a seat as a Liberal member of Canada’s parliament in 2013, she established her most powerful platform yet to agitate for regime change in Russia. Milking her journalistic connections, she published op-eds in top legacy papers like the [New York Times](#) urging militant support from Western capitals for Ukraine’s so-called “Revolution of Dignity,” which saw the violent removal of a democratically elected president and his replacement with a nationalist, pro-NATO government in 2014.

In the midst of the coup attempt, a group of neo-Nazi thugs belonging to the C14 organization occupied Kiev’s city council and [vandalized the building](#) with Ukrainian nationalist insignia and white supremacist symbols, including a Confederate flag. When riot police chased the fascist hooligans away on February 18, 2014, they [took shelter](#) in the Canadian embassy with the apparent consent of the Conservative administration in Ottawa. “Canada was sympathizing with the protesters, at the time, more than the [Ukrainian] government,” a Ukrainian interior ministry official [recalled](#) to the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.



Canada’s Foreign Ministry provided shelter to the neo-Nazis (above) who occupied and vandalized Kiev’s city hall in 2014.

Official Canadian support for neo-Nazi militants in Ukraine intensified after the 2015 election of the Liberal Party’s Justin Trudeau. In November 2017, the Canadian military and US Department of Defense dispatched several officers to Kiev for a [multinational training session](#) with Ukraine’s Azov Battalion. (Azov has since deleted the record of the session from its website).

Azov was controlled at the time by [Adriy Biletsky](#), the self-proclaimed “White Leader” who

declared, “the historic mission of our nation in this critical moment is to lead the White Races of the world in a final crusade for their survival... A crusade against the Semite-led Untermenschen [sub-human].”

US and Canadian military officers meet uniformed members of the neo-Nazi Azov Battalion during a November 2017 multinational training session in Ukraine.

Photos from a deleted page on Azov's website: <https://t.co/08C1FLQ6Ee>  
[pic.twitter.com/5RAIif6OFF](https://t.co/08C1FLQ6Ee)

— Max Blumenthal (@MaxBlumenthal) [March 20, 2022](#)

### As Nazi Family History Surfaces, Freeland Lies to the Public

Back in Canada, Freeland’s troubling family history was surfacing for the first time in the media. Weeks after she was appointed in January 2017 as Foreign Minister – a post she predictably exploited to thunder for sanctions on Russia and arms shipments to Ukraine – her grandfather’s role as a Nazi propagandist in occupied Poland became the subject of a raft of reports in the alternative press.

The Trudeau government responded to the factual reports by accusing Russia of waging a campaign of cyber-warfare. “The situation is obviously one where we need to be alert. And that is why the Prime Minister has, among other things, encouraged a complete re-examination of our cyber security systems,” Public Safety Minister Ralph Goodale [declared](#).

Yet few, if any, of the outlets responsible for excavating Chomiak’s history had any connection to Russia’s government. Among the first to expose his collaborationism was [Consortium News](#), an independent, US-based media organization.

For her part, Freeland deployed a spokesperson to lie to the public, [flatly denying](#) that “the minister’s grandfather was a Nazi collaborator.”

When Canadian media quoted several Russian diplomats about the allegations, Freeland promptly [ordered their deportation](#), accusing them of exploiting their diplomatic status “to interfere in our democracy.”

By this time, however, her family secrets had tumbled out of the attic and onto the pages of mainstream Canadian media. On March 7, 2017, the [Globe and Mail](#) reported on a 1996 article in the Journal of Ukrainian Studies confirming that Freeland’s grandfather had indeed been a Nazi propagandist, and that his writing helped fuel the Jewish genocide. The article was authored by Freeland’s uncle, John-Paul Himka, who thanked his niece in its preface for helping him with “problems and clarifications.”

“Freeland knew for more than two decades that her maternal Ukrainian grandfather was the chief editor of a Nazi newspaper in occupied Poland that vilified Jews during the Second World War,” the Globe and Mail [noted](#).

After being caught on camera this September clapping with unrestrained zeal alongside hundreds of peers for a Ukrainian veteran of Hitler’s SS death squads, Freeland once again invoked her authority to scrub the incident from the record.

LPC House Leader Karina Gould sought unanimous consent to strike Anthony Rota's comments about Yaroslav Hunka from the record and the CPC denied it

CPC MP Marty Morantz says "deleting the words from Hansard would only have one purpose, to try and forget what happened" [#cdnpolipic.twitter.com/S78DkwyPra](#)

— Mackenzie Gray (@Gray\_Mackenzie) [September 25, 2023](#)

Three days after the embarrassing scene, Freeland was back on the floor of parliament, nodding in approval as Liberal House leader Karina Gould [introduced](#) a resolution to strike "from the appendix of the House of Commons debates" and from "any House multimedia recording" the recognition made by Speaker Anthony Rota of Yaroslav Hunka.

Thanks to decades of officially supported Holocaust education, the mantra that demands citizens "never forget" has become a guiding light of liberal democracy. In present day Ottawa, however, this simple piece of moral guidance is now treated as a menace which threatens to unravel careers and undermine the war effort in Ukraine.

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*The editor-in-chief of The Grayzone, Max Blumenthal is an award-winning journalist and the author of several books, including best-selling [Republican Gomorrah](#), [Goliath](#), [The Fifty One Day War](#), and [The Management of Savagery](#). He has produced print articles for an array of publications, many video reports, and several documentaries, including [Killing Gaza](#). Blumenthal founded The Grayzone in 2015 to shine a journalistic light on America's state of perpetual war and its dangerous domestic repercussions.*

*Featured image: Yaroslav Hunka, front and center as a member of the Waffen-SS Galicia division (Source: The Grayzone)*

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