



Written by [Angeline Tan](#) on September 29, 2023

Russia Might Call for Extradition of Ukrainian Nazi Honored in Canada, Trudeau Blames Parliament Speaker

Moscow might call for the extradition of Yaroslav Hunka, a 98-year-old Ukrainian-Canadian veteran of the Waffen SS, according to Russia's envoy to Ottawa, Oleg Stepanov, on September 27.

"Russia is reviewing the Hunka story. May open a criminal case and subsequent extradition request," Stepanov declared in a statement.

Stepanov also posted on X (formerly Twitter),



Hardly worth saying that I have been closely monitoring political and public discussions in the wake of the outrageous commemoration of the Ukrainian Nazi henchman Yaroslav Hunka in the Canadian parliament. Following recent developments in the House of Commons, I would like to draw attention to a fact that was omitted from the story. The 14th Waffen Grenadier Division of the SS "Galicia" has committed multiple war crimes, including mass murder, against the Russian people, ethnic Russians. This is a proven fact. In this regard, I believe that in a multicultural society of Canada, the Parliament and the Government of this country owe a formal and unequivocal apology to all Russians and the Russian Canadian community. An intention to ignore and to exclude from the memory the genocide against Russians committed by the Waffen SS, including the "Galicia" division, is unacceptable. Therefore, I am waiting for the reaction of the Canadian authorities.

AP Images
Yaroslav Hunka (in brown sportcoat)

Stepanov's comments came following Hunka's appearance at Canada's House of Commons, where he



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was lauded as a Ukrainian “hero” who supposedly “fought for Ukrainian independence against the Russians,” as well as the public outcry that followed the contentious honoring.

Hunka, who fought for the 14th Waffen Grenadier Division of the SS, also known as the 1st Galician Division, created by Nazi Germany during WWII and known to have committed atrocities against Jews and Poles, obtained a standing ovation in the Canadian Parliament, with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Ukraine’s Volodymyr Zelensky present as well. Hunka was introduced by the then-House Speaker Anthony Rota as “a Ukrainian hero, a Canadian hero ... who fought for Ukrainian independence against the Russians” in World War II.

Not surprisingly, the parliament’s scandalous praise of the Nazi veteran and consequent public anger led to Rota’s resignation on September 26, voicing “profound regret” for his “error” to invite Hunka to the legislature on September 22. At that time, Rota hailed the SS veteran as a Ukrainian and Canadian hero, subsequently assuming responsibility after garnering criticism.

Rota resigned [as House Speaker](#) after a meeting with House leaders of Canada’s various parties.

“The work of this House is above any of us. Therefore, I must step down as your Speaker,” Rota said, adding, “I have acted as your humble servant of this House, carrying out the important responsibilities of this position to the very best of my abilities.”

“I reiterate my profound regret for my error.... That public recognition has caused pain to individuals and communities, including the Jewish community in Canada and around the world,” he said.

Rota’s resignation was historic considering Canada’s parliamentary history. Only two House Speakers have ever left the position since Confederation in 1867, one in 1899, who died while in office, and another in 1984 who was nominated as Governor-General.

Besides Russia, Poland, which has been among the top supporters of modern-day Ukraine in its conflict against Moscow, has already demanded Hunka’s extradition.

Przemysław Czarnek, Poland’s minister of education, [posted](#) on X that he was already calling for the extradition of Hunka from Canada.

“In view of the scandalous events in the Canadian Parliament, which involved honoring, in the presence of President Zelenskiy, a member of the criminal Nazi SS Galicia formation, I have taken steps towards the possible extradition of this man to Poland,” Czarnek declared.

Additionally, Czarnek also posted a letter written to the Institute of National Remembrance, a Polish group which investigates atrocities against Poles, asking that the group probe into whether or not Hunka may have been associated with crimes against Poles and Jews during his stint in the Waffen SS.

Meanwhile, Trudeau apologized for applauding Hunka, acknowledging that the controversy was “deeply embarrassing” for Canada. Speaking to reporters before addressing the Canadian House of Commons on September 27, Trudeau gave “parliament’s unreserved apologies for what happened on Friday,” alluding to the standing ovation given by Canadian lawmakers, Trudeau included, to Hunka.

At first, Trudeau called the incident “embarrassing,” but failed to apologize directly or resign alongside Rota. The leftist Canadian leader instead pinned the blame on Rota, a fellow member of the Liberal Party.

“The speaker was solely responsible for the invitation and recognition of this man, and has wholly accepted that responsibility and stepped down,” Trudeau said.



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Trudeau then said that “all of us who were in this house on Friday deeply regret having stood and clapped, even though we did so unaware of the context.”

Notwithstanding Trudeau’s claims that he was not cognizant of Hunka’s links to the Nazis, Rota’s description of him as a Ukrainian who “fought the Russians” in the Second World War could only have referred to someone fighting on the side of Nazi Germany.

Opposition MPs slammed Trudeau’s Liberal Party attempt to [erase Hunka’s presence and record on Hansard](#), the parliamentary record, as if such an incident had never happened.

“It would be absolutely wrong to strike what was said from the record. It goes without saying that those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it. What happened on Friday was shameful, and brought embarrassment to this Chamber,” Conservative Party of Canada (CPC) MP Marty Morantz declared.

“Deleting the text of the Speaker’s words from Hansard would have only one purpose: to try and forget what happened, to wash the record clean,” he said.

Liberal House Leader Katrina Gould justified her decision to strike the incident from the Hansard, saying, “If any parliamentarian had known ahead of time, who they were being asked to stand and applaud for, not a single person would have stood.”

“Never in my life, would I have imagined that the Speaker of the House would have asked us to stand and applaud someone who fought with the Nazis,” she continued.

Rather than deleting the incident from the record, Canadian parliamentarians opted in favor of a motion proposed by separatist Bloc Quebecois leader Yves Blanchet to widely denounce Nazism and voice solidarity for the victims of Nazi ideology.

On its end, Russia’s Foreign Ministry asserted that the aforementioned incident was “the best possible way to characterize the regime of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, who has embraced unbridled Russophobia.”



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