

Estonian World Council (EWC)

The Estonian World Council (EWC) was formed in 1955 by the anti-communist émigré groups that led their ethnonationalist communities in Canada, the US and Sweden.¹ Canada's Estonian Central Council (ECC), being "the most vibrant upholder of Estonian culture abroad" and "the model for all other Estonian communities,"² still plays a central role in the EWC. For example, ECC president Markus Hess, founder of the Black Ribbon Day movement, is an executive member of the EWC.³

The EWC has always aligned itself with other anticommunists through networks such as the Baltic States Freedom Council (BSFC), the Baltic World Conference, the CIA's National Committee for a Free Europe and the Captive Nations movement.⁴

Working closely with the profascist Anti-Bolshevik Bloc of Nations

The EWC worked with other fascist-led global pacts like the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc of Nations (ABN). (See p.48.) In 1958, EWC propaganda was beamed at the USSR using an ABN radio station in US-armed, fascist Taiwan. Its broadcasts, in "languages of the enslaved [i.e., Soviet] peoples," included talks by political extremists that the ABN called "Estonian statesmen and politicians living in North America." Overseeing these programs was Ludwig Katona, the ABN representative to the Asian People's Anti-Communist League's headquarters in Taipei.⁵ To describe his leadership of the "ABN Mission," this Hungarian "freedom fighter" said he was "in close contact with the Embassies of the anti-Communist countries" and the World Anti-Communist League.⁶ (See p.48.)

The ABN's Estonian newscasts, done in "close cooperation of the Estonian World Council," included EWC president Yohan Vasar, his successor August Karsna, and Alexander Kütt,⁷ who later chaired the CIA-funded Assembly of Captive European Nations in 1963-64⁸ (see pp.18-19) and was deputy chair of the BSFC in 1965.⁹

An Estonian Canadian heard on these ABN/EWC propaganda programs was then-ECC president, Axel Luitsalu,¹⁰ a former police chief in Nazi Estonia and a veteran of Estonia's Nazi Waffen SS. (See p.29.)

Gerhard Buschmann: Abwehr agent, Nazi war hero, asset of the CIA and the EWC

One of the most active EWC propagandists in the 1950s, 60s and 70s was Gerhard Buschmann, an Estonian of German heritage. In 1940, he joined the Nazi military intelligence agency, Abwehr. In 1941, when Germany launched Operation Barbarossa, he, like so many Estonians, welcomed the Nazis as liberators. To serve them, he went to German-allied Finland in 1941 and took part in the "formation and training of the Erna Group,"¹¹ an Estonian volunteer force that was battling their shared Soviet enemy.

As a Nazi *Oberleutnant* (senior ltj.) Buschmann's main role in WWII was to create and lead the *Sonderstaffel Buschmann*. This special squad, which was "initially subordinated to the Commander of the SS and Police in Estonia," began patrolling the Gulf of Finland in early 1942. In December, his unit was "under the command of a Special Aviation Group that answered directly to Heinrich Himmler."¹² By early 1943, Buschmann had 200 personnel and 40 to 50 aircraft.¹³ In April, his unit joined the Luftwaffe

and most of its squadrons fought as night bombers on the Eastern Front.¹⁴ Buschmann was then deployed to a German intelligence unit at Siverskaja airbase near Leningrad.¹⁵ It was crucial in the genocidal, 900-day Siege of Leningrad¹⁶ in which



Gerhard Buschmann received two Iron Crosses

German and Finnish forces killed over one million Soviet civilians, and killed or captured an additional million Red Army troops.

When the Red Army rid Estonia of the Nazis in mid-1944, Buschmann had already fled to the "Dabendorf propaganda school," near Berlin. As Chief of Staff to Luftwaffe Gen. Heinrich Aschenbrenner, Buschmann set up a Nazi air force for Vlasov's antiSoviet "Russian Liberation Army."¹⁷

To reward his important work for the Third Reich, Buschmann received several Nazi medals including two Iron Crosses.¹⁸

After the war, Buschman continued his crusade "in Germany from 1946 to 1961 in the East European section of the U.S. Army."¹⁹ Data on his job "as an advisor to the US occupation headquarters in Munich" has been declassified. An FBI file about his

work for the US G-2 army intelligence agency in the early 1950s says he recruited "a convinced, if not fanatical antiSemite" Russian informant who had been sentenced in France to 20 years hard labour for being a Nazi collaborator.²⁰ A later file, code named "Redcoat" (the CIA's Soviet/Eastern European Division), released by the CIA under the 2008 "Nazi War Crimes Disclosure Act," mentions California "intelligence assignment" run by Buschmann in 1961.²¹

Buschmann spoke for many Estonian émigré groups pushing NATO's Cold War objectives. As a representative of the EWC, Estonian WWII vets and the Estonian diaspora, Buschmann was mentioned in the US Congress in 1970 and 1971.²² About 230 articles in ten Estonian publications mention him.²³ For example, *Võitleja (The Combatant)*, the Toronto-based global publication for anticommunist Estonian veterans, praised Buschmann's Nazi war record and his role as a "leading figure in many international political organizations."²⁴

Soviet media, translated in a declassified CIA document, decried Buschmann's collaboration with the Nazis, his work as "a CIA agent" and his 1966 ascension to the top post in the Estonian American war-veterans' group based in Washington, DC.²⁵ *The Combatant* celebrated the news that Buschmann had been elected chairman of the US "Freedom Fighters Organization."²⁶

A mock trial, a bombing and a riot

A good example of Buschmann's promotion of the EWC's "anticommunist cause" and mass media collaboration, took place in Feb. 1968. Buschmann was a witness at a three-day "mock trial" in Washington, DC. This propaganda event against "international communism" was covered in 400+ articles found in newspapers.com.²⁷ The articles quoting Buschmann called him "a member of the Estonian World Council"²⁸ and "an Estonian businessman who fled to the West after World War II." Blaming Estonia's woes on "the Nazi-Soviet assistance [sic] pact of [Aug.23] 1939," Buschmann said Balts were forced to allow "Soviet military bases on their soil."²⁹ None of the articles mention that Buschmann was an Abwehr agent and a Nazi war hero who win two Iron Crosses and then worked for US intelligence.

The "mock trial" was organized by two powerful far-right organizations.³⁰ At its conclusion, the Soviet embassy in Washington was bombed. Newspapers spread unfounded accusations by anticommunists involved in the trial that communists bombed the Soviet embassy. One article noted that:

Gerhard A. Buschmann, a member of the

Estonian World Council, said the adverse publicity all over the world [caused by the mock trial] has pressured the communists to take such action in an attempt to discredit the trial.³¹

Another trial witness, Herbert Philbrick, who had infiltrated the communist party for the FBI throughout the 1940s,³² “said it was quite likely that communists did the bombing.” Fred Schlafly, one of the mock trial’s prosecuting attorneys “said Russian effort[s] to blame the bombing on some conservative ‘fanatic inflamed by the mock trial’ was typical of the communists.” He also blamed Kennedy’s assassination on communism.³³

A decade later, papers reported on a “melee” during a protest of 2,000 émigrés outside the Soviet’s UN mission. At this 1978 event, co-sponsored by the EWC, some “demonstrators bombarded officers with stones, eggs and firecrackers and a scuffle between police and demonstrators ensued.” Four were treated in hospital, including a policeman. Two antiSoviet protesters were arrested for “disorderly conduct.”³⁴ This violence, unlike the bombing ten years earlier, could not be blamed on the Soviets. When event organizers³⁵ publicized this rally in their far-right Ukrainian publication, they claimed that “over 8,000” had attended and bragged that it was “widely reported” in the mass media. However, they failed to make any mention of the protesters’ violence.³⁶

The EWC’s strategic forgetting

This neglect to report on their supporters’ violence actions reflects a broader pattern evident within antiSoviet émigré communities. For decades ethnonationalist organizations representing the anticommunist diaspora from Eastern Europe have neglected to account for their historic complicity in Nazi atrocities such as the Holocaust. For its part, the EWC has yet to acknowledge its historic links to the profascist ABN, to the CIA’s far-right front organizations, or its close relations with Nazi Estonian war heroes like Gerhard Buschmann.

References and notes

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30. (1) Twin Circles Publishing, a far-right Catholic firm owned by millionaire Patrick Frawley, Jr., who bankrolled Richard Nixon, and Ronald Reagan, and such groups as the

Estonia’s last surviving SS officer, Harald Nugiseks, died in 2014 and he was buried with full military honors. Estonia’s war minister, Urmas Reinsalu, called him a ‘legendary Estonian soldier’ who fought for ‘Estonian freedom.’



For bravery in fighting the USSR, the Nazis awarded Nugiseks their top medal the Knight’s Cross of the Iron Cross.

Nugiseks fought for the Estonian Legion, a division of the Waffen SS.

Christian Anti-Communism Crusade and the American Security Council, “a pressure group for the military-industrial complex.” William Turner, “The Right Wing’s Biggest Spender,” *Washington Post*, Aug. 30, 1970. bit.ly/PFrawley

(2) Young Americans for Freedom (YAF) was praised by the ABN for “preserv[ing] the traditional values of America by making the membership aware of the dangers the New Left and the radical movement pose to our American way of life.” *ABN Correspondence*, May-Jun 1971, p.38. bit.ly/ABN-YAF

YAF supported the Vietnam War, had a 40-year alliance with Ronald Reagan and was founded at William F.Buckley Jr. in 1960. Recruited by the CIA in 1951, Buckley became a far-right media pundit on PBS.

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(For more on YAF, see p. 61.)

31. Rotstein, *op. cit.*
32. Laura Kells, Herbert Philbrick, A Register of his Papers in the Library of Congress. bit.ly/PhilbrickFBI
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34. See author’s collection of nine articles on this “melee.” bit.ly/Melee1978
35. This protest concluded a campaign of the World Congress of Free Ukrainians, co-sponsored by the EWC, the Lithuanian World Community, the Confederation of Free Byelorussians and the World Federation of Free Latvians. Central to this antiSoviet propaganda campaign was Canada’s Yuri Shymko.
36. Borys Potapenko, “Human Rights, National Rights and the Decolonisation of the USSR,” *Ukrainian Review*, 1979, p.84. bit.ly/UR2-79