

## 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.<sup>1</sup> Canada's Estonian Central Council (ECC), being "the most vibrant upholder of Estonian culture abroad" and "the model for all other Estonian communities,"<sup>2</sup> 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.<sup>3</sup>

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.<sup>4</sup>

### Allied with the profascist Anti-Bolshevik Bloc of Nations

The EWC worked with other fascist pacts like the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc of Nations (ABN). 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 delegate at the Asian People's AntiCommunist League's HQ in Taipei.<sup>5</sup> This Hungarian "freedom fighter," said his leadership of that ABN Mission put him "in close contact with the Embassies of the anti-Communist countries" and the World AntiCommunist League.<sup>6</sup>

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,<sup>7</sup> who chaired the CIA-funded Assembly of Captive European Nations in 1963-64<sup>8</sup> and was deputy chair of the BSFC in 1965.<sup>9</sup>

An Estonian Canadian heard on these ABN/EWC propaganda programs was then-ECC president, Axel Luutsalu,<sup>10</sup> a former police chief in Nazi Estonia and a veteran of Estonia's Nazi Waffen SS.

The Luftwaffe's **Sonderstaffel Buschmann** (SB) operated 40 to 50 warplanes for Nazi Germany



### Gerhard Buschmann: Asset of the Nazis, US intelligence and the EWC

Perhaps the most active of all EWC propagandists during the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s was Gerhard Buschmann, an Estonian of German heritage. In 1940, he joined the Nazi's military intelligence agency, Abwehr. In June 1941, when Germany launched its massive Operation Barbarossa invasion of the Soviet Union, Buschmann—like so many Estonians, welcomed the Nazis as their liberators. That year, he was deployed to German-allied Finland to assist the "formation and training of the Erna Group."<sup>11</sup> It was an Estonian volunteer force fighting against the USSR.

As a Nazi *Oberleutnant* (Senior Lt.) Buschmann's role was to create and lead the *Sonderstaffel Buschmann*. This air squadron was "initially subordinated to the Commander of the SS and Police in Estonia." It began its air patrols of the Gulf of Finland in early 1942. By December, his unit was "under the command of a Special Aviation Group that answered directly to Heinrich Himmler."<sup>12</sup> By early 1943, Buschmann had 200 personnel operating 40 to 50 aircraft.<sup>13</sup> In April, his unit officially joined the Luftwaffe and most of its aircraft served Nazi Germany as night bombers on the Eastern Front.<sup>14</sup> Buschmann was then sent to a German intelligence unit at Siverskaja air-base near Leningrad.<sup>15</sup> It was crucial in the genocidal, 900-day Siege of Leningrad<sup>16</sup> in which German and Finnish forces killed over a million Soviet civilians, and killed or captured an additional one million Red Army troops.

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



During WWII, Gerhard Buschmann was a Nazi Abwehr agent who received two Iron Crosses.



After the war, he joined US intelligence and represented the Estonian World Council

To reward his legendary service to the Third Reich, Buschmann received several Nazi medals including two Iron Crosses.<sup>18</sup>

After the war, Buschman continued his political crusade by working "in Germany from 1946 to 1961 in the East European section of the U.S. Army."<sup>19</sup> Some data on his job as an "advisor to the US occupation headquarters in Munich" has been declassified. For example, 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 collaborating with the Nazis.<sup>20</sup> A later file, code named "Redcoat" (the CIA's Soviet/Eastern European Division), was released by the CIA under the 2008 "Nazi War Crimes Disclosure Act." It mentions a 1961 "intelligence assignment" being run by Buschmann in California.<sup>21</sup>

Buschmann spoke for many proNATO, Estonian émigré groups. As a representative of the EWC and Estonian veterans, Buschmann was cited in the US Congress in 1970 and 1971.<sup>22</sup> About 230 articles in ten Estonian publications mention him.<sup>23</sup> *Võitleja* (Combatant), the Toronto-based global publication for anti-communist Estonian veterans, praised his war record and his role as a "leading figure in many international political organizations."<sup>24</sup>

A Soviet article, translated in a declassified CIA document, decried Buschmann's work for the Nazis, his role as "a CIA agent" and his 1966 ascension to the top post of the Estonian-American war-veterans' group in Washington, DC.<sup>25</sup> *Combatant* celebrated the news that Buschmann was elected chairman of the US "Freedom Fighters Organization."<sup>26</sup>

47. "Red Charge Denied ..." *op. cit.*

See author's collection of nine articles, Nov. 14-15, 1960 [bit.ly/NewsLaak12](http://bit.ly/NewsLaak12)

48. Aksel/Axel Alexander Luutsalu [bit.ly/GenLuit](http://bit.ly/GenLuit)

49. *Red Deer Advocate*, Nov. 14, 1960, p.1. [bit.ly/RDA\\_12-14-1961](http://bit.ly/RDA_12-14-1961)

50. *The Estonians in Canada*, Vol. I, 1975. [www.eesti.ca/ajalugu/en/ec.html](http://www.eesti.ca/ajalugu/en/ec.html)

51. National Archives of Estonia. [bit.ly/E-Arch](http://bit.ly/E-Arch)

52. *Star-Phoenix*, Nov. 14, 1960, p.1. [bit.ly/SP\\_60](http://bit.ly/SP_60)

53. "Pearson Hits Reds for Smear Tactics," *Edmonton Journal*, Nov. 16, 1960, p.53.

"Pearson Hits Propaganda and Smears," *Prov-*

*ince*, Nov. 16, 1960, p.5.

[bit.ly/PearLuit](http://bit.ly/PearLuit)

54. *Ibid.* Simanavicius was BFC president (1957, 1960-61), president of Toronto's LCC and on the LCC executive (1974-80).

Fonds 14, Jonas Robertas Simanavicius fonds [bit.ly/Simanavicius](http://bit.ly/Simanavicius)

55. *Ibid.*

56. "Reds Say Refugee was Mass Slayer," *Ottawa Citizen*, Nov. 14, 1960, p.7. [bit.ly/OC\\_60](http://bit.ly/OC_60)

57. UN General Assembly, Plenary, Sep. 26, 1960, pp.108-12. [undocs.org/en/A/PV.871](http://undocs.org/en/A/PV.871)

58. Kirm, *op. cit.*

## A mock trial, a bombing and a riot

An example of media support for Buschmann's promotion of the "anticommunist cause," took place in Feb. 1968 when he 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*.<sup>27</sup> Buschmann was cited as "a member of the Estonian World Council"<sup>28</sup> and "an Estonian businessman who fled to the West" after WWII. Blaming all of Estonia's woes on "the Nazi-Soviet assistance [sic] pact of [Aug. 23] 1939," Buschmann said Balts had to allow "Soviet military bases on their soil."<sup>29</sup> None of the articles note his role as a Nazi collaborator who then joined US intelligence.

The "mock trial" was organized by two powerful far-right organizations.<sup>30</sup> At its conclusion, the Soviet embassy in Washington was bombed. Newspapers spread unfounded accusations by those involved in promoting the trial that it was communists who had bombed the Soviet embassy. "Buschmann, a member of the Estonian World Council," reported one article, "said the adverse publicity all over the world [caused by the trial] has pressured the communists to take such action in an attempt to discredit the trial."<sup>31</sup>

Another witness at the trial, Herbert Philbrick, who infiltrated the communist party for the FBI in the 1940s,<sup>32</sup> "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 John F. Kennedy's assassination on communists.<sup>33</sup>

A decade later, papers reported on a "melee" during a protest of 2,000 émigrés at the Soviet's UN mission. At this 1978 rally, cosponsored by the EWC, "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."<sup>34</sup> This, unlike the bombing ten years earlier, was not blamed on the Soviets. When event organizers<sup>35</sup> publicized this rally in their far-right Ukrainian publication, they claimed "over 8,000" attended and bragged it was "widely reported" in the mass media. But they failed to mention of the violence at their protest.<sup>36</sup>

gering Russophobia. Those who reveal the fascist links of Estonia's war heroes are smeared for spreading a dangerous Kremlin virus.

## References & notes

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3. Markus Hess, TTL website. [bit.ly/HessTTL](http://bit.ly/HessTTL)
4. CIA document, "Structure of Latvian Central Organizations" [bit.ly/CIA-LatvOrgs](http://bit.ly/CIA-LatvOrgs)
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7. "Broadcasts of ABN Mission in Free China," *ABN Correspondence*, Jul./Aug 1958, p.15. [bit.ly/ABN58jf](http://bit.ly/ABN58jf)
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28. CIA translation of *Kodumaa* (Homeland) Supplement 1966, p.18. [bit.ly/CIAkodumaa](http://bit.ly/CIAkodumaa)
29. *Võitleja*, May 1, 1966, p.4. [bit.ly/VoitMay66](http://bit.ly/VoitMay66)



**Marcus Kolga** has served as vice president of the **Estonian World Council**, and president of the

**Estonian Central Council in Canada** (2016-20) and Canada's **Central and Eastern European Council** (since 2019).

Kolga slurs critics of Estonia's Nazi SS Legion by saying they are spreading **a dangerous Russian virus**.

27. The largest online archive of newspapers. One article, by famous right-wing theorist Russell Kirk, printed in 12 newspapers, praised the antiRed "mock trial" but denounced the Nuremberg trials as "pretty much lynch-law." "Trial of Communism set," *Orlando Sentinel*, Feb. 12 1968, p.4. [bit.ly/KirkTrial](http://bit.ly/KirkTrial)
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29. Art Rotstein, "Schlafly Finds Propaganda in Bomb Incident," *Alton Evening Telegraph*, Feb. 22, 1968, p.2. [bit.ly/AET-1968](http://bit.ly/AET-1968)
30. "Refugees from Iron Curtain ..." *op. cit.*
31. (1) Twin Circles Publishing, a far-right Catholic firm owned by millionaire Patrick Frawley, Jr., who bankrolled Richard Nixon, Ronald Reagan, the 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](http://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](http://bit.ly/ABN-YAF)
- YAF promoted the Vietnam War, had a 40-year alliance with Ronald Reagan and was founded at William F.Buckley Jr.'s home in 1960. Recruited by the CIA in 1951, Buckley became a far-right media pundit on PBS. "History of YAF" [bit.ly/YAF-history](http://bit.ly/YAF-history)
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32. Rotstein, *op. cit.*
33. Laura Kells, Herbert Philbrick, A Register of his Papers in the Library of Congress. [bit.ly/PhilbrickFBI](http://bit.ly/PhilbrickFBI)
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35. See author's collection of nine articles on this "melee." [bit.ly/Melee1978](http://bit.ly/Melee1978)
36. 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.
37. Borys Potapenko, "Human Rights, National Rights and the Decolonisation of the USSR," *Ukrainian Review*, 1979, p.84. [bit.ly/UR-1979](http://bit.ly/UR-1979)

## The EWC's strategic forgetting

Neglecting to report on supporters' violence echoes a pattern rampant among antiSoviet émigrés from Eastern Europe. This diaspora, including the EWC, refuses to face, let alone apologise for, its community's historic complicity in the Holocaust and other Nazi horrors. EWC leaders, like Canada's Marcus Kolga, also defend their community's proNazi traditions by using fearmon-