

ON

*The Debate over
Alleged War Criminals
in Canada*

**THE
RECORD**

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Letters to the editor of *The Whig-Standard*

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Preface

The Justinian Press is committed to the publication of informative, if at times iconoclastic, essays and studies dealing with Eastern Europe under Soviet rule, particularly when what has happened there directly affects Canadians who trace their origins to that part of the world.

We reprint here, unabridged, a series of letters-to-the-editor which appeared in Canada's oldest daily newspaper — Kingston, Ontario's *The Whig-Standard*. All deal with the debate over alleged war criminals in Canada, which began in February, 1985. The 'Victoria Day' weekend, 1987 was selected as an arbitrary 'cut-off' date for reasons of economy. Readers of *On The Record*, however, will quickly come to appreciate just how complex and sensitive this debate remains.

We would like to thank all of those who mustered the intellectual and emotional energy required to take part in the exchange which is reprinted here. We are also grateful to the editor of *The Whig-Standard*, Mr. Neil Reynolds, for the enthusiasm with which he greeted the proposed re-publication of these letters. We hope that *On The Record* will help to further understanding among all Canadians of the singular tragedy that befell Eastern Europe during World War II, an experience whose traces still seem to haunt us all to the present day.

John B. Gregorovich
The Justinian Press
Toronto, May 1987

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Introduction

The Whig-Standard publishes a large number of letters to the editor: With a circulation of 37,000 newspapers a day, we print between 4,000 and 5,000 letters each year. In other words, more than 10 per cent of our subscribers — perhaps as many as 15 per cent of our subscribers — contribute to our letters page each year. (Since more than two people, on average, read each paper sold, we draw our correspondence from many more people than our circulation itself indicates, but the proportion of letters-to-copies is a useful guide to measure the phenomenon.)

The numbers are one measure of what we call our Forum Page. Our readership surveys tell us that the letters we publish are also one of the best-read features in our newspaper. After Page One, our Forum Page is indeed probably the best-read page in the paper. We regard this fact as a testament to what we regard as one of our most important editorial achievements.

Now most newspapers publish letters, and some newspapers — with larger circulations — publish more letters than we do. We do some things differently, however, and it is this difference that, in my judgment, accounts for the success of our Forum Page. The fundamental difference is that we permit people to say what they want to say. Most newspapers edit letters rigorously to “save space.” We let people develop their arguments at length and, indeed, at leisure. And while individual letters may occasionally drone along with excessive self-indulgence, most letter-writers use this liberty of expression responsibly. With the odd exception, we have found that the act of writing — which is, after all, work — imposes its own discipline.

In this booklet is a collection of letters to *The Whig-Standard* that reflects, at its best, our policy of open debate. The dialogue here occurred spontaneously, from within our own community and our own readers. It began without any initiative from the newspaper, and it continued without any stimulus from the newspaper. Although *The Whig-Standard* did publish a few staff-written news stories over the period of this correspondence, these stories were based — as most news stories are — upon general comments made on general issues. We did not deem ourselves competent to write in detail about the very complex issues raised by this dialogue; indeed, it would have taken a very long time for any journalist to have investigated all of the different aspects to this debate — time that newspapers can only rarely commit.

In retrospect, I believe that the readers of this newspaper were better served in any event by the intelligent and knowledgeable debate that unfolded on our letters pages. As I now read through these letters, many months after the first letters appeared, I am deeply impressed by the quality of the correspondence. I am also reminded that we have here a kind of advocacy journalism that is virtually unique. Professional journalism, whatever it may assert in terms of objectivity, rarely deals with controversial issues without imparting to them a “spin” that clearly favors one side or the other. The writers represented in this

collection obviously came at identical questions with a firm and explicit point of view; perhaps, however, taken together, they constitute collectively a more balanced delivery of argument and information than orthodox journalism would have found possible.

I commend the individuals who took the time, and expended the energy, to write the letters published again here. I appreciate their sustained effort in debating the complex and painful issues confronted by the Deschênes Commission. *The Whig-Standard* is proud to have been able to publish this unusual public-interest dialogue.

Neil Reynolds,
Editor, *The Whig-Standard*
Kingston

**Letters to the
Editor of
The Whig-Standard**

Ukrainian refugees were not war criminals

Comment by Lubomyr Luciuk

SPORADICALLY since the end of the Second World War reports have appeared in the Canadian press suggesting that large numbers of Nazi war criminals and collaborators managed to escape justice and hide in this country. Such war criminals were allegedly recruited by Western governments for intelligence purposes. The Jan. 30 issue of the *The Whig-Standard* gave front-page prominence to such a story, the headline boldly stating: "Canada protects Nazi war criminals." Apparently the new solicitor general, Elmer MacKay, has even met with Rabbi Abraham Cooper of the Los Angeles-based Wiesenthal Centre, and the Jewish Canadian writer, Sol Littman, to discuss what should be done about the 800 to 3,000 criminals living among us.

Some troubling questions arise, however. Just who are these people, how did so many of them manage to enter Canada and what are their records? While no one disputes the need for prosecuting genuine Nazis, such as the infamous Dr. Mengele, who are all the other hundreds, if not thousands, of Nazi war criminals supposedly residing in Canada?

Neither Mr. Littman nor Rabbi Cooper were specific. A League for Human Rights of the B'Nai Brith of Canada booklet, entitled **One Is Too Many: Nazi War Criminals in Canada**, is likewise short on details. It does, however, note that most of the suspected people are of East European and not German origin. A similar allegation was made on an April 7, 1983, report on CBC's *The Journal* which featured Mr. Littman. Included in his comments were serious misrepresentations regarding the character and role of the Ukrainian Division "Galicia."

These charges rest on the unfounded assumption that all soldiers of East European units attached to the German armed forces were necessarily motivated by collaborationist and anti-Semitic sentiments. Because of the current concern with the prosecution of presumed war criminals in North America and elsewhere, veterans of these formations have been unfairly associated in the public mind with the Holocaust and related war crimes in Eastern Europe. My aim is to assess the record of the Ukrainian Division "Galicia."

When Nazi Germany invaded the Soviet Union in June, 1941, its leadership had no intention of

recruiting Ukrainians to the German armed forces. Like all other Slavs, the Ukrainians were relegated to the category of *Untermenschen* (sub-humans); Ukraine was considered a source of food and raw materials for the Third Reich as well as an area of future German colonization.

Not until 1943, following the defeat at Stalin-grad and the beginning of the Soviet counter-offensive, was the *Waffen-SS* permitted to recruit a "Galician Division" from the population of Western Ukraine. Even at this point (July, 1943) Adolf Hitler and Heinrich Himmler strongly opposed any concessions to Ukrainian nationalism and insisted that the division be referred to as a "Galician" and not a "Ukrainian" one. Anyone breaching this rule was liable to punishment.

Ukrainians were willing to join the division because they anticipated that the defeat of Germany would be followed by a further conflict between East and West. They were eager to have ready a military formation — even one originally sponsored by the Germans — which could serve as a nucleus for an independent and national Ukrainian army able to resist communist aggression. Accordingly, the agreement creating the division specified that it would be used exclusively against the Soviets.

Following several months of training, the division was transferred to the Brody area of Western Ukraine, where it was included in the 1st Armoured Army of the "North Ukraine" Army Group. Thrown up against vastly superior Red Army forces and surrounded in the "Brody pocket" on July 19-20, 1944, the division's 13,000 soldiers were decimated. Only about one in five survived. Some of these men joined the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) which fought both the Nazi and the Soviet regimes.

Subsequently the division was reformed at Neuhammer in Silesia, thereafter taking part in relatively minor military engagements. At no point was the division involved in the Nazi extermination of Jews or other Slavs. Soviet allegations that the division was involved in the suppression of the Warsaw Uprising are conclusively refuted in a recent study of this topic.

ON APRIL 27, 1945, at the insistence of the Ukrainian soldiers, the division was renamed and reconstituted as the 1st Ukrainian Division of the Ukrainian National Army under the command of Maj.-Gen. Pavlo Shandruk. It surrendered as such to the British near Radstadt on May 8, 1945, its members being accorded the status of surrendered enemy personnel.

Eventually the division was interned at a camp near Rimini, Italy, where British and Soviet in-

investigators thoroughly reviewed its war record. In a then-secret report prepared for the British government, D. Haldane Porter, who was in charge of the Refugee Screening Camp 374, Italy, wrote (Feb. 21, 1947) that Ukrainians had enlisted in the division "in the hope of securing a genuinely independent Ukraine. . . they probably were not, and certainly do not now, seem to be at heart pro-German."

In a "top secret" report regarding the repatriation of Soviet citizens, sent to the undersecretary of state at the British War Office, London, it was noted that compelling members of the division to accept repatriation to the U.S.S.R. would certainly "involve the use of force or drive them into committing suicide." Furthermore, the knowledge that these individuals, if sent back, would be dispatched to "an almost certain death" was considered to be quite out of keeping with British traditions of justice and democracy. Since the United Nations War Crimes Commission indicated to the British Foreign Office that it had no Ukrainian war criminals of any sort on its list, the decision was made not to forcibly repatriate members of this unit to the Soviet Union.

The division was therefore transferred to the United Kingdom, beginning in June of 1947 and held there by the British government until even further screening could be carried out. As early as 1946, prominent Ukrainian Canadians including Gordon Panchuk, M.B.E., C.D., Anthony Hlynka, M.P., and Ann Crapleve, B.E.M., C.D., had attempted to secure the release and "civilianization" of the division's members while also assisting them in emigrating to Canada. On May 31, 1950, following consultations with the RCMP, the Cabinet issued a statement admitting members of the division to Canada without restriction.

The High Commissioner for Canada in the U.K. wrote to the Secretary of External Affairs at the time that, "while in Italy these men were screened by Soviet and British missions and neither then nor subsequently has any evidence been brought to light which would suggest that any of them fought against humanity. Their behavior since they came to this country has been good and they have never indicated in any way that they are infected with any trace of Nazi ideology. . .

"From the reports of the special mission set up by the War Office to screen these men, it seems clear that they volunteered to fight against the Red Army from nationalistic notions which were given greater impetus by the behavior of the Soviet authorities during their earlier occupation of the Western Ukraine after the Nazi-Soviet Pact. Although communist propaganda has constantly

attempted to depict these, like so many refugees, as 'quislings' and 'war criminals' it is interesting to note that no specific charges of war crimes have been made against any member of this group."

Understandably, the Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC) was concerned about the admission of individuals allegedly guilty of "war crimes" to Canada. Its representations to the Canadian government, however, were based on misinformation.

The CJC claimed that it possessed "actual documentary proofs" of the division's involvement in war crimes. When challenged to produce these by the Ukrainian Canadian Committee, throughout August and September of 1950, it failed to do so. Nonetheless the furor created so vexed the Cabinet that it again consulted with the British Foreign Office to make certain that the division was not a Nazi formation. The British confirmed that the group was neither anti-Semitic nor guilty of war crimes. On September 25, 1950, Cabinet reaffirmed its earlier decision on the admissibility of the division's members to Canada.

To this day, the Canadian Jewish Congress has produced no evidence to suggest that Cabinet's decision was inappropriate. Since Mr. Littman, at least, is aware of some of the relevant archival documentation on this subject, his persistent reiteration of similar charges is rather puzzling.

THE OTHER MAJOR, and highly dubious, source of allegations against the division is the Soviet propaganda machine. Since the war's end the Soviet authorities have generated a stream of undocumented brochures associating the division with the Holocaust. The most recent of these was titled **The SS Werewolves**, by V. Styrkul. No scholarly work has substantiated any of the Soviet claims. One may refer to the following non-Ukrainian historians — John Armstrong, **Ukrainian Nationalism**, Nikolai Tolstoy, **Victims of Yalta**, Alexander Dallin, **German Rule in Russia, 1941-1945**, or David Littlejohn, **The Patriotic Traitors**, for objective depictions of the division's history. Regrettably, Soviet disinformation continues to fuel controversy about an issue that was resolved by 1951.

Membership in the division has never been regarded by its veterans as a cause for shame. Those living in Canada, the United States and Western Europe belong to a public organization, the Brotherhood of Veterans of the 1st Ukrainian Division of the Ukrainian National Army. They hold regular meetings, publish a journal, *Veterans' News*, and play an active role in community life. Such behavior is hardly characteristic of individuals fleeing justice.

A wealth of documentary evidence and oral testimony shows that the division cannot be linked with crimes against humanity. Those concerned with the identification and prosecution of war criminals should make full use of the material readily available in Canadian archives and libraries before making indiscriminate charges. To ignore the evidence is to fall prey to propagandistic distortions.

□ *Lubomyr Luciuk of Kingston is a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Toronto. He is an authority on refugee migration to Canada after the Second World War.*

Hunting Nazis

We shouldn't trust Soviet evidence in seeking out war criminals

By Ron Vastokas

DURING HIS RECENT trip to the Soviet Union, External Affairs Minister Joe Clark asked a senior official in Kiev if a Ukrainian national, held in a labor camp for 40 years, might be released to join his family in Canada. The official got angry and told Clark that the man was in prison for crimes against the state, that his future was a matter for the People's Court to decide and, besides, "how many war criminals. . . have been prosecuted in Canada, despite . . . requests for extradition?"

The notion that the West harbors thousands of war criminals is commonplace in the Soviet press. *Izvestia*, the state newspaper, says (Feb. 26, 1983) that "foreign jurists were given evidentiary material . . . concerning no less than 70,000 Nazis," but that this evidence, gathered by the Committee for State Security, the KGB, was hardly ever used.

Since Ottawa's Commission of Inquiry on (Nazi) War Criminals began its hearings in April, that Soviet "evidentiary material" has become the subject of a major controversy. It has been impugned as highly questionable and politically motivated. A heated debate has also been going on in the United States where the Office of Special Investigation (OSI) has been using Soviet-supplied evidence in its denaturalization cases against alleged Nazis. Now that there have been calls for a Canadian version of the OSI, and our commission is thinking about using Soviet evidence, the lessons of the American experience are worth looking at.

In January 1980, Allan Ryan and Walter Rockler, former directors of the special investigations office, went to Moscow and struck an agreement to use Soviet testimony in American courts. They asked the Soviets to provide documents and permit witnesses to travel to the U.S. to testify. Although the Soviets said there would be "no objection" to this arrangement, the office had to settle for what Ryan calls an "acceptable substitute," the videotaping of depositions in U.S.S.R. courtrooms. The Soviets have not allowed a single witness to testify in the U.S.

The target of the investigation, in the United States and in Canada, is the same: persons from Eastern European countries that are now occupied by the Soviet Union. In the 26 active OSI cases, all but two of the defendants are from Eastern Europe. In Canada, "most, if not all, the persons against whom accusations have been made came originally from Eastern Europe," says a cabinet task force report on *Alleged War Criminals in Canada* (1981).

To get a full perspective on this issue, however, it is not enough to ask how the arrangements made in Moscow worked out in practice. As important are the questions, why was Moscow so ready to co-operate with the special investigations office and how much is the Soviet legal system an expression of the goals of the Soviet state?

At the end of *The Gulag Archipelago*, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn says that "the law in our country, in its might and in its flexibility, is unlike anything called 'law' elsewhere on earth." The many reasons Solzhenitsyn gives to support this conclusion boil down to the single fact that Soviet courts are totally subservient to the Soviet state and the rule of law has been supplanted by the men who rule. Lenin's famous dictum "a law is a political measure, it is politics," applies as much in the Soviet Union today as it did in the heyday of the revolution. Even then Lenin was taking his cue from a historical trend. Czarist governments always tended to look upon law as a device for controlling the population.

The Soviet legal system, therefore, is an extension of state policy where political cases and war crimes have a special place. *Izvestia* itself says that "the interests of the state dictate all of the . . . work in the search for war criminals" (Feb. 25, 1983). For all practical purposes, it is the current ideology and the ruling party, not the merits of the case, that dictate its eventual outcome. That is why the Soviet courts, since October 1917, have not acquitted anyone arraigned on political charges. An investigation must end without fail in a conviction because the defendant that is brought to court is assumed guilty, or, as the dissident Vladimir Bukovski puts it, "in the opinion of the KGB and the party, his time has come."

Moreover, the state decides who is or is not a war criminal. "In the eyes of the Soviet authorities, for example," says the cabinet task force report, "war criminals may be an apt description for Soviet prisoners of war held by the Nazi forces and for partisans who resisted the Soviet occupation of Eastern European countries." The persons on the list submitted to the government by the Soviet embassy in Ottawa are not looked upon

as "alleged" war criminals. They *are* war criminals, and the purpose of the courts is to punish them, not to try them. This point was underlined in a recent statement by the Soviet embassy spokesman to the *Ottawa Citizen* (June 5, 1985). Alexander Podakin said that Moscow could make available testimony taken in absentia against "some of these criminals" now living in Canada.

THE OUTCOME of political trials in the U.S.S.R. is determined beforehand by the authorities. The January 1963 issue of *Soviet Legality*, the official gazette of the procurator general, gave an account of a war criminal trial in Tartu, Estonia. The reporter described the questioning of the witnesses, the exhibits before the court, the cross-examination of the defendant, and the prosecutor's remarks. He noted that the passing of the death sentence was "met with the unanimous approval of the public."

These events did, in fact, take place as described, but they all happened *after* the story appeared in print. The trial was set to start on Jan. 6, but was postponed to Jan. 16. The Moscow editor was not alerted of the delay and released the report. When the trial opened, people coming into the courtroom carried with them the verdict in print.

Needless to say, this conviction violates the U.S.S.R. constitution. The reporter was tried, found guilty, and given one year's hard labor, and another edition of *Soviet Legality* appeared with the dates deleted.

So it is within the state-controlled legal system that the political aims of the state find their logical outlet. But *Izvestia's* candid comment that links "the interests of the state" with "war criminals" supplies no further details.

One source that inadvertently sheds light on Soviet goals is Allan Ryan's book, **Quiet Neighbors: Prosecuting Nazi War Criminals in America**. The negotiations on evidence took place a month after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, but their tone was unusually cordial. In fact, says Ryan, a consular officer that accompanied him "shook his head in disbelief. He had never seen a Soviet official discuss any matter with such directness and candor." The OSI director dubbed the agreement as a "wildly improbable marriage" and marvelled at the Soviets who "asked nothing of us in return for their assistance." Ryan had obviously not heard of the maxim of the veteran U.S. negotiator George Kennan that things go well only when the Soviets want something.

The irony of Ryan's assessment becomes clear in the rest of the book where one can find the main

themes of Soviet state interests. Put another way, the Soviets got a good bargain: a revised version of Baltic history, and support for the Soviet claim that refugees from Eastern Europe are "Hitlerites" and that their opposition to communism is a "camouflage" to hide their former collaboration with Nazis.

The book is full of innuendoes against Ukrainian and Baltic refugees. The displaced persons camps in Germany where they lived are said to have had in them "everything . . . except Hitler." They were "infested with Nazi collaborators" who, after the war, "literally and figuratively threw off their Nazi uniforms" and "ingratiated themselves" to the Allies. Then they came to America in "boatload after boatload," — ten thousand, in fact.

When Ryan talks of the Soviet seizure of the Baltic States in 1940, he puts quotation marks around "forcefully incorporated," but leaves them off when he refers to the Great Patriotic War, a standard in Soviet phrasology. He adds in a footnote that "the State Department clings to the fiction that the Baltic republics are independent," even though the United States has never recognized their illegal occupation. In a book that deals with the complex theme of war criminals, one would expect a complete treatment of the war. Ryan's foreshortened history of the Baltic area begins with the invasion of Soviet-occupied Lithuania on June 22, 1941, which Ryan now calls the "invasion of the Soviet Union." There are no references to the Hitler-Stalin pact of Aug. 23, 1939, or the protocol that put Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia "into the U.S.S.R. sphere of influence," or the Red Army invasion of the Baltic states and the mass killings and deportations that followed. There is no mention of the Great Famine of 1933 when Stalin systematically starved and terrorized to death seven million Ukrainians, or that five million more died in the Nazi holocaust, or that the Ukrainian resistance was on a par with the celebrated French underground. Nor is there any mention of the second and continuing illegal occupation of Eastern Europe and the severity of the present cultural, national and religious repression. These are all basic facts in any assessment of Soviet motives in Eastern European affairs.

The refugees from Eastern Europe are the last surviving witnesses of the war crimes that the Soviets themselves committed and the last claimants to the territory the Soviets seized by force. The refugees are also a powerful voice in the western world and a constant reminder of the goals of Soviet colonialism.

In the search for Nazi war criminals, therefore,

the Soviets have seen and seized an opportunity to advance their interests in Eastern Europe at little political risks: to silence and to stigmatize the refugees as "Hitlerite bourgeois reactionaries," to revise history so that all war crimes become Nazi war crimes, and to solidify territorial claims in the Baltic states.

To cover this undisguised political self-interest, the Soviets have linked the Nazi hunt with the search for world peace. In recent Soviet press articles the "Hitlerites" and their "Fascist organizations" are invariably seen as a "threat to peace, a threat to the security of nations." In Moscow, Ryan was reminded that the Soviet Union and the U.S. were "allies still in this important work" of prosecuting "Hitlerites," a line again repeated in Ottawa by Alexander Podakin.

THIS MESSAGE HAS NOT been lost on some American commentators. Walter Reich, writing in the *Washington Post* (April 28, 1985) also finds a "reservoir of kinship" in the historic struggle against the Nazis that might now be put to use. He suggests that, as a gesture of goodwill, "former Nazi collaborators" who were "born in what is now the Soviet Union," be deported to the USSR to improve the climate at the Geneva arms talks.

Like the Soviets, Reich ingeniously combines politics and justice. Deportation of alleged war criminals becomes a peace offering and arguments against Soviet evidence a threat to *detente*. But to accept this point of view is to make the whole issue of evidence, not just Soviet evidence, irrelevant.

Although Ryan says that the "marriage . . . arranged in Moscow worked out surprisingly well," the procedures for taking testimony in the Soviet Union have come under strong criticism. Since all depositions are conducted in Soviet courts under the auspices of the KGB and the Central Committee of the Communist Party, many U.S. defence lawyers find the arrangement repugnant. Paul Zumbakis, a Chicago lawyer, in a recent memorandum to the U.S. Immigration Court, says that "allowing the KGB, through Soviet procurators under their control, to supervise and preside over evidentiary depositions taken expressly for use in U.S. courts is as repulsive to our system of justice as would be the taking of depositions under Gestapo supervision in Nazi Germany."

Beyond procedure and politics, however, is the moral argument of lending respectability to a judicial system that has been, and is, a willing instrument of a repressive regime. The men with whom the Americans worked out the Moscow

agreement are members of that regime and are themselves guilty of summary justice and execution. The procurator general of the U.S.S.R. Gen. Roman Rudenko, whose "commanding presence" so impressed Ryan, is the same Rudenko who, on Aug. 1, 1953 at the Vorkuta Camp 29, gave orders to shoot at striking political prisoners. Rudenko's deputy, Aleksandr Rekunkov, while negotiating with the OSI, read the exile decree to Andrei Sakharov and banished him to the closed city of Gorky. The state prosecutor in OSI proceedings in Lithuania is Jurgis Bakucionis. He is also responsible for sending every major Lithuanian religious and political dissident to the prison camps.

Above all, the Soviet regime has never acknowledged the killing of 42 million defenceless people on its own and its neighbors' territory. If the prosecution of surviving Nazis is to proceed unblemished, it should not enter into a partnership with men who have never brought their own war criminals to justice and are using genocide as an instrument of state policy. If we set out to redress one of the greatest evils in history, can we blind ourselves to another evil that was just as great?

□ Ron Vastokas teaches anthropology at Trent University in Peterborough and has been a Liberal party candidate in three federal elections. He is a native of Lithuania.

Canada must work to bring war criminals to justice before time runs out

The long-awaited report of the Commission of Inquiry into Nazi War Criminals in Canada (Deschênes commission) will be presented to Justice Minister Ramon Hnatyshyn soon.

While no one knows beforehand what Mr. Justice Jules Deschênes will recommend in his report, we do know what evidence was presented to the Simon Wiesenthal Centre, B'Nai Brith, and the Canadian Jewish Congress. On the basis of that evidence, it is reasonable to assume that the commission of inquiry will find that:

□ A significant number of war criminals found shelter in Canada in the postwar years and have been living free, undisturbed lives in Canada.

□ The number is large enough to merit prompt and forceful action by the Canadian government.

□ Not only are their numbers sizable, but their crimes were substantial. In some cases — Alexander Laak, Haralds Puntulis, Hermine Braunsteiner, le comte de Bernonville, Helmut Rauca — their victims number in the hundreds and thousands. Above all, they are not simply tired old men hounded by the Soviets for making a political misjudgment that put them on the Nazi side.

□ While Canada's laws may need some minor adjustments to permit prosecution of war criminals in Canada, these difficulties can be readily overcome by a government determined to see justice done. (This concept was largely supported by a majority of the lawyers whose opinion was solicited by Justice Deschênes.)

□ Extradition offers a viable instrument for dealing with war criminals. Some treaties may have to be amended to cover some of the legal technicalities presented by varying criminal codes in different countries. For example, our treaty with Holland could include a phrase stating that wartime treason leading to the death of civilians is to be regarded as the equivalent of murder and regarded as an extraditable offence.

□ Extradition to Soviet-bloc countries presents special problems. However, the United States — which is certainly no friend of the Soviet Union — has deported several war criminals to countries behind the Iron Curtain. There is no indication that they failed to receive fair trials or were sentenced on the basis of forged evidence. The evidence in some cases is so clear that even the Soviet Union need not lie. The Holocaust *did*

happen and the Nazis did most of the killing in countries now part of the Soviet bloc.

□ The American approach, namely denationalization and deportation for filing false immigration remains feasible in a substantial number of cases despite the systematic destruction of immigration documents. In any event this approach should be tested in Canada's courts rather than rejected out of hand by a timorous government bureaucracy.

□ Evidence, while difficult to assemble, nevertheless exists: while much evidence has been lost in the past 40 years, vital documents are stored in the world's archives and living witnesses wait to give evidence.

□ While some of this evidence lies behind the Iron Curtain, corroborative documents and witnesses exist in Israel, Western Europe, the United States and Canada.

□ Canada became a major haven for war criminals when, at the behest of the British government, it turned its back on war crimes prosecutions in 1948. British and American Cold War policy at the time called for the rearming of Germany and its conversion into a western ally against the Soviet Union. West German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer's price for German co-operation was the discontinuance of war crimes prosecutions by the Allies.

□ Key point: Forty years of neglect can only be overcome by the creation of a well-staffed and well-financed unit specializing in war criminal prosecutions similar to the Office of Special Investigations of the U.S. Justice Department. The OSI, because its work was supported by a staff of investigators, historians and prosecutors, has been successful in bringing such infamous war criminals as Artukovic, Federenko and Trifa to justice. Without a special unit, the biological clock is likely to run out before justice can be done. Normal agencies of law enforcement in Canada are not adequate to the task. For example, it took the RCMP 20 years to find Helmut Rauca although he was living openly under his own name, regularly renewing his passport and receiving the Canada Pension.

It must be borne in mind that Justice Deschênes can only report and recommend — his mandate does not permit him to prosecute anyone. Changes in Canadian law, alterations in extradition treaties, and active prosecution of alleged war criminals must wait on government action. It is also up to the prime minister and his cabinet to implement Deschênes' findings.

Justice Deschênes' recommendations are sure to be fiercely attacked by those organizations that have consistently objected to the creation of a

Commission of Inquiry into Nazi War Criminals. You can expect that they will direct a deluge of letters, postcards, telegrams and petitions at the prime minister demanding that the report be shelved. They will stage mass rallies in major cities and organize marches on Parliament Hill. They will again raise the bogey of "Soviet evidence" and claim that inter-ethnic amity is threatened. In the end, the battle to bring war criminals to justice will be political. Much will depend on the willingness of the government to brave disapproval by the opponents of the Deschênes commission in order to see justice done.

The battle, however, is not between the Jewish and the Ukrainian communities. (It was unfortunate that Justice Deschênes gave standing before the commission to two Jewish and two Ukrainian organizations, thereby inadvertently giving the impression that these two communities stood opposed to each other.) The disagreement is between those of all national and ethnic backgrounds who see the punishment of Nazi war criminals as part of the world's unfinished business and those who would rather see the holocaust reduced to a forgotten footnote.

Sol Littman
Canadian representative
Simon Wiesenthal Centre
Toronto

Canada must not be pressured into selectivity in pursuing war criminals

Re: "Canada must work to bring war criminals to justice before time runs out." (*Whig-Standard*, Oct. 8). Sol Littman, whose role in befuddling the Canadian government into establishing a Commission of Inquiry on War Criminals, can only be characterized, charitably, as murky. introduced several specious claims into his lengthy letter dealing with the forthcoming report of this commission. Although one suspects he knows better, he states that it is "reasonable" to "assume" that a "significant number" of alleged war criminals came into Canada after the Second World War. Until Mr. Justice Jules Deschênes's report is made public, it is, in fact, quite unreasonable to try and second-guess what the inquiry discovered, if anything. Its conclusion may well be, as many scholars and lawyers have pointed out, that very few war criminals, if any, managed to find shelter in Canada.

Interestingly, Mr. Littman — who does not speak, at least officially, on behalf of B'Nai Brith or the Canadian Jewish Congress, but only for a foreign-based centre named after, but not directed by, Nazi-hunter Simon Wiesenthal — persists in referring to the commission as "the Commission of Inquiry into Nazi War Criminals in Canada." Unconsciously, perhaps, he reveals a peculiar bias. The proper title is Commission of Inquiry on War Criminals.

Unfortunately, Mr. Littman's views about whom the commission should be searching for, seem to have found fertile soil within the inquiry itself. Either because of a misreading of its mandate, or possibly a bias in its executors' perspectives on the Second World War, the commission has steadfastly refused to consider whether or not Soviet war criminals might have found shelter within Canada. This bias persisted even *after* the inquiry was presented with a lengthy list of persons who might be living in this country and who are alleged to have perpetrated crimes against humanity in Soviet-occupied Eastern Europe *during* the Second World War.

Littman, and his apologists, seem reluctant to address this oversight. For them one Nazi in Canada is "one too many." While agreeing with that, one cannot help but wonder why having one Soviet war criminal in Canada is also not "one too many." Do murdered Ukrainians, Poles, Lithuanians or Estonians not count?

It is undeniable that, during the war, war crimes were committed by both the Nazi and Soviet regimes. In *every West European*, as well as East European country, there were individuals who collaborated with the invaders, either out of ideological motives or self-interest. Yet, just as some East and West Europeans participated in the destruction of European Jewry so too some Jews, for ideological or personal reasons, assisted the Soviet forces who slaughtered members of the national resistance movements in these lands. Searching, so many years after the war, for only those who helped the Nazis, is discriminatory.

Rather disingenuously, it was Littman himself who was most directly responsible for claiming that large numbers of Nazi war criminals remained hiding within various East European communities, although he never introduced evidence in support of this belief. He also helped precipitate the inquiry itself by publicizing the totally specious claim that Joseph Mengele (long dead in South America) had tried to enter Canada. It is well to recall how a government lawyer, Mr. I. Whitehall, was so angered by Mr. Littman's machinations that he publicly denounced the latter before the commission.

A number of related questions arise from Littman's letter. Why has this Wiesenthal Centre, for which he is, apparently, a paid lobbyist, not investigated whether Soviet war criminals also found shelter in North America after the war? Why have none of the groups Littman likes to align himself with (like the Canadian Jewish Congress and B'Nai Brith, two organizations whose officers voice very critical assessments of Mr. Littman's behavior and allegations but are unwilling, it seems for reasons of community solidarity, to say so publicly) not raised the issue of why the Soviet Union, making use of the puppet Polish regime, continues to allow Nazi Erich Koch, known as the "Butcher of Ukraine" to live in comfort under "house arrest" in Braczewo, Poland?

Surely it would be worth Simon Wiesenthal's time, or that of self-appointed Nazi-hunter Littman's, to go after the last major Nazi war criminal — a man under whose regime at least 800,000 Ukrainian Jews perished and several million other Ukrainians were murdered or sent as slave laborers to the Third Reich?

Yet, in order to make (so far, unsuccessfully) the case that a few low-ranking collaborators may have come to Canada (all, in Littman's view, from Eastern Europe, none from Western Europe), Littman, and others, are apparently prepared to treat with the Soviets to get so-called "evidence" with which to try Canadian citizens.

One might feel better if Littman knew even one East European language. Russian perhaps. Yet, not knowing a word of Ukrainian, Polish, Lithuanian or any other relevant language, he claimed that he has personally seen "tons" of "evidence" in Soviet archives. No doubt his Intourist guide was most helpful.

It is worthwhile reflecting on why some people seem willing to condemn the U.S.S.R. for its abuse of human rights, especially of Soviet Jewry, but are simultaneously willing to enter into negotiations with the internal security forces, known as the KGB, who persecute Jews, Ukrainians, and others in the *Gulag*. In the United States the Office of Special Investigations (OSI), often relying on Soviet supplied "evidence," has carried out what amounts to a "witchhunt," aimed particularly at Americans of East European descent; people who, during the war, fought for their nations' independence against both the Nazis and the Soviets.

Curiously, this OSI has found no West European who collaborated in the Soviet-initiated massacres in Eastern Europe. Yet Mr. Littman would have the Canadian government, and all of us, as taxpayers, fund a similar multi-million-dollar bureaucracy here in Canada, a leviathan which might end up seeking *only* Nazi war criminals, a body with an obviously vested interest in finding people, if only to justify its continued existence.

Certainly, if there are any war criminals in Canada, be they of Estonian, Belgian, Serbian, Jewish or German background, let them be tried *here in Canada*, according to Canadian standards of jurisprudence. No Canadian organization representing Ukrainian, Lithuanian or other East European communities has ever suggested otherwise. Mr. Littman seems to have convinced himself that there is some massive attempt to misinform the Canadian public about this issue; apparently he feels there is something wrong with Canadian citizens writing to their MPs or engaging in peaceful protests against what they perceive to be a distortion of justice.

While we can be sure he would claim "anti-semites" were at work if his own "centre" was prevented from soliciting donations by mail or engaging in political lobbying in Ottawa, he seems to wish to deny that democratic right to millions of Canadians of East European heritage. He also forgets that the vast majority of these people, including those who have vigorously challenged his erroneous descriptions of the East European experience during the Second World War, were born in Canada. These Canadians have no interest in hiding Nazis or Soviet war criminals

in their midst.

There will undoubtedly be considerable interest in what the Deschênes commission reports. It is not surprising to observe Mr. Littman attempting to influence public opinion by trying, before the inquiry has even concluded its work, to yet again convince Canadians that there are large numbers of Nazis living amongst them. The point remains that the commission may just as likely have found that this is a totally incorrect view. In that case the government must have the political courage to say so and refuse to be bullied into funding yet another round of investigations of the type fueled by such easily disproved allegations as the one about Mengele.

The Commission of Inquiry on War Criminals was welcomed because many believed that it would finally resolve this complex issue. It now seems appropriate to let it finish its work without attempting to pressure it, or the government, into acting one way or another. Once the commission's report is available, those interested in its findings can reflect on its mandate, methods and conclusions. Only then can all Canadians decide what legal and political measures, if any, need to be taken.

If one can speak of a "battle" in Canada (to use Littman's rhetoric) it is, at least, wise to repeat that this is most definitely not a fight between Jews and Ukrainians. Rather it pits decent Canadians, who insist that *all* war criminals should be found and prosecuted according to western standards of law, against a minority who prefer to be selective in their remembrance of genocide and seemingly discriminatory in the value they place upon East European as opposed to other peoples' lives and deaths. Individuals or organizations with such narrow and biased beliefs must never be allowed to impose their skewed concepts of law and history onto Canadian society. To allow them to do so would be to have forgotten the real universal meaning of the Holocaust.

Elizabeth Erskine Forbes Mitchell
Toronto

Many so-called 'war crimes' lie outside commission's terms of reference

THE POSSIBLE PRESENCE of war criminals in Canada has been investigated by the Deschênes commission, which will soon issue a report that, we all hope, will set this painful business to rest. However, the recent letter to the editor on Oct. 21 from Elizabeth Erskine Forbes Mitchell does not contribute to an impartial and reasoned discussion of the issues involved.

Her assertion that Sol Littman "befuddled" the Canadian government into establishing this commission of inquiry is nonsense. Mr. Littman raised legitimate concerns which must have appeared sufficiently serious to the government to warrant further investigation.

The government of Canada does not move as easily on unsubstantiated allegations as she thinks. Ms Mitchell appears to have little faith in Canadian constitutional processes. Through her letter she is trying to influence public opinion just as much as Mr. Littman is. As a private citizen Mr. Littman has just as much right to his opinion as she has to hers. No one is under any obligation to agree with either one.

Central to Ms Mitchell's desire to have the commission widen its inquiry to ferret out Soviet war criminals is the definition of what constitutes a war crime.

This definition was legally established by the London Agreement among the four powers (United States, Great Britain, France and the Soviet Union) on Aug. 8, 1945; by the terms of reference of the Nuremberg Tribunal of December of that year, and by the resolution of the General Assembly of the United Nations on Dec. 11, 1946.

This definition, now established in international law, specifies the different varieties of war crimes. However, all these crimes have to do with acts committed against soldiers or civilians of an enemy state with which the transgressing state is at war.

Acts committed against one's own nationals, however abhorrent or deplorable, do not fall under this definition. Most of Stalin's crimes, having been committed against Soviet citizens, fall outside the limits of this definition.

If Ms Mitchell, or anyone else, believes that the Deschênes commission should proceed against individuals living in Canada who may

have been implicated in atrocities during collectivization or the purges of the 1930s, this is by definition outside these terms of reference.

If, on the other hand, she has evidence that certain individuals now living in Canada may have participated in Soviet crimes on occupied territory during the Second World War (such as the Katyn massacre of 1940) she has the moral obligation to bring charges before the commission or any other legally constituted body, so that these persons might be brought to justice.

Certainly one war criminal of any nationality whatsoever in Canada is one too many. However, in our expectations of how the commission should approach its task, we must remember that most of the atrocities committed by the Soviet Union were carried out by relatively small bodies of the Soviet secret police, the NKVD.

And it seems most unlikely that there has been a mass migration of NKVD personnel into Canada. On the other hand, far larger bodies of German armed forces and police units were implicated in atrocities all over occupied Europe during the Second World War, and we do know that numerous former members of units which are suspect on such grounds did enter Canada after 1945.

For instance, there exists in Canada an organization of veterans of the former 14th *Waffen SS* Division (also known as the Galicia or First Ukrainian Division). This organization, known as the Brotherhood of Former Soldiers of the 1 Ukrainian division U.N.A., holds meetings, issues publications and otherwise celebrates its service in the German armed forces.

However, the operational history of this division gives rise to some interesting questions. The division was raised in 1943 in the western Ukraine and completed its training in Germany in May, 1944. It was then transferred to the rear area of the Eastern Front, which, at that time, ran through former Polish territory.

On May 18, 1944 the command of the Polish resistance, known as the Home Army (*Armia Krajowa*), notified the Polish government-in-exile in London to the effect that units of this division had burned six Polish villages of the Hrubieszow district and were massacring the Polish population. Similar reports were transmitted on May 24 and July 7, 1944. (See *Armia Krajowa W Dokumentach 1939-45*, [London, 1976, 5 vols.] Vol. 3 pp. 447, 458, 507).

After the defeat of the German forces at Brody in July of 1944, in which this division was decimated, the survivors were transferred to Slovakia, where they participated in the suppression of the Slovak revolt against the Germans

from September to December, 1944, a suppression was accompanied by atrocities against the Slovak population. (Wolfgang Venohr, *Aufstand in der Tatra* [Konigstein, 1979] *passim*).

In February 1945, units of the division were also sent to Slovenia in Yugoslavia, where they took part in operations against the anti-German guerrillas there. No one is arguing that any specific veteran of this division now living in Canada participated in these atrocities.

However, the association of the division with operations leading to atrocities against nationals of several occupied countries, whose only "crime" was that they fought against the German invaders of their homelands, at least warrants a close look by the Deschênes commission or any other concerned Canadian.

While it is true that in every West European country there were collaborators with the Germans during the Second World War, all of these countries made serious efforts to bring them to justice after the liberation and are still doing so (Klaus Barbie in France). Frenchmen, Dutchmen, Danes, Norwegians or Belgians who served in the German armed forces were penalized for it after the war.

And in Eastern Europe the postwar regimes also punished such collaborations. Thus, it is hard to see what point Ms Mitchell is trying to make by raising this issue in this context.

But when she makes the allegation that some Jews "assisted the Soviet forces who slaughtered members of the national resistance movements in these lands," she seems to be engaging in a dubious argument which smacks of former Nazi propaganda about "Judeo-communism," rigged out in new garb. Besides that, she seems perilously close to making the kinds of blanket condemnations which she suggests Mr. Littman is doing.

Furthermore, there are two points about this assertion concerning Jews which a historian cannot allow to pass without comment. First, Jews who participated in such alleged activities did so as individual Communists. There were Jews in Eastern Europe who were Communists, just as there were Ukrainians, Poles, Latvians, Roman Catholics, Protestants, Uniates, Orthodox or Moslems who were Communists.

This was inevitable under the political conditions of the time. But all of these individuals of whatever nationality or faith who belonged to or worked with the NKVD did so as individuals. There were no specifically Jewish, any more than there were Ukrainian or Armenian, battalions or divisions within the NKVD.

Therefore, Jewish or any other members of the

NKVD did not represent their nationalities, but merely Stalin's regime. However, the Ukrainian, Latvian, or Estonian police battalions, or SS divisions in the German forces, carried specific national labels and thus, presumably, felt that they were in some ways representing their nationalities. If these labels now pursue them to Canada, this is perhaps more understandable than Ms Mitchell is willing to allow.

Secondly, it is difficult to understand the allusion to the "slaughtering of the national resistance movements" in the Soviet occupied lands. There are two periods to which Ms Mitchell may be referring: the period between the occupation of these territories in 1939-40 and the German invasion in June, 1941, or the period after the Soviet re-conquest of this area in 1944-45.

In between, the area was occupied by the Germans for half of the Second World War, and obviously her argument does not apply to this interval. Between the Soviet occupation and the German invasion, there was little time for national resistance movements to appear, and during this time Jewish residents of these territories suffered just as much as the rest of the population.

Thousands of Jews were arrested as "class enemies," deported to Siberia, deprived of property and executed. During this time, the record of Jewish Communists in this area does not appear to be different in kind from that of Ukrainian or any other Communists.

After the Soviet re-conquest of the area in 1944-45, strong resistance movements did appear in Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and the western Ukraine, but by this time there were virtually no Jews left alive in these territories to assist the Soviet forces in their suppression — the Germans and their collaborators had seen to that.

Apropos Ms Mitchell's comments on the Wiesenthal centre and Mr. Littman, the reason why they do not investigate alleged Soviet war criminals in North America is because they have, like the Deschênes commission, a specific purpose, which is to pursue those responsible for the Holocaust.

However, this does not imply that the Jewish community or its organizations in North America are soft on the Russians; witness their constant concern and protests against Soviet violations of human rights and the suppression of Jewish culture in the Soviet Union.

Her further argument about the unwillingness of the "self-appointed Nazi hunters" to pursue Erich Koch is not only a red-herring, but also shows her lack of knowledge of the issues she writes about.

Nobody is pursuing Erich Koch because he was

tried for war crimes by the Polish government and sentenced to death on March 9, 1959 (*New York Times*, March 10, 1959, p. 5). He was not executed because he was broken in health, and the Polish government apparently felt that hanging a physical wreck would be an inhumane act.

Ms Mitchell's statement that he is being allowed by the Soviet Union to live in comfort under house arrest conjures visions of Koch living the life of Riley at the expense of a Communist government; in actuality, if he is still alive, he is now 90 years old and it is doubtful that the Polish regime has made the intervening years all that pleasant for him.

Her questioning of the evidence shown to Mr. Littman in the Soviet Union is yet another red-herring since she obviously does not know what kind of evidence he was shown. Was it photographs? Was it captured German documents? In such case, no knowledge of East European languages would be necessary on his part. Only if further disclosures are made on the nature of the alleged evidence will we be able to judge.

Ms Mitchell's slap at the U.S. Office of Special Investigations (OSI) leaves one gasping. To assume that under the presidency of Ronald Reagan any U.S. government agency would carry out a "witch-hunt" at the behest of the KGB and on the basis of faked Soviet documents is so fatuous that it does not even deserve serious consideration.

Her argument that the OSI found no West Europeans who collaborated in the Soviet-initiated massacres in Eastern Europe is another howler. Does she imagine, perhaps, that Frenchmen or Englishmen were being employed by the NKVD to police Eastern Europe? No wonder none were found.

MS MITCHELL ARGUES that any war criminals found in Canada should be tried here in Canada. This sounds nice, but what basis is there in Canadian law for trying war criminals in Canada for crimes committed neither in Canada nor against Canadians? It is doubtful that any Canadian court could legally take on such a responsibility.

Moreover, Ms Mitchell invalidates her argument through her blanket rejection of all evidence that might come from behind the Iron Curtain. How could any Canadian court function in the way she proposes if it were *a priori* denied access to witnesses and documentation which, of necessity, would have to come largely from the Communist countries of Eastern Europe, where the alleged crimes were committed?

There is nothing whatever wrong with "Canadian citizens writing to their MPs or engaging

in peaceful protests against what they perceive to be a distortion of justice," but these are, after all, judicial matters to be decided not in the streets but in the courts. In her entire approach to this issue Ms Mitchell raises a fundamental question.

The Canadian law-making system incorporates among its most important features investigative commissions and an independent judiciary. Both must be able to function unhampered within their legal frames of references.

Ms Mitchell seems to imply that any person "fingered" by the Deschênes commission as a possible war criminal will be immediately condemned and handed over to the Soviets. This is, of course, untrue.

The commission will only establish possible grounds for action, which must then be taken by the legal system, and the accused, if any, will then have all the resources provided by the Constitution and the laws with which to defend themselves. Only after a lengthy and exhaustive judicial process would anyone be extradited as provided by law.

However, she seems to have very little faith in our legal system. She seems to argue that Canadian courts, judges and juries are so naive and gullible that they will inevitably be bamboozled by faked evidence and induced to hand innocent people over to Soviet "justice." She thus feels that our legal system must be protected from itself by denying it in advance all evidence emanating from Eastern Europe.

But this is a very dangerous principle, because the functioning of our legal system depends on its access to all evidence. After all, Communists don't always lie and Canadians don't always tell the truth under oath.

Our judicial system, being a human institution, can be fallible like all human institutions. But it functions generally very well and manages to avoid injustice. Our courts apply very strict rules of evidence and are generally able to distinguish the true from the false. But it is of crucial importance that they should be allowed to do so without restrictions.

Once the principle of excluding *a priori* some types of evidence is accepted, it might be possible in future to apply the same reasoning to all evidence given by Blacks, Ukrainians or people named Mitchell.

Moreover, Ms Mitchell's strictures against the reliability of all testimony emanating from the Communist countries can, if applied strictly, lead to ridiculous situations. Suppose testimony were offered by Lech Walesa or Andrei Sakharov? Not all residents of Eastern Europe are Communists, nor do they all automatically lie.

Only the untrammelled examination of *all* evidence from whatever source by our judicial system can get us close to the truth.

Ultimately, one either believes in our system or one doesn't. We, the undersigned, do believe in it and, unlike Ms Mitchell, are willing to trust it.

In her final paragraphs, Ms Mitchell sets up a spurious confrontation between "decent Canadians" and "a minority who prefer to be selective in their remembrance of genocide." It would seem that the latter group are not "decent." Her allusion to "narrow and biased beliefs" of certain "individuals or organizations" itself demonstrates her own narrowness and bias, as well as a sloppy use of the English language.

The term "genocide" has, after all, a precise definition. It has been defined as the deliberate extermination of an entire national, racial, or cultural, group. Under this definition, there was only one case of genocide during the Second World War, the Holocaust of European Jewry. (Possibly the attempt of the Croatian *Ustashi* puppet regime to murder the entire Serbian population of their state counts as a second case.)

Thus, it is impossible to understand what Ms Mitchell means by "selective remembrance." Nobody tried to exterminate all the Ukrainians or all the Latvians. The liquidation of selected, politically suspect sections of these populations by Stalin's regime, however atrocious, was not genocide.

Ms Mitchell seems to believe that the uniqueness of the Jewish experience must somehow be cut down to size by giving all persecuted groups an equivalent genocide, just as she seems to feel that for every pro-Nazi war criminal in Canada an equivalent pro-Soviet one must be discovered. Unfortunately, historical experience does not always provide for such neat equations.

No one has ever argued that all postwar East European immigrants to Canada are collectively guilty of association with Nazi atrocities, or even of hiding war criminals in their midst. We strongly believe that the vast majority of them and of their Canadian-born descendants prefer to have guilty individuals exposed and brought to justice.

We take issue only with those individuals or groups, whether of East European descent or pure Anglo-Saxon lineage, who seem to wish to obstruct the work of the Deschênes commission, or who, through the use of spurious arguments and arbitrary restrictions, wish to prevent the pursuit of justice. Among the latter, Ms Mitchell, despite her moralizations, must unfortunately be included.

The shrill outcry against the work of the

Deschênes commission reminds one irresistibly of the episode in 1970 when an organization called the Italian-American Civil Rights League suddenly appeared in the United States to protest at the way that Italian-Americans were always being accused of association with the Mafia.

The Mafia, it maintained, was a myth invented by the police; if there was organized crime in America, it held, it was not organized by Italians. The league tapped a vein of resentment in Italian-Americans, and succeeded in mounting great demonstrations to picket the FBI headquarters.

But the Mafia was real; and it soon turned out that the organizer and financier of the league was none other than Joe Colombo, one of the principal Mafia bosses, who used his gullible fellow citizens to try to pressure the government into suspending its investigation into organized crime.

One can only hope that the foolish protests and letters against the work of the Deschênes commission will not turn out to be the same kind of gambit. If Canadians of East European extraction truly wish to demonstrate their disassociation from Nazi war criminals, they can best do so by assisting, not resisting, the work of the Deschênes commission.

Lucien Karchmar
Gerald Tulchinsky
Kingston

Revisionists ignore ugly reality of Jewish collaborators in Second World War

Re the letter "Many so-called 'war crimes' lie out of commission's terms of reference" (Nov. 10).

As a Ukrainian political prisoner who survived several Nazi concentration camps, including Majdanek, it is incumbent upon me to place on record certain facts which, however unpalatable they may be for some of your readers, must be recalled. The ignorance of men like Sol Littman, or of his apologists, Messrs. Lucien Karchmar and Gerald Tulchinsky, must not be allowed to stand unchallenged. Many of my friends — Ukrainians, Poles, Jews — perished in the Nazi death camps. I cannot now allow revisionists, of whatever political bent, to selectively recall only those bits of Second World War history that suit their interests and ignore those realities which I personally experienced.

In November, 1943, some 27,000 Jews were exterminated in Section 5 of the Majdanek concentration camp. I was interned in Section 4, from where it was possible to catch glimpses of what was happening inside the adjacent section. The ugly truth is that most of the victims were handed over to their executioners by other Jews.

The latter were occupied in the running of the internal administration of this camp, and I read of many others. While I do not dispute, in any sense, the suffering endured by the Jews during the Second World War — I shared in the degradations, the misery, and the humiliations of concentration camp existence — I find it hypocritical that, four decades after the war, some individuals and organizations are suddenly busy searching for Nazi war criminals among East European communities.

It seems to me that it is incumbent upon them to first proceed against the war criminals in their own midst. It might be objected that justice was done in this matter soon after the war. Yet, as Dr. Petro Mirchuk, another Ukrainian political prisoner, held in the infamous Auschwitz camp (and tattooed #49734), has pointed out, many former Jewish collaborators escaped serious punishment after the war, and continue to live, unharmed, in Israel.

In his book Mirchuk points out that while in Israel he spoke with the Chief Rabbi of Tel Aviv, Dr. David Kahana. The latter pointed out that

Jacob Kozelchuk, known as one of Auschwitz's most brutal executioners, had survived the war, found his way to Israel and there has been tried, but acquitted, ostensibly because he performed some minor tasks on behalf of the underground. Still, he was also undoubtedly a mass murderer. It seems likely that other war criminals of this type found shelter in Canada after the war, perhaps masquerading as displaced persons or political refugees.

I often wonder myself what happened to a Jewish *kapo* in Majdanek; I remember his first name was Alex. He personally whipped me once, 15 lashes, and I saw him do the same to others, including his fellow Jews. There was another young Jewish boy, perhaps 16 or 17 years old, called "Bobbie" who was promoted to a *kapo* position for hanging his own father. I also witnessed how, in Buchenwald, the Jewish foremen of a labor gang brutalized their own people.

You may argue that such men were forced to do these things. They were. So were others of various nationalities. Why are East Europeans however, now being singled out, or so it seems, for investigation while these others are apparently forgotten? I can only add that many of the East European *kapos* and foremen were — in the context of those camps — *relatively* better disposed towards prisoners like myself. For example, I owe my life to one such man. If more of those Jewish foremen had tried, it seems to me their people would have suffered far less than they did.

If Messrs. Karchmar and Tulchinsky were more careful followers of the proceedings of the Commission of Inquiry on War Criminals they would know that at least one such person — formerly an NKVD officer — was asked to testify before Justice Deschênes in Montreal, not about his own crimes but about *Baltic collaborators*! One wonders when the Canadian government plans to spend a few million dollars investigating the Soviet war criminals who can be found in this country.

Which brings me to my final point. Rereading Elizabeth Mitchell's letter of Oct. 21, I do not see where she introduced "propaganda" about "Judeo-communism" into her reply to Littman, as Karchmar and Tulchinsky claim she did. Frankly, it is surprising that these gentlemen would be so trite as to have to resort to implying "anti-Semitic" motives to her in their critique of the points she raised.

While I cannot personally testify to the veracity of the observation made by Prof. Richard C. Lukas (*The Forgotten Holocaust: The Poles Under German Occupation, 1939-1944*, The

University Press of Kentucky, 1986, p. 128) that "Jewish collaboration with the Soviets, more than any other factor, was responsible for increasing anti-Semitism in Poland during the war," there certainly is a prevailing sentiment among Eastern European survivors of the war that this is a historically accurate statement.

Perhaps Littman, Karchmar and others would do better if they investigated and denounced *all* war criminals regardless of their ethnic, racial, religious or cultural background, as Ms Mitchell advises, rather than pretending that there were no Jewish war criminals. Gentlemen, I was there. You, very obviously, were not.

Stefan Kuzmyn
Kingston

No immunity from justice

Erich Koch, known as the "Butcher of Ukraine" described himself as a "brutal dog" in his inaugural speech and claimed that this was why he was appointed by Hitler as the *Reichskomissar* (overseer) of Ukraine.

He then proclaimed that his mission was to "suck from Ukraine all the goods we can get hold of, without consideration for the feeling or the property of the Ukrainians." The type of man he is can be detected in his declaration "If I find a Ukrainian who is worthy of sitting at the same table with me, I must have him shot."

Under Koch's regime some 2.5 to 3 million Ukrainians were deported to the Third Reich as slave laborers. Many of them perished. Some 700,000 Ukrainian Jews were also exterminated. Ukraine suffered material and population losses far greater than any other occupied European nation, east or west.

Now Erich Koch sits under "house arrest" in Braczevo, Poland. Far lesser Nazis were tried and executed shortly after the Second World War. yet Koch was allowed to survive, supposedly because of "ill health." Apparently Lucien Karchmar and Gerald Tulchinsky (letter, Nov. 10) feel that he has been punished enough and that, because he is now 90 years old, he is immune from justice. I wonder if they would say the same about Hitler who, if he had survived like his confederate Koch, would now be 97 years old?

Mike Dejneha
Kingston

Incredible innuendo

The letter on *The Whig-Standard's* **Forum** page on Nov. 10 refers to "The shrill outcry against the work of the Deschênes commission. . . ."

The Civil Liberties Commission of the Ukrainian Canadian Committee, which is an umbrella organization recognized as the spokesperson for the Ukrainian Canadian community, was granted standing before the Commission of Inquiry of War Criminals as were the Brotherhood of Veterans of the First Division of the Ukrainian National Army in Canada, B'Nai Brith and the Canadian Jewish Congress. All of these organizations have contributed to the work of the commission by submission and argument.

Other organizations and individuals have made submissions. No submission has attacked the commission and none of the organizations which have made submissions has attacked the commission in any forum.

Lucien Karchmar's and Gerald Tulchinsky's innuendo that a respectable and responsible organization such as, say, the Canadian Jewish Congress, is on a par with the Mafia beggars belief.

J.B. Gregorovich
Chairman
Civil Liberties Commission
Ukrainian Canadian Committee
Oakville

Selectivity clouds hotly debated issue of war crimes investigations in Canada

The mandate of the Commission of Inquiry on War Criminals has generated a bitter debate. In the most recent exchange in letters to the editor, Elizabeth Erskine Forbes Mitchell, because she believes that the mandate of the commission is selective and "discriminatory" (Oct. 21), has been charged by Lucien Karchmar and Gerald Tulchinsky with obstructing the work of the Deschênes commission by "spurious arguments and arbitrary restrictions" (Nov. 10).

Since the issue has wide political and social implications and may not entirely go away when Deschênes tables his report soon, the following additional background points should be considered.

As historians, Karchmar and Tulchinsky ought to know that the notion of "selectivity" was first raised not by Mitchell or any East European but in the Martin Low report on **Alleged War Criminals in Canada**, commissioned by Prime Minister Joe Clark in 1979, within the Department of Justice.

The report says that despite the concern in Canada over Nazi war criminals, "evenhandedness would require that any policy to deal with 'war criminals' should apply to any . . . person, regardless of where or when the wrongdoing took place."

In setting up the commission, however, the present government ignored the principle of "evenhandedness" and specifically directed the investigation to Joseph Mengele and Nazi war criminals. Prime Minister Brian Mulroney also failed to consult a single Canadian from the Eastern European community in spite of the fact that the Martin Low report said that "most, if not all, the persons against whom accusations have been made come originally from Eastern Europe."

Moreover, arguments by the Ukrainian Canadian Community and other Eastern European organizations that "all alleged war criminals" be brought to justice (Feb. 14, 1985), appeals to the commission that "allies of Nazi Germany" in the wake of the Hitler-Stalin Pact of 1939 should also be included "in the ambit of the inquiry" (April 30, 1985), and even the submission of a list of Soviet war criminals, some of whom may be residents of Canada, to the attorney general (Feb. 13, 1986), a course which Karchmar and

Tulchinsky recommend, all have fallen on deaf ears.

Beyond that, anyone who suggests a broader mandate is seen as "obstructing" the work of the commission. Karchmar and Tulchinsky are mistaken when they say "no one has ever argued that . . . post-war East Europeans are . . . guilty of . . . hiding war criminals in their midst." On Oct. 10, 1985, *The Canadian Jewish News* said in an editorial: "We fail to understand why decent-minded Canadians of East European descent insist on protecting persons in their midst who are accused of murder. In their quest to harbor them, they tar an entire community needlessly."

For their part, Karchmar and Tulchinsky argue that, by definition, Soviet crimes do not fall within the purview of a war crimes inquiry. "Most of Stalin's crimes," they say, "having been committed against Soviet citizens, fall outside the limits of (the) definition" of a war crime.

Does that mean that the massacres and deportations of Lithuanians, Latvians, and Estonians are not war crimes because the Red Army first incorporated them into the Soviet Union in the summer of 1940?

And what do we call the murder of some seven million Ukrainian peasants in the terror-famine of 1932-33 if, as Karchmar and Tulchinsky say, "the liquidation of selected, politically suspect sections of these populations by Stalin's regime, however atrocious, was not genocide"?

Surely there is irony in resorting to definitions that exonerate Soviet culpability when recent Soviet population studies (Iosif Dyadkin, 1983; M. Maksudov, 1981) show that in civilian killing Stalin outkilled Hitler by two to one.

It is also difficult to reconcile Karchmar and Tulchinsky's resistance to a wider mandate with their assertion that "one war criminal of any nationality whatsoever in Canada is one too many." Surely the only way to bring all war criminals to book is to investigate all allegations.

Why, for example, is General Tissa Weerasingha not the subject of a judicial inquiry? He has had allegations of torture of Tamil civilians and guerrillas in northern Sri Lanka in 1979 levelled against him by expatriate Tamils and Amnesty International. He lives in Canada and his alleged wrongdoings can certainly be defined as war crimes.

The obvious reason, of course, is that he is Sri Lanka's High Commissioner to Canada. He has been given accreditation, Canadian relations with Sri Lanka are valued, and any judicial inquiry would be a major diplomatic embarrassment. Justice is adjusted to the situation and a political

solution is sought within the Department of External Affairs.

Perhaps this is the core of the whole issue: some war criminals seem to be more criminal than others. In fact, Martin Low said in his report that there is "a serious problem of perception and definition which would have to be resolved in the development of any policy to deal with 'war criminals' in Canada."

Seen in that light, the sources from which Karchmar and Tulchinsky derive their definitions, The Nuremberg Tribunal and the United Nations Convention on Genocide, take on an additional political dimension. The commissioner himself, Mr. Justice Jules Deschênes, has said that the Nuremberg Trial "in the wake of a military victory cannot easily be seen truly impartial." There were no judges from the neutral and vanquished countries and the statutes adopted before the trial at the London Conference prohibited the defence of "tu quoque," that is, that the Allies had also committed war crimes (*The Sword and the Scales*, 1979).

These measures effectively closed the door on Soviet war crimes, or for that matter, on the destruction of Hiroshima, Nagasaki, or even Dresden. Ironically, the chief Soviet prosecutor at the Nuremberg tribunal, Roman Rudenko, who, as public procurator general of the U.S.S.R., gave summary orders to execute political prisoners at the Vorkuta Camp 29, on Aug. 7, 1953, returned to the headlines in January, 1980, when he struck an agreement with the U.S. Office of Special Investigations to supply evidence against alleged Nazis in the U.S.

When Karchmar and Tulchinsky say that the "liquidation of politically suspect sections of populations" is not genocide, they are referring to Article II of the United Nations Convention on Genocide (Dec. 9, 1948) which is, indeed, silent about political groups.

What most readers do not know, however, is that the UN failed to give political groups any protection not because they have not been subject to violence and physical destruction, but because the Soviet delegation in the spring of 1948 launched a vigorous campaign in the various committees framing the convention against the inclusion of political groups. They were supported by several other governments apparently unwilling to renounce the right to commit political genocide against their own nationals.

In fact, the government of Burundi defended its most recent genocidal massacres of the Hutu on political grounds: maintaining public order and quelling insurrection. And, the killing of millions of Ukrainian "kulaks," Stalin called the "revo-

lution from above."

Beyond matters of definition, Karchmar and Tulchinsky believe that arguments to investigate all war criminals are motivated by an urge to "cut down to size" the "uniqueness of the Jewish experience," or as Sol Littman puts it, to "reduce the holocaust to a forgotten footnote" (*Whig-Standard*, Oct. 8).

Surely this is an unfounded supposition. Hitler's destruction of European Jews is so much a part of western consciousness, the physical, documentary, and visual evidence is so overwhelming that, unlike Stalin's annihilation, it is not likely to be so easily forgotten or denied.

As for the "uniqueness of the Jewish experience," that is surely an ethnocentric position. When one looks at some 11 major genocides in the 20th century alone, with some 45 to 50 million civilian dead, and examines how the victims were identified, segregated and finally destroyed, it is very difficult to see how any single genocide can be labelled unique. The distinguished French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss has said that the holocaust has no privileged status either historically or metaphysically and that it is a part of the continuity of massacre of human peoples that characterize modern man (in G. Steiner, *Nostalgia for the Absolute*, 1974).

Two final points. Karchmar and Tulchinsky suggest that the Galicia, or First Ukrainian Division, "at least warrants a close look by the Deschênes commission." They are apparently unaware that on Oct. 3, 1985, counsel for the commission, Yves Fortier, resolved that issue: "I am pleased to put on the record . . . that if the only allegation against a resident of Canada is that he was a member of the Galicia Division, that is not an individual that we consider should be made the subject of an investigation."

When Karchmar and Tulchinsky suggest that there were no national units within the NKVD, the Soviet secret police, in at least the case of Lithuania, they are incorrect (E. Jacovskis, *Fronto Uzrasai*, 1976). The 16th (Soviet) Lithuanian Home Guard Division had a SMERSH killer unit attached to it that played a part in the extermination and deportation of 350,000 Lithuanian civilians.

Ron Vastokas
Madoc

Writer misunderstood intention of letter defending Deschênes commission

In reply to Stefan Kuzmyn's letter of Nov. 20, we wish to emphasize that we are not apologists for Sol Littman and we cannot answer for the ignorance of Mr. Littman. Our purpose was not to support Mr. Littman, but to criticize biased and ignorant criticism of the Deschênes commission — which is not synonymous with support for Mr. Littman.

Thus, we fail to see the point of Mr. Kuzmyn's letter. He appears to argue that Jews who collaborated with Germans during the Second World War should be pursued, brought to justice and punished severely. We have never taken issue with the viewpoint and support it entirely. Quite true, that there was a group of Jewish *kapos* at Majdanek who were notorious for their brutality.

We are sorry that Mr. Kuzmyn fell foul of them and we believe that if any of them survived to emigrate to Canada they should be denounced and brought to justice along with all other Nazi collaborators. Consequently, we cannot understand what Mr. Kuzmyn is arguing about. We had protested against Elizabeth Mitchell's identification in an earlier letter of Jews with Soviet crimes not Nazi ones.

Nevertheless, if Mr. Kuzmyn objects to much more effort being put into pursuing war criminals among the East European community than among the Jewish community, we would like to point out that *kapos* were themselves prisoners like the others in the camps. The difference between a *kapo* and an SS guard was the same as that between a trusty and a guard in American prisons.

Nearly all of the collaborators with Nazis ended up like the rest of the Jewish community; that is, in the gas chambers. Thus, it is statistically rather improbable that many of them can be found in Canada today. But, while Mr. Kuzmyn was being whipped by the Jewish *kapo* in Majdanek, he might have noticed that among the 1,228 SS and police who operated the camp and guarded the gates there were a great many Ukrainians and Lithuanians, as shown by contemporary German records. These, being free men, had much more chance to survive and still be around today than did the Jewish *kapos* among the prisoners.

Mr. Kuzmyn says that he does not see where Ms Mitchell introduces propaganda about Judeo-communism. We would like to point out that the

special association of Jews with crimes of Bolshevism was a basic feature of Nazi anti-Semitic propaganda. It is one of the common attitudes of anti-Semites that they are especially sensitive to and critical of behavior in Jews which they tolerate or overlook in others.

In the era of Lenin and Stalin, two of the heads of the Soviet secret police, the Cheka and the GPU, were Poles, but does Ms Mitchell or Mr. Kuzmyn especially blame Poles for Soviet crimes and oppression? Or do they blame Georgians because in Stalin's later period the head of the NKVD, Beria, and many of his top subordinates were Georgians?

What we object to is that only Jews are criticized by people like Ms Mitchell, although Jews made up only a small percentage of the security police and few of them reached the top ranks. It is this attitude that is anti-Semitic and in repeating such accusations Ms Mitchell was indeed following in the footsteps of "propaganda about Judeo-communism."

Mr. Kuzmyn tries to justify Ms Mitchell's attitude by quoting Prof. Lukas to the effect that "Jewish collaboration with the Soviets, more than any other factor, was responsible for increasing anti-Semitism in Poland during the war." With all due respect to Prof. Lukas, other authorities have argued that the increase of Polish anti-Semitism during the war was due to a constant and intense barrage of Nazi anti-Semitic propaganda, which the Germans fed to the occupied Polish population for over five years.

This massive propaganda campaign could not fail to have had a strong effect on a society in which, even before the war, there were certain anti-Semitic currents. Does Mr. Kuzmyn, who says he was "there," remember this propaganda? One of us, who also, as it happens, was "there" (although he did not undergo as harrowing an experience as Mr. Kuzmyn), remembers it vividly, and also its effects.

For that matter, a standard feature of this Nazi anti-Semitic propaganda in wartime Poland was the accusation that Jews had collaborated with the Soviets in Soviet-occupied eastern Poland and had denounced Poles to the NKVD. This theme was pursued massively by the Germans in pamphlets, anti-Semitic exhibits, posters, movie shorts and so forth.

If Mr. Kuzmyn is interested, he can find examples of at least one such pamphlet containing this particular accusation in the state archives at Koblenz in West Germany under the entry number R52 V/17 S. 16. Thus, it is obvious that such collaboration may not necessarily have happened at all and that the Polish attitudes reported

by Dr. Lukas were merely the effects of Nazi propaganda which convinced the Poles that it happened.

Mr. Kuzmyn seems to think that there is some special virtue and exclusive key to wisdom associated with having been "there." Taken logically, this attitude means for instance that only those who have had polio are able to understand the disease or are entitled to research or treat it, since they are the only ones who have been "there." But polio victims do not necessarily make good polio doctors; and, as Mr. Kuzmyn has demonstrated, people who have been "there" are not necessarily those best capable of analyzing what happened "there."

In reply to the letter of Mike Dejneha (Nov. 27) concerning Erich Koch, we can only point out that Koch died recently in Poland, having been held there — under sentence of death — since 1959. We certainly made no suggestion that "he had been punished enough" or that "because he is now 90 years old, he is immune from justice." We were, however, responding to Ms Mitchell's suggestion that war criminal Erich Koch be pursued.

Thus, we pointed out that he had been brought to justice by the Polish government in March of 1959, and that the harping on this case is no more than a red herring introduced by those who wish to divert attention away from the possibility that war criminals may be living among us today in Canada.

Lucien Karchmar
Gerald Tulchinsky
Kingston

U.S. war-crime process unfair

Recent letters published in *The Whig-Standard* insinuate that the prosecution of alleged Nazi war criminals in the United States has proceeded in an ethical or equitable manner. Nothing could be further from the truth.

The United States experience has clearly shown that:

1. The U.S. Department of Justice Office of Special Investigations (OSI) does not rely on Holocaust survivors for testimony, but instead deals almost exclusively with "witnesses" and "documents" produced by the Soviet KGB.

2. The prosecution of alleged war criminals has been selective, based on nationality and creed. The flow of NKVD and KGB agents, who have and who continue to participate in genocide, into the U.S. has not ceased during the past four decades. Nonetheless, suggestions that all types of war criminals should be sought and prosecuted are met with a deafening silence, and the OSI turns a blind eye to all but alleged Nazi collaborators.

3. The OSI process is blatantly unfair. OSI uses civil courts to prosecute U.S. citizens and permanent resident aliens for misrepresentation during the immigration process, when the underlying allegations are that the defendant collaborated with Nazi Germany or Nazi-controlled governments (conveniently ignoring the fact that the Soviet Union was a partner of Nazi Germany in 1939-1941). In a legal action in which the defendant may be subjected to a penalty much harsher than that imposed on almost any convicted criminal, defendants are not provided with legal counsel (most cannot afford even a symbolic defence), jury trials or basic due process afforded by the U.S. Constitution.

Hopefully, Canada will learn from the mistakes made by the U.S. and will not taint its justice system nor split its ethnic communities, as the U.S. has done.

S. Paul Zumbakis
Chicago

Soviets were to blame for Nazi war criminal Erich Koch's escape from justice

Karchmar and Tulchinsky ("Writer misunderstood intention of letter defending Deschênes commission," seem to be ignorant of the fact that Nazi *Reichskommissar* Erich Koch, who died recently in Poland, was *never* brought to justice for the war crimes committed under his regime in occupied Ukraine. His trial in Poland in 1959 was *only* for his misdeeds while governor of East Prussia. Thus the countless numbers of Ukrainians murdered by the Nazis, including some 750,000 Jews, and the 2.5 to 3 million Ukrainians shipped to the Third Reich as slave laborers, will now never be avenged for the horrors and suffering his Nazi administration brought upon them. More telling is the fact that the Soviets *never* asked their Polish counterparts to extradite Koch to the U.S.S.R. to stand trial. Thus this major Nazi war criminal escaped justice, dying in comfortable surroundings under "house arrest" in Braczewo.

Pointing these facts out is not, however, as Karchmar and Tulchinsky assert, a "red herring." Instead it is a serious expression of concern about why the Soviets, who claim that they are genuinely interested in bringing all war criminals to trial, made no effort to do so in this case. Since they did nothing they, in effect, allowed a known Nazi war criminal to die unpunished for most of his crimes against humanity. Furthermore, the historical record that might have been preserved if Koch, an unrepentant Nazi to the end, had stood trial, has also been irretrievably lost. For this the Soviet authorities must be held accountable.

Perhaps what truly bothers these gentlemen is being reminded that there were some Jews who, out of ideological orientation, for reasons of personal gain, or out of fear, collaborated with both the Soviets and the Nazis. While the latter's propaganda undeniably played up this theme of Jewish collaboration with the Soviet secret police, the NKVD, it is sad but true that such heinous collaboration did take place. That some of those persons, who helped the Soviets, both during 1939-1941 when the U.S.S.R. was an ally of Nazi Germany and afterwards, may have reached Canada after the war seems to be as likely as the presence of Nazi war criminals here.

Searching *only* for alleged Nazi war criminals and doing so *primarily* within the country's East European communities is discriminatory. *All* war

criminals, regardless of their ethnic, religious or racial backgrounds, should be found and prosecuted according to Canadian laws in Canadian courts.

To ignore the likely presence in Canada of Soviet war criminals is certainly not Karchmar's or Tulchinsky's recommendation. Yet their allegation that bringing this matter up is an attempt to divert the attention of the Deschênes commission is a sophistry. What good will this entire inquiry have accomplished if its report and recommendations are based on an incomplete analysis of what kinds of war criminals there might be in Canada? Since the commission was sent a lengthy list of Soviet war criminals who might be living in Canada it must, for the moment, be presumed that the alleged presence of Soviet war criminals in Canada will be seriously discussed in Justice Deschênes's report. If it is not, then his conclusions and recommendations can only be partial. If this is the case then this commission will have failed to deal objectively with the complex issue of collaboration in Eastern Europe between 1939-1945.

Mike Dejneha
Kingston

Messrs. Karchmar and Tulchinsky wrote in response to a critique of what they have now learned to call Sol Littman's "ignorance." As a survivor of several Nazi concentration camps, I wrote earlier to correct historically inaccurate statements made in their polemical retort to Ms Mitchell. Messrs. Karchmar and Tulchinsky now plead that I "misunderstood" them, and express their sorrow that I "fell foul" of Jewish *kapos* while interned.

If they had left it at that the matter would be closed. Regrettably these gentlemen — although one of them claims to have been "there" (where?) — have yet again introduced a number of erroneous statements in their letter. These must be corrected. Furthermore they seem to prefer taking a rather cynical tone in their reply to me, one that belies the sincerity of their sympathy for the horrors I survived, but many of my Ukrainian, Polish, Jewish and other friends did not.

While I was being whipped by a Jewish *kapo* in the Majdanek concentration camp I concentrated on surviving. I can attest, however, that during the 14 months I languished there, there were no Ukrainian or Lithuanian SS men in the camp, contrary to what these gentlemen have read somewhere. Frankly, I never even heard of any such SS men being in Majdanek. So much for "contemporary German documents."

It is true that there were so-called "Ukrainian

police" in this camp. They were, however, like me, inmates, and not guards. Even more telling is the simple fact that most of them were not Ukrainian, despite the title of their unit. The several I met in 1943 were ethnic Russians and Byelorussians. I suspect that many of the so-called "Ukrainian SS men" one reads about were, similarly, not ethnically Ukrainian but rather conscripts or volunteers raised in occupied Soviet territory by the Nazis.

I did meet *Volksdeutsche SS* men, Germans who came from Ukraine in the concentration camps. They certainly knew the Ukrainian language. But it would be grossly unfair to label them as Ukrainian because of their linguistic skills or to blame the Ukrainian people for the depredations committed by such men. Equally it would be morally indefensible to suggest that the crimes committed by some Jews, as collaborators with the Nazis or the Soviets, make the entire Jewish people guilty of war criminality.

As for the Second World War's war criminals I do not single out any ethnic, religious or racial group for particular condemnation. However, I do reject the racist viewpoint that some nations or peoples are traditionally, historically or intrinsically anti-semitic. There is no nation on earth that does not have its criminal element. Just as there were German, Austrian, Italian, French, Belgian and other West European war criminals, so too there were collaborators among the Jews, Ukrainians, Poles, Latvians and other peoples of Eastern Europe. It also has to be noted that not every camp guard, or SS man, was a fiend. Some were better disposed towards us inmates, in camps like Dachau, Natzweiler and Majdanek where I spent much of the war, than were some of our fellow prisoners who became *kapos*.

Sadly, Messrs. Karchmar and Tulchinsky again resort to the trite tactic of branding anyone who raises the subject of Jewish collaboration with the Soviets of being anti-semitic. Certainly not all Jews were Bolsheviks; in the anti-Soviet and anti-Nazi resistance movement known as the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA), a significant number of Jews played acknowledged and crucially important roles. Yet it is also true that, as Prof. George Leggett points out in *The Cheka: Lenin's Political Police* (Oxford, 1981), there was a "pronounced Jewish element evident at the apex of the Bolshevik party" while, in Ukraine in 1919, 75 per cent of the personnel of the Kiev Cheka, and "seven out of its ten collegium members, were Jews."

Also, as Prof. Richard Lukas has written (*The Forgotten Holocaust: The Poles under German Occupation 1939-1944*, The University

Press of Kentucky, 1986) the character of the University of Lvov changed dramatically after the Soviet occupation of western Ukraine in 1939. Whereas prior to the war the percentage of students was 70 per cent Polish, 15 per cent Ukrainian and 15 per cent Jewish, under the Soviets this changed to 3 per cent Polish, 12 per cent Ukrainian and 85 per cent Jewish. Another report he cites contains an estimate that 75 per cent of all the top administrative posts in cities like Bialystok were in Jewish hands during the Soviet occupation. Jews, according to Prof. Lukas, helped the Soviets ship the Polish intelligentsia off to the depths of the Soviet Union and, in many cities and towns, openly displayed Red flags and welcomed the invading Soviet forces.

While German propaganda certainly inflamed some Poles against the Jews it is specious to suggest that there were no real grounds for *some* East Europeans disliking *some* Jews and exacting revenge when the Soviets were driven out of Poland by the Germans. Any fair and objective analysis of the issue of collaboration during the Second World War demands a review of the behavior of *all* groups involved and not just some. Just as no nation is all bad, so too no nation is all good.

Which brings me to my final points. However revolting anti-semitism is, racism is obviously not uniquely directed against Jews, nor are the Jewish people free of their own share of bigots. For example, in a letter discussing Ukrainian-Jewish relations Dov Ben-Meir, Deputy Speaker of the Israeli Knesset (parliament), wrote: "... the Jewish people has a long score to settle with the Ukrainian people ... To you and your friends, I suggest that you go to church not only on Sunday but also every day of the week and that you kneel there until bleeding at the knees in asking forgiveness for what your people has done to ours."

Would it be surprising if such a brutal example of contemporary racism provoked an anti-semitic reaction? Clearly some Jews feel that *all* Ukrainians, regardless of their birthplace or age, are eternally condemned to damnation because of the history of Ukrainian-Jewish relations. How are Ukrainians to react to this Old Testament-style thirst for vengeance?

Unfortunately this sentiment is apparently more widespread than many would perhaps care to admit. It seems to motivate the lobbying efforts of some who have pressed for the establishment of the kind of selective war criminal investigations now going on in the United States, Australia, the United Kingdom and Canada. Millions of taxpayers' dollars have already been spent. Many are already asking whether these monies were spent to satisfy only a lust for revenge. Per-

sonally, as a Christian, I believe that it is time to forgive those who interned and brutalized me, although history should never forget what the Nazis did to all of us — Poles, Ukrainians, Jews, Lithuanians, Gypsies, Russians and even Germans — in the concentration camps.

Regretably, while many have been celebrating the joy of Christmas, there are millions of Canadians of East European and German origin who look forward to the New Year with trepidation — not because they are war criminals — but because they know that the report of the Deschênes commission will likely spark off yet another round of divisive, inter-ethnic community friction, at a cost to Canada which has yet to be fully assessed.

Stefan Kuzmyn
Kingston

Despite writer's arguments, Holocaust was a unique event in human history

The debate on both the mandate and the findings of the Deschênes Commission of Inquiry on War Criminals in Canada is likely to take on renewed vigor as we await the publication of the report, which was delivered to the prime minister in late December. Organizations and individuals from Canada's East European communities have argued that the commission's terms of reference were too narrow and that it should have been instructed to hunt not for alleged Nazi war criminals in Canada, but other "war criminals" as well. Now that the Deschênes Commission's findings are about to be made public, and as the fear of exposure mounts, we might expect those arguments to be repeated, possibly in the fashion advanced by Ron Vastokas in his recent letter to *The Whig-Standard* (Dec. 9).

As a social scientist, Vastokas should be aware that the establishment of a commission of inquiry to investigate all persons alleged to be war criminals "regardless of when or where the wrongdoing took place," including those which he alleges were committed by Gen. Tissa Weeratunga in northern Sri Lanka in 1979, would be an exercise in futility. An investigative commission with such a broad mandate likely would be so burdened with problems of definition and lack of focus that it might never be able to report.

Those most effective commissions of inquiry are likely to be those with a specific and clear mandate, such as that of the Deschênes commission, and those who keep on insisting that it must have broader terms of reference are indeed engaging in obstructionism. The commission was given a carefully-considered mandate by the government of Canada and it has followed that mandate. Vastokas's assertion that the prime minister "failed to consult a single Canadian from the East European community" is hardly credible, especially in light of the fact that several members of Mr. Mulroney's caucus and cabinet are of East European descent.

In raising the quotation from *The Canadian Jewish News* of Oct. 10, 1985, Vastokas points out an overstatement by one fairly important sector of the Toronto Jewish community. It was excessive and unwarranted. We wish to point out that we are not making that argument, nor are the Canadian Jewish Congress and other responsible

Jewish organizations. Like them, we reject "any form of collective indictment on ethnic or nationality lines."

But we would also point out that for some Canadians of European descent to raise arguments which seem to be intended to obstruct the work of the Deschênes commission could create the impression that they wish to hide from justice persons who might have been Nazi war criminals. Attempts to harbor such persons would indeed "tar an entire community needlessly."

Vastokas asks whether the atrocities committed by Stalin in the Baltic countries are "war crimes." According to the established definitions we discussed in our letter of Nov. 10, they are not and Vastokas should know that the United Nations Convention on Genocide, which he cites, is definitive until it is revised by that body. Of course, the Nuremberg trial definitions of "war criminal" are "not impartial." They were established by the four powers (Britain, France, the United States and the U.S.S.R.), who had fought to destroy Hitler's Third Reich, in order to mete out justice to Nazis and their collaborators. Vastokas seems disappointed that there were "no judges from neutral or vanquished countries" without telling us where, in the ruins of Nazi Germany in 1945, for example, one could have found a judge who was not tainted by a Nazi past and continuing Nazi sympathies. Nor does he explain how a wider definition would be workable.

But if Vastokas, or anyone else, wishes to expose and bring to justice persons living in Canada who might be guilty of atrocities against Lithuanians, Latvians and Estonians, or those who allegedly participated in Stalin's agricultural collectivization policies which resulted in the deaths of Ukrainians and others in the Soviet Union during the 1930s, we suggest that he bring forward evidence and press for the establishment of a government inquiry similar to the Deschênes commission.

The latter should not preclude another search for those who may have committed crimes before immigrating to Canada. And what about Turks who may have been involved in atrocities against Armenians, Argentinians in the murder of thousands of the *desparecidos*, or Ugandans in the butchery of certain tribes? Let them, too, be brought to justice. As for the atrocities against the Ukrainians, it seems clear that those were committed mostly by their fellow Ukrainians, who made up some 55 per cent of NKVD forces in the Ukrainian Republic in 1928, on the eve of collectivization (T. Olesevick, O. Pytel, W. Sadowski, O. Chubenko, *Ukrainska Ludnosc ZSSR*, Warsaw: Ukrainian Scientific Insti-

tute, 1931, passim). Perhaps one good place to look for them is right here in Canada among the Ukrainian community.

Vastokas points to the existence of a SMERSH unit within a Lithuanian Home Guard Division, evidently unaware of the fact that SMERSH units were not NKVD (though there might have been NKVD agents among them) but rather counter-intelligence forces which were integral parts of most military units.

Finally, we come to the issue that appears to be "bugging" Vastokas and others who are discomfited by the Deschênes commission, i.e. the importance that is attached to the Holocaust of European Jewry in which about six million Jews (out of a total world population numbering 16 million) were murdered by the German Nazis and their collaborators between 1939 and 1945.

By emphasizing other atrocities and attempting to greatly widen the definition attached to the term "war criminal," they are really saying that Jews have no monopoly on suffering. And we agree. Jews do not, never have, and never will have a monopoly on suffering. Jewish sufferings are indeed only one chapter in the vast encyclopedia of man's inhumanity to man. But Levi-Strauss's statements notwithstanding, there can be no doubt that the Holocaust of European Jewry is unique.

In its purpose, scale, organization, "scientific" structure, and near success, the Nazi program of murdering the Jews of Europe and attempting to destroy all traces of their presence has no equal. In a letter to Anthony Eden in July, 1944, Winston Churchill wrote concerning the mass murder of Jews that "There is no doubt that this is probably the greatest and most horrible single crime ever committed in the whole history of the world." (Martin Gilbert, *Auschwitz and the Allies*, New York, 1981, p. 341). Statements denying the uniqueness of the Holocaust are probably the most serious of all anti-Semitic canards.

We await the report of the Deschênes commission which, we hope, will recommend procedures for dealing effectively with Nazi war criminals who managed to gain entry into Canada after 1945. Now, at last, let them be brought to justice for their crimes. This is not a matter of ethnic vengeance. It is a matter of Canadian justice.

Lucien Karchmar
Gerald Tulchinsky
Kingston

Was Holocaust unique?

Re "Despite writer's arguments, Holocaust was a unique event in human history," (Feb. 10).

Whether or not the Holocaust is unique in human history is essentially a matter of emotional and not objective evaluation. Clearly Lucien Karchmar and Gerald Tulchinsky's beliefs that it was stand in sharp contrast to the opinion of the internationally distinguished, cultural anthropologist, Prof. Claude Levi-Strauss.

His view about the Holocaust being only one more example of man's inhumanity to man is certainly as credible as Karchmar and Tulchinsky's strident assertions to the contrary. Presumably the fact that the professor is also a Jew will free him from the experience of being tarred as an anti-Semite, a label Karchmar and Tulchinsky seem quite ready to toss about as required in their attempt to suppress open discussion on the issue of bringing alleged war criminals to justice.

Alexandra Potoczny
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Nazi war crimes must not be obscured by Jewish-Soviet collaboration

We wish to respond to some of the points raised by Messrs. Dejneha and Kuzmyn in their letters (Jan. 6) concerning the Deschênes commission's inquiry into the possible presence of Nazi war criminals in Canada.

Mr. Dejneha, once again, tells us that Erich Koch was not tried for his crimes in the Soviet Union. But, in view of the fact that Koch was tried, convicted and sentenced to death in 1959 in Poland, where he committed his first war crimes, we must ask what more was needed? In all probability the Soviets never asked to try Koch because he had already been convicted and was already under sentence of death. Thus, it is sheer nonsense for Dejneha to say that Koch died "unpunished."

The Soviets have no reason to ignore Nazi war crimes committed in the Ukraine during the Second World War. Of these terrible crimes there is plenty of evidence and there are many Soviet publications about them. Practically every history of the war published in the U.S.S.R. contains mountains of material on war crimes committed in the Ukraine, including the atrocities for which Koch was responsible. Indeed, it is in the interest of the Soviets to publish this material and we wonder what Dejneha thinks they are trying to conceal. Dejneha alleges that Koch, despite his conviction, died in "comfortable surroundings." What evidence does he have for this statement? Are there, for example, photographs to show Koch's circumstances while he was in custody in Poland? If so, perhaps he will tell us where they can be found.

In pointing to Jewish collaboration with the NKVD, Dejneha is replaying the same old song which anti-Semites simply love to use. There were Jewish collaborators, and there were also Ukrainian, Polish, Lithuanian, Latvian, and Estonian collaborators with the NKVD, and plenty of them. For that matter, the Ukrainian branch of the Soviet Communist party has never lacked for membership. But, in arguing that it is as likely that some of these wartime NKVD collaborators reached Canada after 1945 as Nazi war criminals, he is patently absurd.

What reason would those who collaborated with the Soviets during the war have to flee from the Soviet forces which occupied the countries of Eastern Europe between 1943 and 1945? The fact is, of course, that the Deschênes commission had

specific terms of reference that were determined by lengthy lists based on actual evidence of suspected Nazi collaborators living in Canada. If Dejneha has evidence that Soviet "war criminals" or collaborators reached Canada, by all means let him present it and push for the establishment of a formal inquiry similar to the Deschênes commission.

The government of Canada is likely to act just as it moved to prevent an alleged Argentinian torturer from entering Canada when protests were mounted. But, on the question at issue, sheer statistical probability indicates that Canada is much more likely to have been inundated by Nazis and their collaborators than by Communists after the Second World War.

Dejneha indirectly raised the same points that were brought up by Ms Mitchell some months ago. These allegations, which have been constantly raised by anti-Semites since long before the war, assert that there exists a special affinity between Jews and Communists and that Jews took the lead in suppressing the Ukrainian nation under communism. But what are the facts? As it happens, one of the few pieces of hard information we have on this issue comes from a non-Communist Ukrainian source.

In 1931, a book was published analyzing the population statistics for the Ukraine on the basis of Soviet statistical data of the 1920s. Among other material, it listed the ethnic distribution in the NKVD forces in the Ukrainian Republic of 1928, before collectivization was begun in the Soviet Union. (T. Olesovich, O. Pytel, W. Sadowski and O. Chubenko, *Ukrainska Ludnosť ZSSR*, Ukrainian Scientific Institute, Warsaw, 1931.)

Their figures show that the NKVD was comprised of Ukrainians 55.3 per cent, Russians 30.9 per cent, others 8.8 per cent, Jews 5 per cent. Considering that the actual population distribution in the Ukrainian Republic for the same nationalities was 80 per cent, 9.2 per cent, 5.4 per cent and 5.4 per cent respectively, it is clear that Jewish membership of the NKVD was slightly below their ethnic fraction of the population, the Russian larger and the Ukrainian below.

Nevertheless, Ukrainians were the largest ethnic component in the NKVD and, in fact, were in the majority. It is evident, therefore, that what was done in the Ukraine during collectivization was done primarily by Ukrainians, secondly by Russians and, a very distant third, by Jews. Thus, all allegations of a special Jewish role are completely false.

The fact that the NKVD in the Ukrainian re-

public had a majority of Ukrainians is, however, never mentioned by anyone. Instead, directly or indirectly, people like Ms Mitchell and Mr. Dejneha cast aspersions on the Jews. There is every probability, however, that these Ukrainian-dominated NKVD units were used against Jews who belonged to social or political groups of which Stalin disapproved, especially in light of Stalin's well-known anti-Semitism.

Turning to Mr. Kuzmyn's letter, he says that he never saw Ukrainian or Lithuanian SS men at Majdanek. The "Ukrainian police," he says, were really *Volksdeutsche*, i.e. Germans who came from the Ukraine. Whatever his memory may tell him 40 years or more after the fact, there is plenty of evidence in memoirs and evidence presented at war crimes trials by Polish prisoners who, after all, constituted a majority — apart from the Jews — of the population at Majdanek.

The Poles, coming from a multi-ethnic society, were quite capable of telling Ukrainians and Lithuanians apart from *Volksdeutsche* (Jan Michalak, Nr. 273 Mial Szesnascie Lat, Nr. 273 [Warsaw: 1969] and Jerzy Kwiatkowski, *485 Dni Na Majdanku* [Lublin: 1966]. We hope that Mr. Kuzmyn will pardon us if we trust their memories — which were published much sooner after the war and by persons who, as far as we can see, had no political or ethnic axes to grind — more than his.

When Mr. Kuzmyn asserts that Jews were active in the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) he is repeating a terrible and cruel lie. A number of Jewish doctors were forced at gunpoint to serve the UPA under threat of death, and they were subsequently murdered anyway. But if he can name a single Jew among the leaders of the UPA's military or political set, let him do so! This organization, which was as anti-Semitic as any that could be found in Eastern Europe, murdered Jews and Poles in the most horrifying and beastly fashion in the Ukrainian parts of Poland, Volhynia and Galicia. At the centre for the Study of the Polish Resistance Movement in London. (File 3.1.13.2) and at the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw (affidavits, Nos. 2242, 4383, 531, 4991. See also *Der Spiegel* [1960] nos. 5 & 11) there is a great deal of eye-witness testimony about UPA mass murders.

The core of the UPA's military leadership consisted of Ukrainians who were enlisted in two Ukrainian *Abwehr* battalions (German military intelligence for subversion and sabotage behind Soviet lines). They entered Galicia with the German army and participated in a huge massacre of Jews at Lvov on July 1, 1941 and a similar slaughter of Jews at Zwoczow three days later.

The rank and file of the UPA came from auxiliary Ukrainian police battalions who were used by the Germans to round up Jews for extermination. (See Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews* [New York: 1961], pp. 252, 329-330 and Gerald Fleming, *Hitler and the Final Solution* [Oxford: 1986] pp. 132-134.) Thus, the assertion that Jews were active in such units, which did their level best to clear the Ukraine of non-Ukrainians, and especially of Jews, is no less than a bald and vicious lie.

Professor Lukas' book which Mr. Kuzmyn cites is a piece of special pleading intended to prove that Poles had nothing to do with exterminations of Jews, and that Poles, too, suffered during the war. It is a tendentious work which, in its main thrust, has been contradicted by other and more reliable historical studies. For example, his assertion that the University of Lvov after 1939 became 85 per cent Jewish is not founded on an analysis of enrolment records of the university, but on a report — which was based on a rumor — from the Polish underground to London.

This does not correspond to evidence given to the Soviets by Poles who were studying and teaching at the University of Lvov, where, in fact, after Soviet occupation in 1939, a policy of outright Ukrainianization was being enforced by the local Soviet administration. (See Karolina Lankoronska, "1939: W. Sowietkim Lwowie," *Wiadomsci* [London: 1948] no. 42/133 p. 1 and W. Pobog-Malinowski, *Najnowsza Historia Polityczyna Polski* [London: 1983, 3 vols.] III, P. 108). In any case, if Jewish enrolments at this university did rise dramatically in 1939, this only reflected the fact that the Jewish populations in most Polish cities constituted very large percentages of the totals and, more important, the fact that prior to the war Jewish entry into Polish universities was severely restricted.

The real point is that, while Jews generally viewed the Soviet occupation of eastern Poland in 1939 favorably, so, too, did all national minorities — including Ukrainians and Byelorussians — all of whom joyfully welcomed the invading Soviet forces. On this point there are literally hundreds of Polish eyewitness accounts (see Jan T. Gross, "W Zaborze Sowietkim," *Aneks* [London], no. 22 [1979]: 28 [1982] and the vast number of personal accounts at the Hoover Institute Library, Stanford University, California, and at the Sikorski Institute in London). All ethnic minorities in this area appear to have hated the pre-1939 Polish state and believed that they would be treated well by the Soviets. In welcoming them were the Ukrainians, Byelorussians

and Jews, therefore, all Communists.

Kuzmyn's reference to a letter written by Dov Ben-Meir is an interesting example of how evidence is used out of context. Ben-Meir's letter which was directed to the members of Israel's Knesset, elicited only one favorable reply. But to describe it as "Old Testament-style thirst for vengeance" is rank anti-Semitism. Ben-Meir, in the statement cited by Kuzmyn, is not calling for vengeance, he is simply asking Ukrainians to go to church every day and pray for forgiveness. A little excessive perhaps, but it is hardly a call for revenge.

Writing at Christmas time, Kuzmyn expressed his willingness to forgive and forget. He thinks that the Second World War crimes of the Nazis and their collaborators should be brushed aside. But why should they be? Does the cause of inter-ethnic harmony in Canada require that the truth be swept under the rug and that Nazis and their collaborators of whatever nationality who might be living in Canada should be allowed to escape justice? We doubt very much that the people and government of Canada — which has already deported one Nazi war criminal, Rauca — will allow that to happen. To do so would be an insult to the memory of millions who were done to death by the Nazis and their collaborators. It would do violence to principles of justice on which Canadian society is founded and without which civilized life is impossible.

Lucien Karchmar
Gerald Tulchinsky
Kingston

Ukrainian resistance organization unfairly caricatured as bloodthirsty killers

In their letter of March 9, Lucien Karchmar and Gerald Tulchinsky have grossly simplified and at times distorted the complex events that occurred in Eastern Europe in the 1930s and during the Second World War. Moreover, the emotive nature of their writing also does little to enlighten the reader: "horri-fying and beastly fashion," "terrible and cruel lie," "bald and vicious lie." The objectivity that is the essential prerequisite of historical research seems to have eluded them. But let us turn to some of the issues they raise.

It is debatable whether Erich Koch, the former *Reichskommissar* of the Ukraine, was truly "punished" for his war crimes. Although he was tried and convicted in Poland as the authors assert, he was condemned for his misdeeds as *Gauleiter* of East Prussia rather than for his role in the German occupation regime in the Ukraine. Yet it was during the latter period that Koch's "reign of terror" saw the persecution of first Jews and subsequently Ukrainians, whom he regarded as "niggers" who needed to be treated with "a whip and some vodka."

Since the late 1970s, the Soviet press has carried lengthy and detailed accounts of war crimes in the Ukraine, particularly about native western Ukrainians who reportedly turned against their own people in the service of Nazi Germany. Koch's name is conspicuous in these accounts by its absence. Only in Soviet works that were published during the relatively tolerant Khrushchev period does one find references to Koch's misuse in the Ukraine.

As for his lenient treatment in prison, Karchmar and Tulchinsky ask for photographic evidence. Perhaps more reliable are the eyewitness accounts that have been related to western politicians and scholars by his prison guards and others, which have referred to his receiving newspapers, magazines and medicines from Germany. And Messrs. Karchmar and Tulchinsky have not answered the most fundamental question: Why was Koch spared when even lower-ranked Nazis were executed? It is surely a modern-day enigma.

The authors of the March 9 letter cite a 1931 source to demonstrate the platitude that Ukrainians made up a majority of the Ukrainian NKVD. More important is whether this NKVD imple-

mented collectivization. The evidence suggests otherwise. According to various Soviet sources, the collectivization of the Ukraine was implemented not by the NKVD but by the political sections that were created in the machine-tractor stations in each individual province (*oblast*). These sections were established in 1933-34 to ensure that the state received its grain quotas and to carry out mass collectivization of peasant households. (See Merle Fainsod, *Smolensk Under Soviet Rule*. London: Macmillan, 1958, pp. 288-93.) In 1949 they were created to complete the delayed collectivization campaign in western Ukraine. (See M.K. Ivasyuta, *Narysy istorii kolhospnoho budivnytstva v zakhidnykh oblastyakh Ukrainskoi RSR*. Kiev, 1962, p. 132.)

In January, 1933, Stalin appointed Pavel Postyshev as second party secretary in the Ukraine. His task was to resolve the agricultural crisis. He arrived in the Ukraine with an entourage of over 1,300 members of the political sections and over 15,000 other party officials who took over the local district *raion* party organs. (See *Pravda*, Nov. 21 and 24, 1933; and *Suchasna Ukraina*, Aug. 23, 1953). All these officials were outsiders with no ties to the villages they entered; whether they were Ukrainians, Russians or Jews (the authors waste three paragraphs on this question) is irrelevant. To those whose land and property they expropriated, or whose grain they removed from the barn, they were the enemy and they represented the latest imposition of the Moscow government.

In their comments on the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA), Messrs. Karchmar and Tulchinsky depict a band of ruthless, bloodthirsty killers. This is a curious description of a resistance movement strong enough to have withstood not only the Germans (during the first two years of its existence, 1942-44), but also a combined Soviet, Polish and Czech onslaught in the late 1940s.

The UPA was not wiped out until the early 1950s. Far from being a pack of criminals, the UPA was a military and political organization whose aim was the establishment of an independent Ukrainian state. It had a well-developed political program which espoused social democracy on the west European model, condemned all varieties of imperialism, and recognized the freedom of Ukraine's national minorities to develop their distinct identities. (See the multi-volume documentary series, *Litopys UPA*, published in Toronto by UPA veterans' organizations since 1976; also *Political Thought of the Ukrainian Underground*, ed. Peter J. Potichnyj and Yevhen Shtendera. Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1986).

It is true that at the outbreak of the German-Soviet war in 1941, Ukrainian nationalists expected the Germans to acquiesce in the establishment of a Ukrainian state in return for military assistance against the Red Army. But the Germans were not interested in such a *quid pro quo*: as soon as the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists proclaimed an independent state in June, 1941, its leaders were arrested by the Germans, and its rank-and-file hunted down, killed or imprisoned. (See John A. Armstrong, **Ukrainian Nationalism**, 2nd ed. New York, 1963, pp. 104-17.)

The Ukrainian battalions that entered Lviv with the Germans did not participate in the massacre of Jews as Messrs. Karchmar and Tulchinsky claim: this Soviet allegation was refuted by a West German court in 1960-61. (See Hermann Raschhofer, **Political Assassination**, Tubingen, 1964.) The UPA membership consisted not only of deserters from the Ukrainian auxiliary police, but also — and primarily — of Ukrainians seeking to protect themselves against the ruthless colonial policies implemented by the Germans. (See e.g., Yaroslav Bilinsky, **The Second Soviet Republic: The Ukraine After World War II**, New Brunswick, N.J., 1964, pp. 118-27.) The UPA's struggle against the Germans is amply documented in volumes 6 and 7 of *Litopys UPA*. Thus, the impression created by Messrs. Karchmar and Tulchinsky that the UPA was German-inspired is completely false.

We have no wish to present a censored version of history. The late, eminent Jewish scholar Philip Friedman, whose essay, *Ukrainian-Jewish Relations during the Nazi Occupation* (Yivo Annual of Jewish Social Science 12, 1958-59, pp. 259-96), remains the best study of its subject to date, cites evidence that Ukrainian nationalist detachments murdered Jews. But he also cites testimony to the effect that Jews served the UPA in various auxiliary roles, and that some managed to survive thanks to their association with the UPA. As for the tragic Polish-Ukrainian conflict in Volhynia, it was the product of longstanding mutual animosity and was characterized by atrocities on both sides. Only Polish government propagandists attribute it exclusively to the UPA.

The UPA's struggle for Ukrainian independence, waged with great dedication against overwhelming odds, deserves to be much better known than it is. The sorry caricature offered by

Messrs. Karchmar and Tulchinsky serves neither the establishment of historical fact nor, in their phrase, the "principles of justice on which Canadian society is founded."

Myroslav Yurkevich
David R. Marples
Edmonton

War crimes debaters are guilty of the faults they ascribe to their opponents

Because the letter by Myroslav Yurkevich and David R. Marples of March 25 in answer to ours of March 9 appears to be cast in a scholarly mould, we would like to point out just how false, twisted and out-of-context their arguments and "information" are. This is a difficult chore because, on one hand, they accuse us of presenting a grossly oversimplified and distorted picture of events in Eastern Europe during the Second World War, while they are guilty of the intellectual crimes of which they accuse us. On the other hand, they are obviously not fully familiar with the very historical references with which they have bombarded us and the readers of *The Whig-Standard*. Furthermore, much of their argument seems to be nothing more than an effort to divert discussion away from the central issues and shift it onto new ground in an effort to escape the issues we have been talking about.

First, they say that it is "debatable" whether Erich Koch (guilty of mass murder of Jews and Ukrainians during the Second World War) was ever truly punished for his war crimes. Since when is it "debatable?" He was tried, found guilty and sentenced in Poland in 1959. If they have any hard and fast evidence that he was mollycoddled while in a Polish prison, let them produce it. They have, so far, not done so. They refer vaguely to "eyewitness accounts that have been related to western politicians and scholars by his prison guards and others." The only eyewitness account we know of came from a Polish political prisoner who was confined to the same cell during the 1950s as Koch. He described the cell as being of plain concrete with a wooden bunk and a bucket for excrement. As for their assertion that Koch received newspapers, magazines and medicines, we can only note that, if true, prison inmates on death row are allowed such items.

Why was Koch spared by Polish authorities from the execution he so richly deserved? We don't know and we wager that Yurkevich and Marples don't either. Unless definite documentary evidence can be produced, this whole dispute is meaningless and, as we have said before, no more than a red herring used to divert attention away from the real issues.

The original issue was the protest we registered against the argument that Ms Mitchell, Stefan Kuzmyn and other Ukrainian propagandists were

using against the Deschênes Commission saying that it was "unfair" to pursue petty war criminals while big war criminals like Koch were untried and unconvicted. We pointed out that this was untrue and that Koch was tried and sentenced to death years ago. Yurkevich and Marples, having been forced to admit that we were right, attempt to confuse the issue by raising a smoke-screen of petty carping. They complain that Koch was tried in the wrong place, for the wrong crime and that he was pampered in a Polish prison. All of this is nonsense and does not even deserve a serious reply.

Second, Yurkevich and Marples criticize our contention regarding the NKVD in the Ukraine by arguing that, despite the statistics we provided, it was not the NKVD which implemented collectivization during the 1930s but, instead, the political cadres in the machine tractor station. They are being disingenuous here. Surely, they must be aware that although these political sections were used to supervise collectivization, it was the NKVD which supplied the muscle to enforce these measures to bring the peasantry into line. The political sections, which had a staff of only seven or eight persons to supervise six or seven collective farms each, were unlikely to be able themselves to coerce peasants to deliver their grain.

This job was done by the NKVD or, as it was known at the time, the OGPU. Surely, since this is discussed at length in Merle Fainsod's *Smolensk Under Soviet Rule* (London: Macmillan, 1959) pages 280-289, they are aware that each political section had a deputy director, "for special work," who was the OGPU agent for the district and that, in police matters, this official could act independently of either the political section head or the motor tractor station director.

It was the OGPU official, with his network of informers, who purged the collective stations of "anti-Soviet elements" and decided whom to arrest and deport. For these purposes the OGPU and militia forces under his control were used. It was the OGPU that planned dekulakization which was the first stage of collectivization and carried out the arrest and deportation of hundreds of thousands of peasants.

And it was OGPU internal troops and militia which enforced grain deliveries. Fainsod discusses this in detail in chapters 12 to 14. Thus, it was not the persuasion of the political section officials but fear of arrest, deportation or execution by the OGPU which compelled the peasants to join the collectives and it was the OGPU which "took care of" those who opposed government policy.

The point we have been making was that it is simply not true for some to say that the Ukrainian OGPU was full of Jews and that it was Jews who carried out these measures against Ukrainians. We pointed out, on the basis of contemporary information from non-Communist Ukrainian sources, that this argument was untrue and that the OGPU in the Ukrainian Republic consisted essentially of local people i.e. Ukrainians (as doubtless it consisted of local people in other national areas) and that if any nationality held a special position in the OGPU (or NKVD) it was the Great Russians. Therefore, the measures which resulted in death in the Ukraine during the famine of 1932-33 were carried out overwhelmingly by Ukrainians and Great Russians. Instead of addressing the lies against Jews, Yurkevich and Marples again try to cloud the issue by shifting onto new ground.

Third, they criticize us for depicting the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) as "ruthless and bloodthirsty killers." They seem to think that just because a movement holds itself, or is, a resistance movement, it cannot possibly be ruthless or bloodthirsty. This is nonsense. Quite a number of "resistance movements" correspond to this description, as any reader of newspapers must know. We need only cite the Mau Mau and the Khmer Rouge in our own day.

As for the UPA and its political parent organization, the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) there is plenty of evidence that, despite their dedication to the goal of independence for the Ukraine, they were indeed not much different. Borys Lewickiy, one of the most important leaders of the OUN, quotes one of the popular UPA songs "Kill, Kill the Poles. Kill the Moscovite Jewish Communists" (*Kultura* [Paris], no. 4/150, April 1960, p. 90). The policy of the UPA during the Second World War was pretty well expressed in these and other slogans while they were in pursuit of an independent Ukrainian state.

Yurkevich and Marples say that the UPA units consisted not only of deserters from the auxiliary police "but also — and primarily — of Ukrainians seeking to protect themselves against the ruthless colonial policies implemented by the Germans." We draw their attention to the words of John A. Armstrong, the principal American authority on Ukrainian nationalism, whose book they quote (*Ukrainian Nationalism*, 2nd edition, New York, 1963) who says on page 291 "... indeed, after early 1943 the nationalist partisans consisted for the most part of German-organized militia or police units which had turned guerrilla...."

However, we will admit that both Armstrong and we probably overstated the case to some degree. What we meant to say in our previous letter was that the core of the UPA consisted of former auxiliary police. As an example, in March, 1943, just in the province of Volhynia, 4,000 auxiliary police deserted to the UPA, mostly in complete units. Later on, some 6,000 more did so in Galicia. Thus, at least one-quarter of the 40,000 UPA fighters came from the auxiliary police and another few thousand from the SS Division "Galicia." Yurkevich and Marples may argue that these elements, which, after all, had been used by the Germans to murder Jews, liquidate ghettos, hunt down escapers and anti-German resisters turned snow-white pure the moment they entered an organization like the UPA, which was dedicated to Ukrainian independence. We maintain what we consider the more logical position that they brought their prejudices into the organization and that, in fact, their attitudes came to prevail in it.

Yurkevich and Marples say that the political program of the UPA was "social democracy on the West European model" and that it "condemned all varieties of imperialism, and recognized the freedom of Ukraine's national minorities to develop their distinct nationalities." Balderdash! The real program of the UPA and the parent OUN was "integral nationalism" and a totalitarian ideology espousing the concept of "solidarity" of a nation, subordination to a charismatic leader (the *fuehrer* prinzip) and a single party system. The UPA glorified action, war and violence. They believed in the "purity" of the Ukrainian people and tried to achieve this purity by wiping out or driving out the minorities in their midst. Armstrong discusses this on pages 19-23, 37-38 and 158-165.

Later, during the war, the UPA leadership, which was not particularly interested in social or economic issues, began to incorporate a number of slogans about social egalitarianism and economic justice, mainly to make their program palatable to potential recruits from the Eastern Ukraine who had lived under the Soviet system and were more used to a collectivist society. Nevertheless, the central point of the UPA's ideology remained an all-consuming nationalism and romantic authoritarianism (Armstrong, pages 160-165).

The documentary series which Yurkevich and Marples cite is undependable precisely because in retrospect it tries to carry out cosmetic improvements on the image of the UPA. They accuse us of gross oversimplification of historical events. They themselves do so in their discussion of the relationship between the OUN and the Ger-

mans. In 1941 the OUN was actually split into two factions, the more radical led by Bandera (OUN-B), and the more moderate led by Melnyk (OUN-M). Although the Germans arrested the leaders of the OUN-B when they tried to proclaim an independent state, which did not fit into the German occupation program, and arrested and even executed a number of OUN activists, especially in the Eastern Ukraine, they continued to deal with the OUN-M.

This was the instrument the Germans used in organizing the SS Division "Galicia." For that matter, Bandera and others arrested with him were at first held in mild house arrest. Although they were later sent to Sachsenhausen concentration camp, they were held in "honorable" imprisonment and did not suffer the usual horrors associated with such an address.

In fact, they were released in 1944 and Bandera saw no obstacle in negotiating with the Germans again for co-operation against Soviet forces (Armstrong, *passim*). Although the UPA carried out a number of "reprisal actions" against the Germans in 1942 and 1943, by and large the two parties avoided direct confrontation, since, in many ways, they had common goals and complemented each other in a struggle against the Polish resistance movement and Soviet partisans. The Germans usually did not try to enter rural areas held by the UPA, nor did the UPA seriously attempt to hamper the German war effort. The only major confrontation arose between June and September of 1943, after which an unofficial truce prevailed. In fact the Germans often helped the UPA when it fought Polish or Soviet guerrillas. The German army reported being repeatedly asked by the UPA for weapons during 1944 (Alexander Dallin, *German Rule in Russia, 1941-1945*, 2nd edition, London, 1981, pp. 621, 625).

Yurkevich and Marples state that a West German court refuted allegations of participation by Ukrainian battalions in the massacre of Jews at Lvov. This is absolutely false. There was no such court case in West Germany, nor does Raschhofer, whom they cite (*Political Assassination* [Tubingen, 1964] say that there was. There was an East German court case which asserted that the Ukrainian battalions were involved and convicted in absentia Theodore Oberlaender, who had been a German intelligence officer attached to the Ukrainian battalions, for such participation. (In 1960 Oberlaender was minister for refugee affairs in the West German government). In fact, Raschhofer's book is an attack on this East German case and he never claims that any West German court dealt with this matter. What took place

in West Germany was an investigation by the Bonn district attorney of claims against Oberlaender and a subsequent decision to drop the case "for lack of evidence," (*New York Times*, Sept. 27, 1960, p. 7 and April 15, 1961, p. 10). This does not exactly constitute political exoneration and would, in any event, exonerate only Oberlaender personally, not the Ukrainian battalions.

Raschhofer's book is, in any case, a slanted and untrustworthy one. In citing the testimony of witnesses presumably collected by the Bonn DA he gives only initials, not names, thus making it impossible to assess the value of their evidence. He also uses the evidence very selectively. In dealing with the easily identifiable testimony of Moritz Gruenbart, for example, he uses the first part in which Gruenbart describes the execution of Ukrainian prisoners by the Soviet NKVD before the German capture of Lvov, but conveniently forgets to cite the second half in which Gruenbart definitively identifies the Ukrainian battalions as participating in the murder of Jews. The evidence for this Ukrainian participation comes from Gruenbart (see *Der Spiegel*, Vol. 14, no. 11, March 9, 1960, pp. 20-21), and other eyewitnesses, as well as from reports by German SS and police units to Himmler's headquarters (see Dallin, p. 119). There are, moreover, contemporary German accounts (See W. Diewerge, *Deutsche Soldaten Zehen Die Soviet Union* (Berlin, 1941, p. 45). The evidence concerning the Ukrainian murder of Jews in Lvov is massive, and attempts by Ukrainian apologists now to deny it cannot be taken seriously.

We are happy that Yurkevich and Marples consider Phillip Friedman, the author of *Ukrainian Jewish Relations during the Nazi Occupation* (YIVO Annual of Jewish Social Science, 12, 1958-9, pp. 259-96), as the best authority on Ukrainian-Jewish relations during the war. We would like to point out, however, that, by quoting him out of context, they misrepresent what he says. Friedman does quote testimony that a number of Jews served the UPA in auxiliary roles. But he also points out that these were only technicians, particularly medical personnel, plus a number of artisans (tailors, cobblers, etc.) whose skills the UPA lacked.

Therefore, they were forced to resort to recruiting Jews who were, in effect, slave labor, and their existence in the UPA does not prove either Jewish sympathy for the UPA's goals or Ukrainian sympathy for Jews. Friedman, moreover, asks the question why so few of these Jewish technicians survived the war and cites testimony that they were murdered as soon as they were not necessary. Furthermore, Friedman

points out that many of the anti-Semitic slanders we have been protesting against, such as allegations of Judeo-Bolshevism and the Jewish occupations of important positions in Soviet-occupied Galicia were already floating about in the UPA during the war (Friedman, pp. 272-273); these reports are now being repeated by the ideological successors of the UPA in Canada.

As a final comment on this point, we must reiterate our statement that the suggestion, first made by Mr. Kuzmyn, that Jews were active in the UPA, an organization which murdered so many Jews, is indeed "a terrible and cruel lie."

Yurkevich and Marples dismiss the Polish-Ukrainian conflict in Volhynia in two sentences by saying that "it was the product of longstanding mutual animosity and was characterized by atrocities on both sides." However, the systematic extermination of 60,000 or more people can hardly be shrugged off so easily. Beginning in November, 1942, the UPA pursued a policy of deliberate and systematic attack against Polish villages in what they considered Ukrainian territory with the aim of destroying or driving out Poles so as to achieve a form of "purity" of the Ukrainian nation. This policy was carried out for almost two full years until the arrival of the Soviet army in the summer of 1944 and is attested to by an overwhelming body of evidence from eyewitnesses in published books, in memoirs and in documents at the Polish Historical Institute and the Centre for the Study of the Polish Resistance, both in London.

They may object to our using such terms as "horrifying and beastly fashion" to describe the UPA's murder of Poles and Jews. But the killing of defenseless men, women and children with axes, hammers and knives, in order to save ammunition, cannot otherwise be described and is attested by many eyewitnesses. Yurkevich and Marples try to imply that the Poles were somehow equally guilty of the situation which produced these massacres. However, the numerical weakness of the Polish population in these areas and the Polish resistance movement there, as well as the inferiority of armaments in the Polish forces make it extremely unlikely that the Poles started this dispute. All testimony indicates that these massacres were a deliberate UPA policy deliberately applied. Poles defended themselves, to be sure, and committed some atrocities in retaliation. But their scale does not match the actions of the Ukrainians.

Yurkevich and Marples give an oversimplified and distorted picture when they say that the UPA was strong enough to have withstood "not only the Germans... but also a combined Soviet, Pol-

ish and Czech onslaught in the late 1940s." Surely the whole point of the UPA experience was that it did *not* withstand this onslaught, but was destroyed. Moreover, the phrasing gives the picture of combined Polish and Czech armies converging on a small and brave resistance movement. This is poppycock. The forces used against the UPA were not out of proportion to usual anti-guerrilla practices of that period i.e. approximately between five and eight to one. Thus, in Polish territory some 2,500 UPA fighters were confronted by 15-20,000 Polish troops, while the rest of the Polish army dealt with other problems elsewhere.

Finally, Yurkevich and Marples either do not know how to use historical evidence and how to deal with sources, or else are resorting to deliberate distortion in order to bolster their arguments. They either misrepresent what was said, as they do with Fainsod and Friedman, or do not seem even to have read properly the books they quote, as in the case of Raschhofer. The "sorry caricature" which they ascribe to us can better be applied to their letter. It is difficult, if not impossible, to carry on a reasoned scholarly discourse under these circumstances but we have done our best to answer them.

Lucien Karchmar
Gerald Tulchinsky
Kingston

Selective pity for holocaust victims is repugnant and morally indefensible

Re: letter "Nazi war crimes must not be obscured by Jewish-Soviet collaboration" (March 9). The latest Karchmar and Tulchinsky diatribe is an especially offensive example of Ukrainophobia. Apparently at a loss for finding some objective way of replying to my reminiscences about the wartime collaboration of Jews, they resorted to the incredible tactic (of a type they nevertheless seem to favor) of attempting to brand me, a survivor of the Holocaust and of several Nazi concentration camps, as a "liar" and "anti-Semite."

They then go on to recite a whole collection of half-truths and distortions about Ukrainians during the Second World War, rewriting history in a style that smacks of Sol Littman's "teachings" on this subject. Their perspective is, obviously, the only one they will tolerate as valid in the debate about alleged war criminals in Canada. Lest my silence be misconstrued I must reply at least to the most blatant errors of fact in their letter of March 9.

According to data they muster from one notoriously unreliable source (e.g. Soviet statistical materials of the 1920s) Jews in Ukraine constituted some five per cent of the secret police, then known as the NKVD; Ukrainians, they admit, were *under-represented*. However, what is important is not *how many* members of any individual ethnic group, be they Poles, Jews, or Russians were in the NKVD, but *what rank* they occupied. Karchmar and Tulchinsky know that many (but, of course, not all) Jews occupied the middle-and upper-level ranks.

Certainly there were also Ukrainians and other nationalities like Byelorussians and Georgians in the NKVD, some of them at senior levels — Ukraine was not ruled by Jews, as Messrs. Karchmar and Tulchinsky believe someone alleged. The occupying power was Soviet Russia which sought collaborators from whatever national group it could.

Regrettably, access to Soviet archives is denied to western scholars, and so, for the time being, it is quite impossible to determine precisely the nationality of those mass murderers who orchestrated the "terror-famine" of 1932-33 in Ukraine, when over seven million Ukrainians died, or of those who willingly collaborated with the Nazis and Soviets in their occupation of Ukraine and much of the rest of Eastern Europe. That some Jews suffered as much as Ukrainians

under Soviet rule, or that they were murdered *en masse* by the Nazis is indisputable. That there were collaborators of every nationality and creed is also historically true. The Deschênes Commission recognized this and wisely decided that the Canadian authorities should bring all war criminals regardless of their ethnic, religious, racial, or cultural background to justice in Canada under this country's criminal laws. It did not rule that only Nazis were guilty of war crimes or that only Nazis should be sought out and brought to justice. That decision seems both fair and true to the historical record.

It is troubling that Karchmar and Tulchinsky assert that it is "anti-Semitic" to raise the issue of Jewish collaboration with the Nazis or, more especially, with the Soviets. Why? Their predictable reaction to any mention of this matter is to brand those initiating it "anti-Semitic." They should be more judicious in the use of this incantation, lest it begin to lose its power from overuse. No poll has demonstrated that there has been any rise in "anti-Semitism" in Canada since the Second World War but a constant reiteration of stories to the effect that "anti-Semitism" is a problem may end up becoming a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Karchmar and Tulchinsky also make no secret of their partisanship. Thus they feel comfortable denouncing Professor Lukas' study, *The Forgotten Holocaust*, simply because he raises serious questions about Jewish collaboration with the Soviets. This is unlikely to win them much respect within the academic world. Maybe they should write their own book rather than simply carping that they don't approve of what others have written.

Believing in the uniqueness of the holocaust (or Shoah) is a personal matter; while I have never disputed that millions of Jews were murdered by the Nazis I, along with many others, including many prominent Jewish thinkers, do not elevate, or denigrate, any specific example of man's inhumanity to man. Observing that the holocaust was not unique has absolutely nothing to do with "holocaust-denial." It might be helpful if Karchmar and Tulchinsky were to ponder over the words of the Jewish intellectual George Steiner, who wrote the following in a recent issue of the journal *Encounter*:

Is there a qualitative uniqueness in the Shoah? The argument that there is a bestial innovation in the Nazi decision to kill all Jews purely and simply on ethnic-racial grounds does not hold. Ask the Armenians, the Gypsies . . . A number of Jewish thinkers and historians have ar-

gued that the Shoah differs from any other massacre in its application of a specifically designed bureaucracy and technology. I do not find this argument persuasive. In their own military-political terms, the mass exterminations carried out by the Vandals, by the Huns, by Islamic conquerors of Byzantium represent appalling feats of purposed and organized bestiality. Arrows and fire kill no less surely than gas ovens . . . the presumed uniqueness of the Shoah has become vital to Judaism now . . . The Shoah is today the cement of Jewish identity.

I don't suppose Steiner, any more than Professor Claude Levi-Straus, is an "anti-Semite," although neither of them feel that the holocaust was unique. As I said above, the Nazis murdered Jews in the millions; I spent the war years in a number of concentration camps and know what the Nazis did, both to Gentiles and Jews. Karchmar and Tulchinsky's ridiculous allegation that I recommended that the "Second World War crimes of the Nazis and their collaborators should be brushed aside" is evidence of either maliciousness or an inability to read English. Possibly they are just too worked up to be objective. It would be preferable if they didn't mislead readers of *The Whig-Standard* with their misperceptions about what I've said.

As for war losses, Professor Norman Davies, author of the internationally acclaimed, two-volume study, *God's Playground: A History of Poland* (Oxford University Press, 1981) has recently reviewed the various claims made about deaths during the Second World War. He has calculated that approximately five million Jews died in the war, compared with five million ethnic Poles and as many as 11 million Ukrainians. In his view:

It is hard to think of any other part of the world, with the possible exception of modern China, where so many excesses and so much misery has persisted for so long or on such a scale (as in Ukraine).

As Davies points out, "people in the know" have long regarded the Ukrainians as "the most tragic nation in Europe." Since Karchmar and Tulchinsky have a different "axe to grind" — even if they wield it clumsily — they reject anything which might somehow place the suffering of the Jewish people in historical perspective. I do not feel that the victims of one nationality or religious group are more important than those of any other. I think that my view is both the objec-

tive one, and moral. What others choose to think, or believe, on this subject is their own business. I only object when someone attempts to impose their own viewpoint as the "truth" and tries to punish those who question it. That's what the Nazis did and the Soviets still do.

Not surprisingly Karchmar and Tulchinsky are all wrong in their assessment of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA). This partisan army fought against both the Nazi and Soviet occupations of Ukraine. As evidence of its effectiveness and the widespread support it enjoyed one might turn to an article in *The Times* (London, England) of May, 1946, which noted that the UPA was waging such a strong guerrilla war in the Curzon line area that "a complete breakdown of the Polish government's authority" had taken place.

Although Ukrainian and Polish forces did clash during the war years, the UPA and Polish Home Army eventually cooperated in fighting against Soviet power. Although the UPA suffered great losses after the combined forces of the U.S.S.R., Poland and Czechoslovakia were brought to bear against it in the fall of 1947, instances of armed resistance by Ukrainians were being reported into the early 1950s.

When Karchmar and Tulchinsky allege that the UPA was one of the most "anti-Semitic" groups in Eastern Europe they are engaging in a falsification of history. The Ukrainian national liberation movement was never "anti-Semitic." Indeed a Jew, questioned by *The Times'* Prague correspondent, reported that he had "no apprehension" about the UPA or the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN). The distorted view of UPA presented by Karchmar and Tulchinsky resembles the stuff regularly churned out by Soviet propagandists. Instead of turning to Communists for their descriptions of UPA they might rather read Professor P.J. Potichnyj and E. Shtendera's *Political Thought of the Ukrainian Underground, 1943-1951* (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1986). It should also be pointed out that in a book of reminiscences edited by Dr. P. Mirchuk and W. Dawydenko (*In The Ranks of UPA*, New York, 1957), Dr. Stella Krenzbach wrote that in her UPA unit there were 12 Jews, eight of whom were doctors. The title of her article says it all — "*I Am Alive Thanks To The UPA*." I suppose Karchmar and Tulchinsky would have to call her a liar, too.

As for the rounding up of Jews for extermination, the Ukrainian nationalist writer Dr. Petro Mirchuk (interned because he was a nationalist by the Nazis — his Auschwitz number was 49734) has pointed out that there were "ten times

more" Jews than Ukrainians working with the Nazis. The Jews whom I saw being exterminated at Majdanek were handed over to the SS by Jewish *kapos* and not by any so-called "Ukrainian police."

Karchmar and Tulchinsky are also seriously mistaken in their claim that no Soviet war criminals or collaborators made their way west either during or after the Second World War. American Counter Intelligence Corps (CIC) archives make it clear that, from September, 1945, through the spring of 1948, various NKVD agents were deliberately sent out into the American and British zones of Germany and Austria, with the specific mission of infiltrating and sowing dissent among the various communities of East European Displaced Persons (DPs) sheltering in refugee camps. Some of these Soviet agents probably remained in the West, and moved into Canada, the U.S.A. and U.K. These CIC reports made it clear, incidentally, that Jewish DP camps were especially heavily penetrated by the NKVD. Just because Karchmar and Tulchinsky find the thought unpalatable does not mean that no Soviet war criminals, agents, or collaborators are not now sitting in Canada, continuing with their nefarious work among this country's Jewish and East European communities. I agree with them when they argue that the government should establish another commission to determine how many Soviet war criminals there are now hiding in Canada. A lengthy list of alleged Soviet war criminals was submitted to the Deschênes Commission although this type of war criminal was not discussed in the publicly released part of the commission's report.

I rather resent these gentlemen raising doubts about my memory. I have not noticed the onset of senility or memory loss that is said to accompany the aging process. I think, therefore, that I am justified in asking for an apology from them, although I don't expect to receive one. I have never questioned either of their mental capacities, although it is obvious that emotionalism has clouded their sense of judgment and taste on more than one occasion. I also stand by my personal testimony that there were no Ukrainian or Lithuanian guards or so-called "Ukrainian police" while I was in Majdanek. The few "Ukrainian guards" I met while there were actually of Russian or Byelorussian origin. The testimonies of the unnamed Poles Karchmar and Tulchinsky would prefer to believe have as much, or as little, credibility as does my account. That some Poles and Jews harbored (and obviously some still do) anti-Ukrainian sentiments and have borne false witness out of pure spite should be kept in mind.

There is an interesting side issue to this question of "memory loss." Karchmar and Tulchinsky appear to doubt whether someone can recall personal experiences accurately after 45 years. They should communicate this observation to the courtroom in Israel where John Demjanjuk is now on trial for his life on the grounds that he *may have been* Treblinka's "Ivan the Terrible." Several witnesses have appeared before this tribunal and made statements to the effect that Mr. Demjanjuk is "Ivan" yet every one of those same witnesses earlier (in the USA in trials held in 1976 and 1981) could not identify Mr. Demjanjuk as this notorious camp guard. The memories of these witnesses seem to have improved with age. Take your pick, gentlemen, either memory improves with age or it fails us all. I have not forgotten my dead friends, Ukrainians, Poles, Jews and others who perished under the Nazis. That is why I find it so offensive that Messrs. Karchmar and Tulchinsky seem to prefer to lament over only some of the holocaust's victims while they appear to accord blame selectively — this is a morally indefensible and repugnant attitude.

Apparently one of them was also "there." I was sorry to read that, since I know from personal experience what it was like to survive under the Nazis. I have never, however, resorted to the underhanded tactic of casting aspersions against either Mr. Karchmar or Mr. Tulchinsky, nor have I speculated as to what either of them did during the war. Their gratuitous remarks about my memory and my character are unfounded, ugly and a sign of immaturity. When I first wrote to *The Whig-Standard* I hoped that my testimony might help inform the important debate on the subject of bringing alleged war criminals who might be found in Canada to justice. Karchmar and Tulchinsky ended up reducing what should have been an entirely serious and important exchange to the level of personal invective. There is no point in carrying it any further.

And after all these exchanges it turns out, as the Deschênes Commission reported, that there are only some 20 suspects against whom there might be sufficient evidence for the government to initiate "war criminal" trials. Alarmist reports by people like Littman that there were "thousands" of "war criminals" in Canada's East European communities turned out, according to Justice Deschênes, to be "grossly exaggerated." Not only was the Ukrainian Division "Galicia" cleared but it seems that there aren't any Ukrainian "war criminals" in Canada. Many Canadians, including myself, knew so all along. Much of this debate was, in fact, "much ado about nothing" although saying so during the past two

years exposed the honest man to insults about "obstructing justice." Now that this expensive, divisive, and, regrettably, selective "hunt" for "war criminals" is finally over I am, like many others, content to let the government go ahead and do what it has to in order to bring any genuine war criminals of any period and from any conflict found in this country — be they Germans, Jews, Russians, or whatever — to justice. But let us remember that any war criminal is an *individual* and not in any way a representative of an entire ethnic or religious group. Too much hatred has been generated by those who either ignorantly, or vindictively, engaged in a campaign which amounted to little more than community or group libel. Now that this entire issue has been aired, and resolved, I trust Canadians will not be bothered with such unfounded allegations ever again.

Stefan Kuzmyn
Kingston

Good-bad distinction cannot be made about facts of Ukrainian insurgent army

In their letter of May 5, Lucien Karchmar and Gerald Tulchinsky again insist on depicting the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) as a murderous, collaborationist formation whose claims to represent the legitimate strivings of the Ukrainian people for independence deserve no serious consideration. The facts are at variance with their description.

The relationship between the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) and the UPA is far more complex than Karchmar and Tulchinsky admit. Although both the Melnyk and Bandera factions of the OUN adopted integral-nationalist programs in 1939 and 1941 and hoped to ally themselves with the Germans against the Soviets in order to achieve independence, German policy made this course untenable.

Not only did the Germans imprison the leaders of both factions, but they killed or imprisoned rank-and-file members of the OUN; deported some 2.8 million persons from the occupied territories to Germany as forced laborers, most of them from Ukraine (Alexander Dallin), *German Rule in Russia 1941-1945*, second ed., [Boulder: Westview Press, 1981] p. 431; and forced Ukrainian peasants to produce for the German war effort. As Erich Koch stated, "The feeding of the civilian population [in the Ukraine] is a matter of utter indifference" (Dallin, p. 345).

The formation of the UPA, over which the OUN-B gained control in 1942, was a necessary response to these German policies. Since the UPA attained a peak strength of about 40,000 (John A. Armstrong, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, second ed. [New York: Columbia University Press, 1963] p. 156, it is clear, even from the figures used by Karchmar and Tulchinsky, that the vast majority of recruits were not deserters from German police formations.

As the political scientist Yaroslav Bilinsky points out, the recruits included former Soviet prisoners of war, local youths who refused to go to Germany as laborers, those who sought to evade forced draft into the Red Army after the Soviet reoccupation, and a considerable number of Eastern Ukrainians (*The Second Soviet Republic: The Ukraine after World War II* [New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1964] pp. 121, 139; see also Armstrong, p. 296). De-

serters from the *Waffen-SS Division Galizien* who joined the UPA can hardly be considered war criminals as Karchmar and Tulchinsky allege: Mr. Justice Deschênes is the most recent investigator to make this clear.

Nor is it true, as Karchmar and Tulchinsky maintain, that the OUN-M was the instrument used to organize the *Division Galizien*: this was carried out by a military executive committee formed for the purpose (Roman Krokmaluk, *Zahrava na skhodi* [Toronto: Brotherhood of Former Soldiers of the 1st Ukrainian Division UNA, 1978], pp. 20-25).

German efforts to destroy the UPA were very substantial: General Erich von dem Bach-Zelewski, who would later drown the Warsaw uprising in blood, led an offensive against the UPA in 1943 (Lev Shankov's'kyi, "*Ukrainis'ka povstancha armii*" in *Istoriia ukrains'koho viis'ka* [Winipeg: Ivan Tyktor, 1953], pp. 668-73. The diminution of German hostility in the later period of occupation is to be explained not by ideological rapprochement, but by German panic after the Stalingrad disaster. Only then did the Germans modify their previous policy of refusing arms to "sub-human" Slavs.

Ukrainian nationalist leaders were kept alive not, as Karchmar and Tulchinsky imply, because they merited special consideration, but because the Germans kept them in reserve for possible use as political pawns. Others were not so fortunate: Stepan Bandera's brothers were among those who died in Auschwitz.

Moreover, contrary to the allegation of Karchmar and Tulchinsky, it was not Bandera who sought a deal with the Germans toward the end of the war. Desperate to salvage their war effort, the Germans released Ukrainian leaders and sought to have them join a committee of the Liberation of the Peoples of Russia headed by the Russian general Andrei Vlasov. The Ukrainians refused to do so, forming a separate Ukrainian National Committee which, as Armstrong points out (p. 186), did not give even lip service to alliance with the Germans.

The Germans' viciously anti-Ukrainian policies made it necessary for the OUN-B and the UPA to rethink the entire ideological basis of their struggle. Instead of condemning the *Litopys UPA* documentary series *a priori*, Karchmar and Tulchinsky would do well to acquaint themselves with it. The basic programmatic document of the UPA, "What is the Ukrainian Insurgent Army Fighting For?" dated August, 1943, sets forth the goal of struggle for an "independent, united Ukrainian state and for the principle that every nation should be able to lead a free life in its own

independent state." The document explicitly condemns "Russian communist Bolshevism and German National Socialism." It goes on to call for a mixed economy, a wide range of social services, the guarantee of democratic freedoms of the press, speech, thought, convictions, worship and world-view, and for the full right of national minorities to cultivate their own national cultures. The same positions are taken in the resolutions of the Third Extraordinary Grand Assembly of the OUN-B (August, 1943) and in the platform of the Supreme Ukrainian Liberation Council, formed in July, 1944, as a political superstructure for the UPA and including representatives of various political currents. (For English translations of these texts, see Peter J. Potichnyj and Yevhen Shtendera, ed., **Political Thought of the Ukrainian Underground** [Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1986], pp. 333-53, 359-63, 377-81.) These documents, and many similar ones by UPA publicists, were by no means window-dressing, but grew out of the requirements of the UPA's struggle, were hotly debated in the OUN-B, and led to a formal split in that faction after the war.

Regarding the UPA and the Jews, it is true that Jewish auxiliaries were taken into the UPA for mercenary, not humanitarian or ideological, reasons. However, Karchmar and Tulchinsky's description of them as "slave laborers" is overdrawn: as Bilinsky (p. 123) points out, "many of them are said to have performed their extraordinary tasks with exemplary courage and ingenuity." As for the participation of *Nachtigall* troops in the massacre of Jews in Lviv, the West German investigation which Karchmar and Tulchinsky describe (properly correcting my inadvertent reference to "court") examined the issue and concluded that, at most, one platoon of *Nachtigall's* second company, acting without authorization, may have participated in this outrage (Hermann Raschhofer, **Political Assassination** [Tubingen: Fritz Schlichtenmayer, 1964], p. 58).

In their discussion of the Polish-Ukrainian conflict in Volhynia, Karchmar and Tulchinsky fail to place the issue in its proper context. The Second Polish Republic was not a democracy, but, from 1926, a dictatorship and military regime that treated its substantial minorities as second-class citizens. A scheme to settle Western Ukraine with Polish ex-soldiers, with the aim of making it inalienably Polish, was undertaken in the 1920s. Ukrainians were denied state schooling and other services in their own language, discriminated against in the professions, refused equitable participation in politics, and subjected to a brutal military "pacification" in 1930. The

war led to an intensification of chauvinist attitudes on both sides as they sought to assume their post-war dominance in Western Ukraine. Ukrainophobia and even suggestions of anti-Ukrainian pogroms were not lacking in the Polish underground press, and Polish murders of Ukrainian peasants and prominent community activists began as early as 1941 (Shankovs'kyi, pp. 697-98).

The role of the UPA in this butchery is not nearly so clear-cut as Karchmar and Tulchinsky allege. As Bilinsky points out, "it is a well attested fact that in the spring of that year [1943] the two nationalities started to slaughter each other on a grand scale [in Volhynia]. German authorities fed fuel to the flames when after the defection of Ukrainian security police they recruited Poles for the job of pacifying the Ukrainian countryside. The emergence and growth of the Ukrainina Insurgent Army in Volhynia must, therefore, be explained primarily as an effort to protect the local peasants against the provocations of Soviet partisans, the hostility of Polish settlers and brutal repressions on the part of the Germans" (pp. 121-22).

These considerations in no way justify Ukrainian atrocities against Poles. They do, however, establish that mutual hatred had reached fever pitch and that Poles must bear a large share of the responsibility for this. Polish historians have noted that Polish atrocities included the extermination of entire populations of isolated Ukrainian hamlets (Jan Tomasz Gross, **Polish Society under German Occupation** [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979], p. 194), but Karchmar and Tulchinsky apparently feel justified in reserving their indignation for Ukrainians.

The Soviet and Polish struggle to destroy the UPA was a protracted one which, as Karchmar and Tulchinsky fail to mention, involved not only regular forces but also NKVD troops, who infiltrated Western Ukraine on a large scale; this was accompanied by such measures as the distribution of poisoned drugs, the taking of hostages, and public torture and executions (Shankovs'kyi, pp. 753-65). Moreover, Ukrainians in the southeastern border regions of Poland were forcibly deported to western and northern parts of the country in order to deprive the UPA of a popular base. According to a recent Polish source, a total of 137,833 persons were deported by late July, 1947 (Jan Golec, "*Aby wygasić luny w Bieszczadach*," *Nadodrze* [Zielona Góra], No. 17, 1986). Hardly a routine operation.

Finally, it must be pointed out that even after

1947, when the bulk of the UPA had been destroyed, individual detachments continued to fight. The commander-in-chief, Roman Shukhevych, was not killed until 1950. Captured UPA soldiers were usually sentenced to 25 years in Soviet forced-labor camps, where they earned a reputation as defiant men who remained true to their convictions. Their role in organizing a prisoners' strike after the death of Stalin is well-established (see, e.g., Ievhen Hrytsiak, *Korotkyi zapys spohadiv* [Baltimore: Smoloskyp, 1980]). Roman Shukhevych's son, Yurii, has spent the last 37 years in Soviet prisons, labor camps and places of exile because of his steadfast refusal to denounce his father. This is not the behavior of criminals or opportunists. The UPA should not be idealized, but neither is it an appropriate target for vilification. As the UPA publicist "Poltava" wrote, "Everyone who has seen or heard of the heroism of our struggle must ask himself: 'What are these people dying for?'"

Myroslav Yurkevich
Edmonton

War criminals hiding in Canada were at the vanguard of Nazi movement

The real guts of the Deschênes Commission Report on War Criminals In Canada remains buried. A special study by Ottawa historian Alti Rodal based largely on neglected documents in Canada's national archives was cut out of Justice Deschênes public report and is being held back by the government.

Without that study, little in the Deschênes Commission report makes sense. All you get is an 800-long list of cases, denuded of all identity, geography and history. It leaves us with little idea of who the war criminals are, what motivated them, how they got into Canada, and what they are up to nowadays.

Fortunately, several of us have plowed the same territory. I have been over the ground several times, mining the material in archives in Ottawa, Washington, New York, Paris, London, and Jerusalem. Even more important than the data on individual war criminals that we gathered, was the political pattern of war criminal activity that emerged.

Just who are the war criminals that found shelter in Canada?

First, let's eliminate the romantic myths. They are not a conscience-stricken group of men whose nightmares are haunted by the agonized faces of their victims.

On the contrary, they tend to be tough old birds who sleep well and are proud of what they did. Most, if given the chance, say they would do it over again. When they are in their cups, some have been known to boast of the iron will that permitted them to kill women and children without flinching. Others show off the diamond rings they exacted from their Jewish captives in exchange for a glass of milk or a drink of water.

Many are still ardent advocates of the causes that brought them into close collaboration with the Nazis. They still believe that what Hitler did was right and proper. If only the world understood, it would praise rather than condemn them.

Another myth is that they had no choice, that they acted with a Nazi gun to their head.

Nonsense! Most of those suspected of war crimes were members of pro-fascist, pro-Nazi political parties before the war. In France, they belonged to the *Action Française*, in Holland to the Dutch National Socialist Party, in Belgium to

the Flemish National Brotherhood, in Romania to the Iron Guard, in Hungary to the Arrow Cross, in Slovakia to the Hlinka Guard, in Finland to the People's Patriotic Party, in the Ukraine to the OUN (Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists), and in Croatia to the *Ustashi*. If Hitler had succeeded in invading Britain, we could have added Sir Oswald Mosley's British Union of Fascists.

In almost every case, they schemed to have the Nazis take over their country and greeted them joyously when they arrived. In some cases, as in Lemberg and Kaunas, they could hardly wait for the German occupation forces to arrive before launching their own programs.

Most of them had been around for years, joining one pro-fascist movement after another, deserting one "leader" for another. They paraded about in uniforms, engaged in street battles, preached hatred of the Jews and extolled violence. Except in Germany and Italy, they were small, unpopular parties with little chance of taking over the reins of government. But when the Germans marched in, they turned out to help the invaders and were rewarded with appointments as town mayor or police chief.

Their young men donned armbands and helped the SS-men round up the local Jews. They competed to show the vaunted SS how tough they could be, how callous, how indifferent to the pleas of their victims. The Nazi mobile killing squads, the dread *Einsatzgruppen* responsible for the deaths of one and a half million Jews on Soviet territory, recruited the worst of them for their execution squads, decked them out in police uniforms and organized them into armed militias. When they had fully proven their devotion to the Nazi cause they were "honored" by being allowed to join "foreign" *Waffen SS* units and fight shoulder to shoulder with the Germans against Allied forces.

In the Netherlands, for example, members of the Dutch National Socialist Party volunteered to patrol roads, round up Jews, and hunt down those who fled rather than work in German arms factories as slave laborers. Known as the *Landwacht* or Home Guard, they started in motley uniforms, armed with an occasional shotgun. Soon they were dressed in SS black, and carried automatic weapons. As time went on, they were organized into police battalions to combat the Resistance. When the Allied forces arrived, they were converted into full-fledged fighting units led by German officers.

As the territory occupied by the German forces shrank, the collaborators retreated with them. Some fought to the end, some were captured, others threw away their uniforms and mixed with

the hordes of liberated slave laborers wandering the countryside.

Merciful Allied forces gave them shelter in Displaced Persons camps. The International Refugee Organization (IRO) helped them settle in Canada, the United States, Australia, New Zealand, Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay. Most of those in the camps were genuine refugees, driven from their homes by war and hunger. But hidden among them were those who knew they could never return home because their government would try them as war criminals and hang them as traitors.

In France, Holland, Belgium, Denmark and Czechoslovakia — indeed, in every country occupied by the Germans — large numbers of collaborators were tried for their crimes after the war. In fact, the trials go on to this day. Not everyone was recognized and caught at once. Some remained hidden under assumed names for years. Others, like Klaus Barbie, fled to South American countries that refused to extradite them. Hundreds fled to Canada which also refused to extradite them and pretended they didn't exist. As a result, Canada became known as a haven for war criminals and was mockingly referred to in refugee circles as "Paraguay of the North." In 40 years since the war, Canada has extradited only one man, SS-Master Sgt. Helmut Rauca, responsible for the death of 10,500 men, women and children in Kaunas, Lithuania.

Did Canada get any of the "biggies" or just small fry concentration camp guards and minor party members? From immigration records we know that Canada got its share of the biggies. A former cabinet member of the Slovak puppet state settled in Canada, as did the publisher of a pair of anti-semitic Hungarian newspapers. We gave shelter to the assistant commander of a notorious Estonian concentration camp responsible for the death of thousands of people. The Canadian government has turned a deaf ear to repeated requests for the extradition of a former deputy police chief of a major Ukrainian city. Several members of the infamous Aja's Death Commando, who participated in the deaths of thousands of Latvian Jews have found a secure haven here.

Big enough?

Of course, some have died since of natural causes, and some have left for the United States and South America. But a majority of the approximately 3,000 war criminals and wartime collaborators who made it to our shores are still here.

In Australia, a recent report revealed that the war criminals who had found shelter "down under" fell into three broad groups:

☐ Members of police units that cooperated with the Nazis or "security units" which participated in deporting, ill-treating or murdering people on racial and political grounds.

☐ Guards and administrators of prisons and concentration camps where large numbers of people were murdered and mistreated.

☐ Members of puppet governments that joined in the deportation, ill-treatment and murder of persons on racial and political grounds.

The same is undoubtedly true in Canada because our experience with war criminals is remarkably similar to that of our Commonwealth sister. Both countries are finally moving forward, preparing to prosecute war criminals. What remains to be seen is if they can muster the political will to make up for 40 years of wilful neglect.

Sol Littman
Toronto

☐ *Sol Littman is a veteran journalist and representative in Canada of the Los Angeles-based Simon Wiesenthal Center.*

Is Nazi-hunter's anger a case of sour grapes?

Re: "War criminals hiding in Canada were at the vanguard of the Nazi movement" (May 8). One might have thought that Sol Littman, Canadian representative of the Simon Wiesenthal Center of Los Angeles, would have had the decency, or at least the common sense, to fade from the scene after the release of the Commission of Inquiry on War Criminals report. Not only did Justice Deschênes severely criticize Littman and his associates for "grossly exaggerating" the number of alleged war criminals who might be in Canada, but, ironically, it is also clear that it was Littman's "unfounded allegations" on this subject which were instrumental in provoking the establishment of this inquiry on Nazi war criminals.

Yet, now he is back at it again, making all sorts of unsubstantiated charges about the "thousands" of Nazis and fascists he would like us to believe are still hiding out in Canada. The commission report has described how unfortunate the consequences of such "loose language and somewhat careless public statements" can be. Obviously Littman has not read the Deschênes report or, if he has, appreciated its meticulously documented conclusions.

What is also curious is that Littman, who has absolutely no credentials whatsoever as a historian (even your faithful essayists Tulchinsky and Karchmar were careful to publicly disassociate themselves from him, as did both B'Nai Brith and the Canadian Jewish Congress), makes much of his "mining" of archives in various western countries. Elsewhere he has also claimed credit for "research" in Soviet archives, a remarkable achievement given that he knows no East European language, much less German.

Yet, despite all of this, he has never been able to produce any concrete evidence in support of his many accusations. For example, Case No. 643.1 in the Deschênes report was brought to the commission's attention by Littman not on the basis of archival evidence but because he received an "anonymous tip."

Case No. 645 was brought forward after Littman read something about an individual in a Soviet newspaper. That was all the "evidence" he could produce! In fact, 77 names put before the commission came from either newspaper reports or radio broadcasts and some of these denunciations, as the commission itself admitted, were based on racial prejudice, mistaken beliefs and similarly ugly motivations.

At least 44 cases were suggested by "anonymous" sources; this is hardly a situation likely to inspire confidence in the degree to which our individual rights and freedoms were protected during this inquiry. Littman, it must be remembered, was very much a part of all this. His latest (May 8) letter goes further in the sense that he is now apparently cross with the Deschênes commission, and therefore asserts that it did not do its work thoroughly — a far cry from his enthusiastic praise for it back in early 1985.

Would it be unfair to say that because the commission refuted his wild imaginings we are now all being exposed to a classic case of sour grapes? Certainly Kingstonians have been, as were people in southwestern Ontario who recently read much the same "letter to the editor" in *The Windsor Star*. Does he routinely circulate his "letters to the editor?" Is he being informative or is he a provocateur?

Perhaps Littman, who has often made use of information provided for him, as Justice Deschênes observed, by "a foreign country" (the U.S.S.R. seems to be the likely source), should focus his attention a little closer to home for his Nazis, collaborators and war criminals. According to an article in the May 1 edition of *The New York Times*, the American Office of Special Investigations (OSI) has been forced, as the result of a "news leak," to begin proceedings against Jacob Tannenbaum, an especially cruel Jewish *kapo* who served the Nazis at the Görlitz concentration camp in southeastern Germany during the war.

This alleged war criminal has apparently been a donor to the Simon Wiesenthal Center of Los Angeles. Are other *kapos* or Soviet war criminals hiding in Canada? Before pointing a finger at other ethnic communities, Littman should be certain that his trips and mental meanderings are not being subsidized by war criminals of the "tough old bird" type he has been searching for, quite obviously in the wrong places.

J. Bellis
Toronto

The Deschênes report: A time for healing

*Comment by
Ron Vastokas and Lubomyr Luciuk*

CANADA'S COMMISSION of inquiry on War Criminals has finally released its report. It represents a uniquely Canadian approach to the issue of bringing alleged war criminals to justice. The commission's final report has generally been greeted with optimism, most particularly by organizations representing Canadians of Jewish, Ukrainian, and other East European backgrounds.

Not only have the quarrels which emerged during the work of the Deschênes Commission, and the question of Soviet evidence, been addressed, but it may well be that the commission's recommendations will themselves serve to bridge the rifts that emerged over the past two years between these various communities.

Heading the list of the major conclusions of the commission was the clear statement that *all* war criminals — regardless of their ethnic, religious, racial or cultural origins — who are found in Canada will be brought to trial in Canada under Canadian criminal law.

An amendment to the Criminal Code will allow for such prosecution. This solution addresses the concerns of those communities which argued that justice must not be selective and that one war criminal in Canada, of whatever background, is one too many. Just as there may soon be a Nazi war criminal trial in Canada, so, too, the prosecution of Soviet war criminals who may be found in Canada is provided for.

Second, there can be a "made-in-Canada" resolution of this issue. Justice Minister Ray Hnatyshyn emphasized that the problem of war criminals should be dealt with in Canada and resolved in a manner consistent with Canadian standards of law and evidence. Furthermore, the legal options of denaturalization, deportation and extradition were, essentially, rejected, as Mr. Hnatyshyn emphasized that Canada should not "export" its problems. The Canadian judicial system is quite capable of dealing with this matter, and in its own way.

Third, the issue of alleged war criminals in Canada is not what it was initially perceived to be. Justice Deschênes' report indicated that there had been "no less than [a] 400 per cent exaggeration" of the number of suspected war crim-

inals said to be in Canada. The figures ventured by "outside intervenors" such as Simon Wiesenthal and the Canadian representative of the Simon Wiesenthal Center of Los Angeles, Sol Littman, were described as being "grossly exaggerated."

There are 20 individuals in Canada against whom there are "specific, credible and serious allegations" of war criminality. While a further 218 subjects will require further investigation, this will be undertaken on a case-by-case basis. As for Canadians who were members of the Ukrainian Division Galicia, these veterans were completely exonerated; it was also concluded that there is no evidence that the infamous Joseph Mengele ever tried to enter Canada.

The nationality and place of origin of all the suspects was carefully deleted by Justice Deschênes to ensure that the civil liberties of Canadian citizens were fully protected as provided for under the Canadian Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms. War criminality has nothing to do with nationality or ethnicity, and this has been underscored in Justice Deschênes' report.

Fourth, the conduct of these necessary investigations will be undertaken within the existing framework of the Justice Department and the RCMP. The required resources will be allocated to these authorities. No additional organization, such as a Canadian equivalent of the U.S. Office of Special Investigations (OSI), will be set up in Canada. This particular recommendation met with the complete support of the Ukrainian-Canadian and Jewish-Canadian organizations which had standing before the commission of inquiry.

THIS WAS A particularly significant development; while Canadian governments in the past may have been slow in searching out and prosecuting war criminals said to be living in Canada, there is now a general agreement among Canadians of origins as diverse as Croatian and Jewish, Ukrainian and Vietnamese, Lithuanian and Arab, that all war criminals found in Canada be brought to justice. For the first time in Canadian history the communities most directly affected by such a search for war criminals have been given a mechanism by which persons should be brought to justice, where this should be done, and on that most fundamental of principles, that all war criminals will be equally subject to investigation and prosecution.

It would be both a factual error and a serious misunderstanding of what Justice Deschênes recommended if it were not recognized that Canada has now established a legal precedent of poten-

tially international implications. Instead of adopting an American, OSI-style solution — and provoking a public outcry that might have attended such an action — the commissioner and the government have crafted a distinctive proposal that satisfies the concerns of all Canadians seriously concerned with this problem. These communities have now agreed that the government should expeditiously move to bring to trial those against whom there are sufficient grounds for such action.

Finally, one of the most important implications for the future is that the government has now proposed a tightening up of the immigration screening process and interview procedures to ensure that Canadian citizenship and immigration are not available to those who have participated in war crimes. Canada's government has made a definite commitment to ensuring that this country will not be a haven for war criminals; the need for future inquiries into the presence of such persons will therefore be diminished, for no war criminals, from whatever conflict, past or present, should ever again be able to come here, disguised as refugees or victims of oppression.

A legal remedy for coping with the problem of war criminals who may be found in Canada is finally available. This solution has been widely applauded. That this issue was mistakenly reported as an inter-ethnic controversy is also clear. Coping with and correcting this misperception still remains a crucial task.

Fittingly, spokesmen for both the Canadian Jewish Congress and the Ukrainian Canadian Committee, Professors Irwin Cotler and Lubomyr Luciuk, interviewed on the CBC's *The Journal* on the night of the report's release (March 12), not only unanimously welcomed its recommendations but, symbolically, sealed their communities' commitment to a healing process with a firm handshake.

While *The Journal* elected to exclude this gesture when it aired its report, it seems clear that this was a heartfelt expression and one that bodes well for the future of inter-ethnic community relations in the multicultural society which we all share.

□ *Prof. Ron Vastokas teaches anthropology at Trent University. Dr. Lubomyr Luciuk is a post-doctoral fellow in the Department of Geography at the University of Toronto.*

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