

# The ignored historical context of so-called “Black Ribbon Day,” August 23, 1939



The UK-France peace treaty with Germany and Italy, gave the Nazis their blessing to invade and occupy Czechoslovakia.

Britain’s Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain hailed it:

**‘PEACE for our time’**

**On Sept. 30, 1938, when Britain and France signed their peace deal with Hitler & Mussolini, King ‘thanked God.’**

When Liberal Prime Minister King, heard that Hitler welcomed Chamberlain at a “very friendly” meeting in Munich, he wrote in his diary: **“What a happy man Chamberlain must be and what an example he has set the world in perseverance of a just cause.”**



That night, when King heard that his British and French allies had signed a friendly treaty with Hitler and Mussolini, he was ecstatic: **“I ... knelt down and thanked God with all my heart for the peace that had been preserved to the world.”**

## **On Aug. 15, 1939, the UK & France refused the Soviet’s plea to ally with them in a war to stop Hitler**

**M**eeting at the Kremlin on Aug. 15, 1939, Canada’s top European allies refused a Soviet plea to join them in a military alliance to stop Hitler’s plans for war in Europe. Details of these efforts to build an anti-Nazi alliance were revealed in 700 pages of declassified Soviet documents in 2008. Retired Russian Maj.Gen. Lev Sotskov explained that “in the event of an antiHitler agreement with Britain and France” the USSR offered to deploy “300 or more divisions ... against Germany” with “120 infantry divisions, 16 cavalry divisions, 5,000 tanks and as many aircraft.” This, he said, was double Hitler’s forces and was “the final chance to slay the wolf ... after Chamberlain and the French had given up Czechoslovakia to German aggression the previous year in the Munich Agreement.”

Britain however wanted to “draw Germany and the Soviet Union into active hostilities,” said Sotskov. It was clear that the Soviet Union stood alone and had to turn to Germany and sign a non-aggression pact to gain some time to prepare ourselves for the conflict that was clearly coming.

**Source:** Culled from Nick Holdsworth, “Stalin ‘planned to send a million troops to stop Hitler if Britain and France agreed pact,’” *Telegraph*, Oct. 18, 2008. [bit.ly/8-15-39](http://bit.ly/8-15-39)

## **On Aug. 23, 1939, the USSR signed a treaty to delay the Nazi invasion**

**N**azi Germany repeatedly stated its intent to destroy the USSR. One week after the UK and France refused Soviet requests to ally with them to wage war to stop Nazi aggression, the USSR was compelled to sign a treaty with Germany. The Soviets did this to build their defences against the coming invasion. Without that extra time, the USSR would likely have been defeated and Nazi Germany would have won WWII.

## **“Double Genocide”: The Myth of Nazi-Soviet equivalency**

**B**lack Ribbon Day, [August 23]... sponsored by ultranationalist elements in Eastern Europe, has been one of the most cunning tools for writing the Holocaust out of history via the “Double Genocide” movement that seeks to “equalize” Nazi and Soviet crimes.

In various East European countries, the [“Double Genocide”] effort includes glorification of Holocaust collaborators and perpetrators ..., defamation of Holocaust survivors who joined the anti-Nazi resistance, and ... attempts to rewrite history to ... equalize those who committed the genocide at Auschwitz [i.e., the Nazis] with those who liberated Auschwitz [i.e., the Soviets].

**Source:** *Defending History*, Aug23, 2018. [bit.ly/dhBRD](http://bit.ly/dhBRD)

**R**ather than adopting the accepted Western chronicle of WWII and the Holocaust, local authorities in many Eastern European countries have sought to create an alternative narrative of the events to achieve two major objectives....

[1] to hide, or minimize, the role played by local Nazi collaborators in the annihilation of European Jewry....

[2] to convince world opinion that the crimes of the Soviet Union and its satellite Communist regimes were equally evil ... to those of the Nazis, and that these crimes, too, constituted genocide. *Historically inaccurate, the canard of equivalency is politically of central importance to certain quarters in Eastern and Central Europe where ... they seek to deflect or avoid painful discussions about local participation by their nationals in Holocaust crimes. This phenomenon is particularly noticeable in Ukraine.*

**Source:** Excerpts, Per A.Rudling and Efraim Zuroff, “The fight for historical truth about the Holocaust in Ukraine,” *Jerusalem Post*, Mar. 30, 2017. [bit.ly/Holocaust-in-Ukraine](http://bit.ly/Holocaust-in-Ukraine)

## **Passing ‘double genocide’ into law**

**O**n Sept. 19, 2019, Europe’s Parliament used the German-Soviet pact of Aug. 23, 1939, to put equal blame on the Nazis and the Soviets for causing WWII. “The resolution,” said the International Association of Democratic Lawyers, “is replete with false assertions and insinuations.” Stifling debate, freedom of speech and academic honesty, the resolution also said that textbooks in EU countries should be changed to reflect this revisionist version of WWII history.

In 2008, a Hungarian law (2010), punishable by three years in jail, made it illegal to say that there was only one genocide in WWII. Similar laws in Lithuania (2010) and Latvia (2014) threaten two to five years behind bars for opposing the Double Genocide canard which equates the Soviets with Nazism.

## **Dropping Holocaust Memorial Day**

**W**riting for the Simon Wiesenthal Centre, Rabbi Abraham Cooper said: “Latvia and Lithuania are in the forefront of a campaign... [to] drop International Holocaust Memorial Day and fold it into a new commemoration in August [Black Ribbon Day] ... to ‘remember’ both victims of the Nazi Holocaust and of communism.”

This, said Cooper, created the appalling prospect of paying respect to the victims of the Holocaust and its perpetrators in a single ceremony ..., while ignoring that it was the Red Army ... who liberated Auschwitz on Jan. 27, 1945.

**Source:** Dougald Lamont, “The problem with the monument to victims of communism,” *CBC*, April 24, 2015. [bit.ly/VOCproblem](http://bit.ly/VOCproblem)