

Timothy Snyder's Lies

BY

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In Timothy Snyder's *Bloodlands*, Hitler and Stalin are one and the same. And the partisans — Jewish fighters included — only encouraged German crimes.

When is a bad book important? When it tackles an important topic, for one thing, something meaty and emotional such as, say, Nazism and the Holocaust. Another is when its arguments resonate, when they capture the imagination of a segment of the reading public and shape thinking in some significant way.

One such book was Daniel Goldhagen's 1996 *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust*, which argued that the real reason for the death of six million Jews was not Nazism per se but an "eliminationist" mindset that had taken hold of the German psyche decades earlier and that only Americanization could expunge — music to the ears, needless to say, of fans of "the indispensable nation."

A more recent example is Timothy Snyder's *Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin*, a high-voltage account of Eastern Europe's bloody travails between 1933 and 1945. *Bloodlands* made it onto the bestseller lists in America, Germany, and Poland, racked up numerous awards, and has been translated into some twenty-six languages. The praise has been lavish. Anne Applebaum called it "brave and original" in the *New York Review of Books*, Samuel Moyn said that it was "a remarkable, even triumphant accomplishment" in the *Nation*, Adam Hochschild described it as "immensely valuable" in *Harper's*, while Neal Ascherson lauded Snyder in the *Guardian* as "a noble writer as well as a great researcher."

Bloodlands catapulted Snyder into the top rungs of punditdom, winning him a coveted spot as a regular contributor to the *New York Review of Books* where he has held forth not just on Eastern Europe, but on the Tea Party, the ideological contortions of the GOP, and kindred topics.

The crisis in Ukraine has launched him even higher. Combining academic expertise with a deep commitment to the post-Soviet "revolutions" of 1989–91, Snyder churned out more than two dozen articles as the crisis deepened and grew beginning in November 2013. The pieces, which have appeared in the NYRB, the *Financial Times*, *Die Welt*, and other such outlets, have pounded away at the theme that the real issue is not the presence of a few ultra-rightists on the barricades in Kiev, but an unprecedented power grab that Putin is assembling in Moscow.

The tone began moderately enough, but built steadily as events accelerated. By April, following the annexation of the Crimea, Snyder was writing that Putin represented a threat not just to the Ukraine but to the entire European community. The Russian leader, he wrote, has two goals in mind:

... the creation of a free trade bloc of Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan, and the destruction of the European Union through the support of the European far right. Imperial social conservatism provided the ideological cover for a goal that was eminently simple. The Putin regime depends upon the sale of hydrocarbons that are piped to Europe. A united Europe could generate an [independent] energy policy . . . [whereas] a disintegrated Europe would remain dependent on Russian hydrocarbons. Individual nation-states would be more pliable than the EU.

The goal was to weaken and divide the EU so that it would not only be at the mercy of Gazprom but of a resurgent Russian imperialism. Asiatic despotism, if Putin got his way, would extend "from Lisbon to Vladivostok," as Snyder put it. "Politicians and intellectuals used to say that there was no alternative to the European project," he went on, "but now there is: Eurasia." Writing in the *New Republic*, he declared:

Stalin thought that an alliance with Hitler, in other words cooperation with the European far right, was the key to destroying Europe. A German-Soviet alliance would turn Germany, he expected, against its western neighbors and lead to the weakening or even the destruction of European capitalism. This is not so different from a certain calculation made by Putin today.

Just as Stalin was out to destroy the West in 1939, Putin is determined to do the same seventy-five years later. He is working hand-in-glove with people like Marine Le Pen, he wants to topple liberal capitalism, he wants to foment conflict with Germany — such sentiments amount to a call to arms that, in the excitement over Ukraine, find a growing audience.

The high-water mark came in mid-May when Leon Wieseltier of the *New Republic* (owned since 2012 by Facebook billionaire Chris Hughes) tapped Snyder to serve as the lead speaker at a five-day conference it was hosting in Kiev. Entitled “Ukraine: Thinking Together,” the conference featured such luminaries as Paul Berman, Timothy Garton Ash, Bernard Kouchner, and the irrepressible Bernard-Henri Lévy lecturing on “la résistible ascension d’Arturo Poutine.” The Yale historian had emerged as intellectual leader of the war party.

Snyder’s Methodology

All of which makes *Bloodlands* worth a second look. Does it really live up to its accolades? How does it fit in with the bellicose rhetoric so abundant this spring?

The first thing that strikes the reader on dipping into its 500-plus pages is its tone. We are all used to sober histories that lay out a problem coolly and rationally, but right from the start it is evident that this is not Snyder’s way. Rather than analytical, the prose is white hot. He bombards the reader with phrases and concepts that are highly provocative yet do not stand up under scrutiny.

The most obvious example is that of the “bloodlands” itself, the label Snyder affixes to the entire border zone between Russia and Germany — not just Ukraine but Poland, Belarus, and the Baltic states, as well. This is the “intermarium” between the Black Sea and the Baltic that the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact bisected in 1939, the Wehrmacht swept through in 1941, and the Red Army then clawed its way back across in 1943–45. According to Snyder’s calculations, some 14 million civilians died there beginning with Stalin’s collectivization campaign and continuing on through World War II. As he puts it:

[M]ass violence of a sort never before seen in history was visited upon this region. The victims were chiefly Jews, Belarusians, Ukrainians, Poles, Russians, and Balts, the people native to these lands. The fourteen million were murdered over the course of only twelve years, between 1933 and 1945, while both Hitler and Stalin were in power. Though their homelands became battlefields midway through this period, these people were all victims of murderous policy rather than casualties of war.

The Second World War was the most lethal conflict in history, and about half of the soldiers who perished on all of its battlefields in the world died here, in this same region, in the bloodlands. Yet not a single one of the fourteen million murdered was a soldier on active duty. Most were women, children, and the aged; none was bearing weapons; many had been stripped of their possessions, including their clothes.

The numbers are horrific, the language incandescent, and the logic murky. Snyder does not explain why this particular piece of terrain deserves the title “bloodlands” while others do not. Yugoslavia lost one-eighth of its population, the second highest proportion of any nation during World War II, yet for some reason does not merit inclusion. Neither does Greece, which lost one person in fourteen. If the bloodlands are “simply where Europe’s most murderous regimes did their most murderous work,” why are they out while countries such as Estonia, which suffered far less proportionally, are in?

Yet another question involves timing. Periodization is always problematic, but Snyder’s demarcations seem especially arbitrary. Why 1933 to 1945? The border zone was the scene of mass carnage during World War I, while death estimates for the Russian civil war and famine run as high as ten million, many of them in Ukraine. So why start the clock running in 1933 as opposed to 1914 or 1918?

The answer is political. What is significant about the period from 1933 to 1945 is that not only was it especially murderous, but it was also the time when Hitler and Stalin were both in power. Hence, it allows Snyder to juxtapose the crimes of one bloody tyrant on another and to show how they supposedly drove each other to greater and greater heights. The question of interaction is key since it is Snyder’s argument that Hitler and Stalin committed more crimes together than they would ever have individually. As he puts it:

The Nazi and Soviet regimes were sometimes allies, as in the joint occupation of Poland. They sometimes held compatible goals as foes: as when Stalin chose not to aid the rebels in Warsaw in 1944, thereby allowing the Germans to kill people who would later have resisted communist rule. This is what François Furet called their “belligerent complicity.” Often the Germans and the Soviets goaded each other into escalations that cost more lives than the policies of either state by itself would have.

The result was a monstrous duet in which Stalin encouraged Hitler in his manifold crimes and Hitler encouraged Stalin in his. “By opening half of Poland to the Soviet Union,” Snyder writes, “Hitler would allow Stalin’s Terror . . . to recommence within Poland itself. Thanks to Stalin, Hitler was able, in occupied Poland, to undertake his first policies of mass killing.” He argues that the Gulag served as the inspiration for Auschwitz, which functioned as “a giant labor camp very much on the Soviet model,” and adds that by subjecting Soviet POW’s to mass starvation, the Nazis were “[i]mitating and radicalizing the policies of the Soviet Gulag.” Millions of Soviet POW’s thus perished “as a result of the *interaction* of the two systems.”



Belarusian partisans, 1942.

The anti-Jewish pogroms that followed on the heels of Hitler’s invasion of the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941, were similarly a product of Soviet-Nazi interaction since they “took place where the Soviets had recently arrived and where Soviet power was recently installed, where for the previous months Soviet organs of coercion had organized arrests, executions, and deportations. They were a joint production, a Nazi edition of a Soviet text.” The millions who perished were “victims, in one way or another, of *both* systems.”

The Nazi and Soviet regimes thus comprised a single great killing machine. But how did this merger take place and how did it work? Snyder never says. “[T]he key to both National Socialism and Stalinism,” he offers, “was their ability to deprive groups of human beings of their right to be regarded as human.” He adds shortly later:

First, a legitimate comparison of Nazi Germany and the Stalinist Soviet Union must not only explain the crimes but also embrace the humanity of all concerned by them, including the victims, perpetrators, bystanders, and leaders. Second, a legitimate comparison must begin with life rather than death. Death is not a solution, but only a subject. It must be a source of disquiet, never of satisfaction. It must not, above all, supply the rounding rhetorical flourish that brings a story to a defined end.

Since life gives meaning to death, rather than the other way around, the important question is not: what political, intellectual, literary, or psychological closure can be drawn from the fact of mass killing? Closure is a false harmony, a siren song masquerading as a swan song.

An explanation is necessary, yet none is forthcoming. Just when the reader expects an answer, she finds herself lost in a verbal fog in which death is not a solution but only a subject, a source of disquiet rather than of satisfaction, and so on.

The murk has its uses, evading the question of causation by surrounding it with a kind of rhetorical smokescreen. And so Snyder can have Hitler and Stalin collaborating in one another's crimes at a time when they were at each other's throat without pausing to explain how that could possibly be. The effect is to suggest that the two regimes were morally equivalent while avoiding an overt engagement with the more unsavory implications associated with the concept of moral equivalence that arose during the famous *Historikerstreit* of the 1980s.

This "historians' quarrel" was sparked in Germany when the right-wing historian Ernst Nolte argued that Hitler's war crimes should be seen, not as unprecedented, but, rather, as a response to Bolshevik excesses. Had the Nazis invented mass murder on their own? Didn't they rather, as he put it in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*:

. . . perhaps commit an 'Asiatic' deed merely because they and their ilk considered themselves to be potential victims of an 'Asiatic' deed? Was the Gulag Archipelago not primary to Auschwitz? Was the Bolshevik murder of an entire class not the logical and factual prius of the 'racial murder' of National Socialism?"

Or as Joachim Fest, co-editor of the FAZ, noted in a follow-up, Hitler "was prepared, as he said, 'to counter every act of terror by Marxism with a response ten times greater.'" However outsized the Nazi response, therefore, it was Lenin who bore ultimate responsibility because he was the one who originated the concept of mass vengeance against an entire social category in the first place. Since Jews figured disproportionately in the Soviet repressive apparatus — Snyder informs us that, as of the late 1930s, about "forty percent of high-ranking NKVD officers had Jewish nationality recorded in their identity documents, as did more than half of the NKVD generals" — the implication is that left-wing Jews played a major role in developing the techniques that would later be their undoing at the hands of the ultra-right.

This would be an explosive argument no matter who made it, but it was even more so in the hands of a German historian. This is why the controversy ended with Nolte getting his knuckles smartly rapped and why Snyder is now careful to avoid falling into the same trap. Instead of spelling out how one regime caused another's misdeeds, he therefore limits himself to drawing endless parallels between the two and leaving it at that:

After collectivization brought resistance and hunger to Soviet Ukraine, Stalin blamed kulaks and Ukrainians and Poles. After the Wehrmacht was halted at Moscow and the Americans entered the Second World War, Hitler blamed Jews. Just as kulaks and Ukrainians and Poles had taken the blame for slowing the construction of the Soviet system Jews took the blame for preventing its destruction.

Stalin blamed kulaks, Hitler blamed Jews, but how the first provoked the second is something that Snyder is reluctant to spell out.

Yet *Bloodlands* is structured to imply not only that causation existed but that, as Nolte and Fest maintained, Stalin was the prime mover. He started it all with his brutal collectivization campaign, show trials, and mass executions. In a chapter dealing with the Nazi rise to power, Snyder describes how politically induced starvation in Ukraine gave Hitler the ammunition he needed to fire away at Marxists in general regardless of their position with regards to Stalinism: "With a single word (*Marxists*), Hitler united the mass death in the Soviet Union with the German social democrats, the bulwark of the Weimar Republic." The war against the kulaks similarly paved the way for the anti-Jewish boycotts: "Like collectivization, the boycotts indicated which sector of society would lose the most in coming social and economic transformations: not the peasants, as in the USSR, but the Jews." Similarly, the purge of Ernst Röhm and his followers in the Night of the Long Knives somehow led to stepped-up repression in Russia following the assassination of Leningrad party boss Sergei Kirov, which in turn led to stepped-up arrests of homosexuals, vagrants, alcoholics, Jehovah's Witnesses, and other "asocials" back in Germany. "Like the Soviet NKVD," *Bloodlands* observes, "the German police carried out organized raids of districts in 1937 and 1938, seeking to meet a numerical quota of specified sectors of the population. They, too, often overfulfilled these quotas in their zealous desire to prove loyalty and impress superiors."

Like collectivization, like the Soviet NKVD — by harping on such likenesses, Snyder's clear intent is to present the two phenomena as essentially the same. If it's repeatedly pointed out that, like fish, whales have fins and live in water, then, unless the differences are carefully spelled out, the reader can hardly be blamed for concluding that they really are fish after all.

The Origins of Anti-Semitism

As the historian Thomas Kühne has pointed out, Snyder plainly writes in the old Great Man tradition. Hitler and Stalin, in his hands, come across as colossi who never panic or stumble but always know precisely what they are doing. Thus, Hitler “intended to use the Soviet Union to solve his British problem,” he “knew” of Ukraine’s economic value, etc., while Stalin “deliberately” starved Ukraine, “chose to kill millions of people,” and engaged in “clearly premeditated mass murder.”

To be sure, Snyder allows that Stalin was wrong to trust in Hitler’s professions of peace in 1941. But otherwise he portrays him as a master tactician. Stalin took advantage of “the public violence in Nazi Germany” to boost Soviet prestige, he writes, he used the rise of fascism to deflect attention from his own crimes, and, in August 1939, he made adept use of the new non-aggression pact with Germany to check Japanese advances in the Far East.

Puffing up the two super-tyrants, Snyder downplays the social forces behind them and exculpates the political actors in between. Since Hitler and Stalin are alone responsible, others are not; violence is not something that arises from within the borderlands, but is visited on them from outside. “In eastern Europe,” Snyder writes, “it is hard to find political collaboration with the Germans that is not related to a previous experience of Soviet rule.” If Poles, Balts, and Ukrainians engaged in massive anti-Jewish pogroms following the German invasion, in other words, it is not their fault but that of the Communists.

But anyone remotely familiar with East European history knows that the region has a rich history of anti-Semitism all its own. Although Snyder refers blandly to Joseph Pilsudski’s “great rival” Roman Dmowski, the Polish nationalist who successfully argued for Polish independence during the post-World War I treaty negotiations at Versailles, he fails to mention Dmowski’s fierce anti-Semitism or note how far back it extended. “[I]f all society were to succumb to [Jewish] influences, we would actually lose our capacity for societal life,” Dmowski wrote in 1913, evidence that Polish anti-Semitism did not follow on the heels of the Bolshevik Revolution four years later.



Anti-Semitism was in fact far fiercer in Poland than in Germany from the early 1920s on and built steadily throughout the interwar period – before the non-aggression pact, in other words, rather than after. Where the Nazis were disappointed by the tepid public response to the Kristallnacht pogroms in November 1938, for instance, Poland saw major outbreaks of anti-Jewish violence in some ninety-seven towns and cities between 1935 and 1937 alone. Polish anti-Semitism clearly had a life of its own.

Snyder struggles to get the borderlands off the hook in other ways, as well. He writes that “anti-Semites in the [Polish] Home Army were a minority” and says of the Polish peasants viewing passing trainloads of Jewish deportees that “[t]he gesture of a finger across the throat, remembered with loathing by a few Jewish survivors, was meant to communicate to the Jews that they were going to die – though not necessarily that the Poles wished this upon them” – a remarkable assertion that he makes no effort to substantiate.

In fact, as the London-based government in exile well knew, the mood in wartime Poland was poisonous. In December 1939, an official with Poland’s underground Home Army informed London that “Jews are so horribly persecuting Poles and everything that is connected to Polishness under the Soviet partition . . . that at the first opportunity all the Poles here, from the elderly to the women and children, will take such a horrible revenge on the Jews, as no anti-Semite has ever imagined possible.”

In the eastern forests and marshlands, members of the fascist *Narodowe Siły Zbrojne* (NSZ), or National Armed Forces, attacked Russians and Jews no less than Germans, while the Home Army, which absorbed the NSZ in 1943, declared war on “Jewish bands in the forests [that] were robbing and looting the peasants.” They were referring to Jewish escapees scrounging for food. In one incident, the *Armia Krajowa* (AK), as the Home Army was known in Polish, attacked a dozen members of the all-Jewish “Bielski partisans” returning from a foraging expedition, killing all but one.

The *Armia Krajowa* also attacked Belarusians, killing some 1,200 in and around the city of Lida in late 1943, and engaged in a full-scale civil war with Lithuanian nationalist partisans in and around Vilnius and Navahrudak in 1943–4. None of this shows up in *Bloodlands*, which is only interested in the AK as victim of the Soviets. Snyder is particularly eager to defend the Home Army against charges that it did nothing to aid the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising from April 19 to May 16, 1943. But the logic he employs is so astonishing that the passage is worth quoting in full:

Warsaw Home Army commanders had strategic concerns that militated against giving the Jews any weapons at all. Although the Home Army was moving in the direction of partisan action, it feared that a rebellion in the ghetto would provoke a general uprising in the city, which the Germans would crush. The Home Army was not ready for such a fight in late 1942. Home Army commanders saw a premature uprising as a communist temptation to be avoided. They knew that the Soviets, and thus the Polish communists, were urging the local population to take up arms immediately against the Germans.

The Soviets wanted to provoke partisan warfare in Poland in order to weaken the Germans — but also to hinder any future Polish resistance to their own rule when it came. The Red Army's task would be easier if German troops were killed by partisan warfare as would the NKVD's if Polish elites were killed for resisting Germans. The Jewish Combat Organization included the communists, who were following the Soviet line, and believed that Poland should be subordinated to the Soviet Union. As the Home Army command could not forget, the Second World War had begun when *both* the Germans *and* the Soviets had invaded Poland. Half of Poland had spent half of the war inside the Soviet Union. The Soviets wanted eastern Poland back, and perhaps even more.

From the perspective of the Home Army, rule by the Soviets was little better than rule by the Nazis. Its goal was independence. There were hardly any circumstances that would seem to justify a Polish independence organization arming communists inside Poland. Despite these reservations, the Home Army did give the Jewish Combat Organization a few pistols in December 1942.

The rebels of the Warsaw Ghetto were thus attempting to lead the Home Army into a Soviet-engineered trap by launching a premature uprising. This is nothing but a repeat of the old AK line that Jews were the Poles' national enemy and that their extermination was none of their concern. As *Antyk*, the AK's anti-Communist propaganda bureau, declared in the summer of 1942 when the Nazis were rounding up some 5,000 to 6,000 Warsaw Jews a day and shipping them off to Treblinka:

Whether we like it or not, Communism is attacking us. The extermination of the Jews in Europe by the Germans, which will be the final result of the German-Jewish war, represents from our point of view an undoubtedly favorable development, for it will weaken the explosive power of Communism at the moment of the German collapse — or earlier. Let us have no illusions. The liquidation of the Jews is not tantamount to the liquidation of the Commune, behind which is the Comintern and through which the Jews want to take their revenge on us.

Under pressure from London, General Stefan Rowecki, commander of the Home Army, agreed to supply the Warsaw ghetto with a few pistols, as Snyder notes. But hostility was undiminished. As Rowecki told Wladyslaw Sikorski, the prime minister in exile:

Now, when it is too late, Jews from various little Communist groups are turning to us for arms, as though we had storehouses full of them. As a test I have given them a few pistols. I have no certitude that they will use them. I will not give them any more arms, for as you know we ourselves have not got them. I am waiting for deliveries. Let me know what means of contact our Jews have in London.

In fact, the AK, by its own admission, had ample storehouses of arms that it had hidden away in the Warsaw area following the German victory three years earlier: 135 heavy machine guns with 16,900 rounds of ammunition, 190 light machine guns with 54,000 rounds, 6,045 rifles with 794,000 rounds, 1,070 pistols and revolvers with 8,708 rounds, 7,561 grenades, and seven small anti-tank guns with 2,147 rounds, etc. Not all the weaponry was operable, but RAF airdrops had enabled the AK to replenish its supplies. Yet the Home Army saw fit to turn over only a few handguns, many of them defective.

“To allocate machines without ammunition creates the impression of a cynical game with our fate and confirms the supposition that the venom of anti-Semitism continues to poison Poland's ruling circles,” Mordecai Anielewicz, the young radical in charge of the ghetto forces, wrote the AK command in March. But the AK was unmoved. Indeed, the only ally the leftists had outside the ghetto was the Polish Workers' Party, the name the Communists took after Stalin allowed them to reconstitute themselves in 1942, which was itself pathetically short of arms but which went to heroic lengths to support the ghetto militants in whatever way it could. Although Snyder believes that the ghetto fighters were following Soviet dictates in launching a revolt, they really had no choice — their back was against the wall.

With mass roundups reducing the ghetto population from more than half a million to a mere 60,000 by early 1943, the survivors were all too aware that “each of us carries his sentence of death in his pocket,” as historian Emanuel Ringelblum put it. They had no alternative but to fight with whatever means they had.

Thanks to the AK boycott — which Snyder, incredibly enough, defends — their weapons consisted of little more than knives, axes, crowbars, clubs, and homemade explosives.

The Partisans

Did the *New York Review of Books*'s Anne Applebaum even read this far or was she so taken with *Bloodlands*'s anti-Soviet animus that she decided to praise it to the skies right away? Normally so adept at ferreting out the tiniest specks of anti-Semitism in his enemies, how is it that the *New Republic*'s Leon Wieseltier failed to notice such a gross anti-Jewish attack on the part of his latest friend?

Snyder brings the same curious logic to bear on the Soviet partisans, whose war against the Wehrmacht was increasingly effective from 1942 on. Given the political exigencies of the Cold War, Western historians have tended to be chary about meting out praise to such elements compared to, say, the French *Maquis* or the Italian *Partigiani*. In her highly influential 1975 study, *The War Against the Jews*, for instance, Lucy Dawidowicz said of the Jews who escaped into Soviet partisan ranks: "The first thing the partisan — Jew or Gentile — learned, if he lived long enough, was that in defense of the Soviet Union no human cost was too high." Rather than saving people, it seems that the Soviets were only interested in their own aggrandizement.

But *Bloodlands* goes farther. However dismissive Dawidowicz is of the Soviet high command, she at least recognizes that "joining the partisans offered the ghetto Jews, in addition to the opportunity of fighting Germans, also at least an even chance of survival under conditions of personal autonomy." Snyder will have none of it. His condemnation of the partisans is total. "Partisan warfare," he writes, "was (and is) illegal, since it undermines the convention of uniformed armies directing violence against each other rather than against surrounding populations." The effect of partisan warfare, therefore, was to exacerbate conditions in Belarus and other areas by subjecting locals to an "escalation of both German and Soviet violence." *Bloodlands* adds:

When Soviet partisans sabotaged trains, they were in effect ensuring that the population near the site would be exterminated. When Soviet partisans laid mines, they knew that some would detonate under the bodies of Soviet citizens. The Germans swept mines by forcing locals, Belarusians and Jews, to walk hand in hand over minefields.

In general, such loss of human life was of little concern to the Soviet leadership. The people who died had been under German occupation, and were therefore suspect and perhaps even more expendable than the average Soviet citizen. German reprisals also ensured that the ranks of the partisans swelled, as survivors often had no home, no livelihood, and no family to which to return.

Since Nazis and Soviets were morally indistinguishable, their actions had to be as well. Jews who escaped to join the partisans did so, according to Snyder, "at the cost of partaking in the descent into mass violence." They "were serving the Soviet regime, and were taking part in a Soviet policy to bring down retribution upon civilians" — a characterization that comes very close to the Home Army's description of the Jews as Polish national enemies.

As with the denizens of the Warsaw Ghetto, one can only wonder what Snyder would have had Jews do instead. Faye Schulman was a nineteen-year-old girl living in a small town in eastern Poland when the Wehrmacht massacred her family along with the rest of the Jewish population in August 1941. Temporarily spared because of her skills as a professional photographer, she fled with the partisans at the first opportunity and, to her gratitude, was accepted into their ranks:

The fighting had ended. The partisans were returning to their bases, and I was with them and alive. It felt like a dream. I had been accepted into the Soviet partisans! I wasn't sure what was waiting for me now, what kind of a life I would have. But I knew I was very lucky. I was now a partisan, no longer afraid of the Nazis. I tore off the yellow star of David. We started our journey into the woods.

"I resolved to volunteer for active combat operations, to fight for my people — for Jewish dignity and honor — and for an end to the Nazi killing machine," Schulman added in her memoirs. Does this make her a criminal? What should a captured Soviet soldier have done if he was able to escape a prisoner-of-war camp in which the death rate, due to overcrowding, exposure, starvation, and appalling sanitary conditions, approached two percent per day? If he was lucky enough to make it to the forests, his only hope was to join forces with other escapees, obtain a weapon, and fight for survival.

The same goes for victims of slave roundups. As Snyder concedes, Nazi troops by 1943 were sweeping through Belarus, killing women and children and sending men off to slave labor in Germany. What could such people do except resist by all available means? One does not know what to make of Snyder's complaint that partisan warfare is contrary to the rules of war by the same token since the fighters were taking up arms against a military machine that engaged in criminality on an unprecedented scale by slaughtering Jews and Communists and brutalizing the general population. But since the Soviets were

complicit in Nazi aggression, resistance was no less criminal than the invasion itself. Since the Soviets “allowed Hitler to begin a war” in 1939, Snyder writes, they had no right to complain when he turned his guns on them in 1941.

Bloodlands misses no opportunity to heap abuse on the partisans, accusing them of shooting Jews, stealing their weapons, and terrorizing civilians. “[W]hile the partisans saved some thirty thousand Jews, it is unclear whether their actions on balance provoked or prevented the killing of Jews,” Snyder writes. Sexual abuse among the partisans was rife, he says: “the standard form of address to girls and women was ‘whore,’ and women usually had no choice but to seek a protector.” But this is not the way Faye Schulman remembers it:

[S]ex was not a major issue in our group. We didn’t think in terms of men and women, boys and girls. We treated each other as equals. There were no special privileges for women; we were all partisans and we knew that death in war did not spare anyone. Certainly in battle, there was no differentiation between men and women. All our thoughts were concentrated on defeating the enemy.

To be sure, the quality of partisan units varied, especially in the early days when the forests filled with ill-organized bands of stragglers and escapees. With German forces stretched so thin that each security division was responsible for patrolling an area greater than Belgium, the result of the blitzkrieg was to create a vast power vacuum that all sorts of forces rushed to fill — bandits, nationalists, Communists, and so on. Discipline was lax, and irregulars “expropriating” food sometimes could not resist helping themselves to jewels, watches, and furs, too. This was not peculiar to Eastern Europe; Greek partisans were also accused of stealing and assaulting village women.

Soviet commanders wrung their hands over a spreading spirit of *partisanshchina*, a term that could mean freedom and self-sufficiency but also laziness, drunkenness, and brigandage. Jews fleeing into the forests could only welcome their efforts to impose a measure of discipline and control since it could mean the difference between being shot on sight by marauders and coming under the protection of a well-disciplined fighting force.

Contrary to Snyder’s description of an oppressive terror apparatus bent on making the peasantry’s life worse, the partisan movement was rapidly evolving. A milestone came in September 1942 when the People’s Commissariat of Defense (*Narodny Komissariat Oborony* — NKO) issued its famous Order 189 declaring that as “the partisan movement develops still more broadly and deeply . . . [it] embraces the broadest masses of the Soviet people in the occupied territory.”

For Jews, this was their Magna Carta since it meant that, ostensibly at least, they now had a place in the movement as much as any Russian, Ukrainian, or other Slav. A Belarusian commissar thus informed his partisans that, as Soviet citizens, they were expected to uphold Soviet law and refrain from using anti-Semitic expressions. When a Russian commander told Tuvia Bielski, the leader of the Bielski partisans, that Jews were nothing but robbers, NKO Order 189 enabled him to reply:

I am the commander of the Soviet company of partisans named for Marshal Zhukov. We are not robbers. If you are a true Soviet leader, you should know that it is in the interests of our homeland to fight the German enemy together. Our homeland does not differentiate between Jews and non-Jews, it only separates the loyal, disciplined citizens from harmful, destructive bands.

Another milestone came in May 1943 when the partisans abandoned the old scorched earth policy in favor of one based on defending peasant holdings. Instead of burning crops to prevent their falling into German hands, partisans now helped peasants fight Nazi troops off. Where partisans were once loath to take on women, children, and the elderly since such people would only slow them down, they were now required to take them under their wing. When one partisan complained, “We’re here to fight the Huns and not to nurse children,” his commander shot back: “Only bastards can talk like that. I am ashamed of you! I see you do not understand the duties of partisans. To protect people who are being persecuted by the fascists is our most important task. To save lives is to fight the enemy.”

When the Fifth Leningrad Partisan Brigade came under heavy pressure in the fall of 1943, the brigade’s commanders decided to defend the local population rather than move on as standard guerrilla tactics might dictate. One officer described it as “a question of principle: what impression would this make on the population? Therefore, [we] decided to fight and to fight in such a manner as to transform every village into a fortress of the partisan struggle and leave only when it was impossible to stay any longer.”



Soviet partisans in Ukraine, 1943.

Faye Schulman was frank about the shortcomings that Snyder dwells on so lovingly. Her memoir tells of thievery and drunkenness, of a partisan officer who nearly kills her when she rejected his advances, and of a low-grade anti-Semitism that was all but ubiquitous. “Because I was Jewish, I had to work twice as hard to be deemed as worthy as the gentile girls,” she writes. “When I worked night and day I was told, ‘You are not like a Jewish girl. You are just like the Russian girls.’ This was meant to be a compliment.” But she always replied: “‘Yes, but I am Jewish.’ My work as a nurse, a photographer and most of all as a soldier was plentiful reason for me to stand tall, to be proud of myself and my heritage.”

It is of course scandalous that Schulman was put in such a position in the first place. But what comes through loud and clear in her memoir — and is wholly absent from Snyder’s account — is her boundless pride in her new vocation and her passionate devotion to the cause:

We all belonged to one brigade. We learned to live together, eat together, fight together and survive together. We also needed to get along with each other. Sometimes it was hard to live through one day, let alone years. There was a strong friendship, cooperation and loyalty amongst most of us and a willingness to help each other.

In the forest, connections were made between disparate people. Cold, hunger, stress forced strangers to become like family. We were also comrades in arms, all dealing with the same life-and-death circumstances. Our lives were bonded by the dangerous conditions under which we constantly lived. A special bond, nonetheless, existed among those of us who had experienced similar horrors under the Nazis.

“Sometimes this bygone world feels almost more real to me than the present,” she added years later. “I am proud of my past and of those who, like myself, were able to stand up to the enemy. That there were uprisings and resistance at all, that twenty thousand or more East European Jews fought as partisans, represented a pinnacle of bravery in the history of the Jewish people — this should never be forgotten.”

Such sentiments are hard to argue with, yet as far as Snyder is concerned, Schulman was merely contributing to a vicious cycle, “a perversely interactive effort of Hitler and Stalin, who each ignored the laws of war and escalated the conflict behind the front lines.” Schulman thought she was fighting to make the world better, but, according to Snyder, she was actually making it worse.

It is worth noting that the partisans were the only multi-ethnic force in the Nazi-controlled borderlands, hence the only one capable of imposing even a degree of comity amid the general chaos unleashed by the German invasion. While Snyder is besides himself with indignation over the Soviet suppression of the Home Army, Schulman’s memoir describes a Hobbesian landscape in which “Jewish partisans found themselves fighting a multitude of Nazi-sponsored local bandit groups who were particularly anti-Semitic and always on the lookout for Jews” — not only *Akovtsi*, which is to say members of the AK, she explains, but *Banderivtsi* (followers of the Ukrainian nationalist Stepan Bandera); *Bulbovtsi* (followers of a rival Ukrainian warlord known as Taras Bulba-Borovets; and *Vlasovtsi* (followers of the renegade Soviet General Andrey Vlasov).

With his mass deportations and Great Russian chauvinism, Stalin’s national policies were a nightmare that would only grow worse after the war. But at least they honored socialist internationalism in the breach whereas the Polish nationalists whom Snyder celebrates, with their mutual slaughters and petty hatreds, were at an obvious dead end.

Nolte Redux

Snyder is very much a son of Nolte. For all its obfuscation, *Bloodlands* basically agrees that Stalin's crimes were not only antecedent to those of Hitler but in some way causative. Where the right-wing German historian Andreas Hillgruber lauded the Wehrmacht for holding back the Red hordes even at the cost of allowing the death camps to continue functioning, Snyder defends the AK for resisting Soviet importuning to launch an armed rebellion even if it meant standing by while the Warsaw Ghetto was obliterated.

He seeks to exculpate local pogromists by portraying them as operating at German behest: "As a result of trained collaboration and local assistance, German killers had all the help that they needed in Lithuania. . . . In the weeks and months to come, Germans drove Lithuanians to killing sites around the city of Kaunas. By July 4, 1941, Lithuanian units were killing Jews under German supervision and orders." But instead of functioning in a subordinate capacity, Lithuanian rightists began slaughtering Jews before the Wehrmacht arrived, with a savagery that even German officers found shocking.

In Kaunas, for example, the Lithuanian fascist Algirdas Klimaitis launched a pogrom on June 25, 1941, in which 1,500 Jews were killed, several synagogues destroyed, and some sixty houses burned to the ground. A German staff officer described it as the most revolting scene he had ever witnessed while a field marshal named Ritter von Leeb was moved to lodge an official protest. In Lviv, Snyder says that "Einsatzgruppe C and local militia organized a pogrom that lasted for days" beginning on July 1, 1941. But Einsatzgruppe C did not organize the pogrom. While the Nazis certainly gave their approval, the organizers were the local *Banderivsi* who took charge from beginning to end. According to one recent account:

The Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists under the leadership of Stepan Bandera provided the engine of the pogrom. It set up a short-lived government in Lviv on June 30, 1941 headed by a vehement anti-Semite. It simultaneously plastered the city with leaflets that encouraged ethnic cleansing. It also formed a militia that assumed a leadership role in the pogrom. Militiamen went from apartment to apartment in Jewish neighborhoods to arrest Jewish men and women.

Bloodlands makes no mention of Jedwabne, the subject of Jan Gross's celebrated 2001 exposé, where, on July 10, 1941, local Poles killed some 1,500 Jews by herding them into a barn that they then set ablaze. Few, if any, Germans were present in Jedwabne that day, and Gross's account makes it clear that the townsfolk acted entirely on their own.

"In the decades since Europe's era of mass killing came to an end," Snyder writes, "much of the responsibility has been placed at the feet of 'collaborators.'" But, he adds, "almost none of these people collaborated for ideological reasons, and only a small minority had political motives of any discernible sort." Yet the pogromists in Jedwabne were fully conscious of the political dimension since they forced their victims to topple a statue of Lenin and then march about singing, "The war is because of us, the war is for us." Because Snyder sees the Nazis and Soviets as morally indistinguishable, he wants us to believe that ideology was secondary. But in a part of Europe in which partisan units give themselves names like "Death to Fascism" (*Smert' Fashizmu*) or "Death to the German Occupiers" (*Smert' Nemetskim Okkupantam*), this is rather like arguing that religion was secondary in the Thirty Years' War.



A Jewish-led group of Soviet partisans training, 1942.

So hostile is *Bloodlands* to the anti-Nazi resistance that it even manages to say something nasty about Herschel Grynszpan, the desperate seventeen-year-old Polish-Jewish refugee whose assassination of a German diplomat in Paris in 1938 provided the Nazis with a pretext to launch the anti-Semitic pogroms known as Kristallnacht. Grynszpan's deed, Snyder writes, was "unfortunate in itself, and unfortunate in its timing" because it "took place on November 7, the anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution." But the significance of such numerology is unexplained, as is the question of why Grynszpan's deed should be seen as unfortunate at all, rather than heroic.

Restorationist Politics

If Ernst Nolte sparked a scandal in Germany in the 1980s, why have far more extreme statements on Snyder's part met with nothing but applause? What is the explanation for the change?

A number of possibilities present themselves, but all stem in one way or another from the titanic events that swept through Eastern Europe and Russia some twenty-five years ago. The *Historikerstreit*, in a sense, was the academic left's last charge, its final attempt to resist a right-wing sweep that had begun with Thatcher, Reagan, and Helmut Kohl. With their immense crowds and calls for sweeping political change, the mass uprisings of 1989–91 looked and sounded like revolutions, but were really the opposite: not efforts to propel society forward in the classic mold of 1789 or 1917, but an attempt to turn the clock back to some halcyon pre-Soviet period. As no less an authority than Adam Michnik noted, "Revolution feeds on the promise of the Big Change; restoration promises the return of the 'good old days.'"

But which good old days, exactly? The 1920s, years of inflation, economic instability, and white terror, particularly in Poland and Hungary? The 1930s, with their deepening economic collapse and even further lurch to the right? The various independence movements of the 1970s and 80s began with a gauzy mix of religion, liberalism, and free-market economics, one part Pope John Paul II, one part Scandinavian social democracy, and one part Milton Friedman. But they led to a brutal economic shakeout, a shaky, consumer-driven recovery during the Bush II years, and then fierce recession after the Crash of 2008, a pattern remarkably similar to that of the interwar period.

Old political forces grew increasingly assertive amid the wreckage. In Hungary, the writer Imre Kertész confessed to being among the "childlike and gullible" who thought that the transformation would usher in an era of democracy and progress, but instead found himself falling "from one surprise to another; lies, hatred, racism, stupidity were erupting all around me; it was just as if a boil which had been festering for forty years was suddenly lanced by the surgeon's knife." By February 2009, according to a poll in Hungary, anti-Semitism was rife, with two-thirds of adults agreeing that Jews wield too much power in the business world, while anti-Roma prejudice was shooting upwards as well.

In Poland, Michnik, the architect of the dissident rapprochement with the church, kept apologizing for the errors he had made prior to "liberation" — for failing to understand the horrors that capitalist restoration would entail, for underestimating the backwardness of the church, for misjudging the depths of anti-Semitism, and so on. But then he kept on making more errors, backing Bush's invasion of Iraq in 2003 or, more recently, taking a hardline pro-NATO stance in Ukraine.

To the north, events have proven even more volatile. Two of the Baltic states that found themselves with large Russophone minorities following independence in 1991 — Estonia with 30 percent and Latvia with 34 percent — responded by revoking the citizenship of all newcomers since the Soviet takeover in 1939–40, an act of collective punishment that makes the anti-Russian measures briefly instituted in Kiev following the February coup seem mild by comparison.



The German execution of a partisan near Minsk.

In 2002, Pärnu, a small town in southeastern Estonia, put up a war memorial showing a bas-relief of a soldier in a Waffen SS uniform along with the words: “To all Estonian soldiers who died in the war of liberation for their country and a free Europe in the years 1941–5.” For the local powers-that-be, the Waffen SS represented the good fight against the Soviets. In 2007, the Estonian government removed a Soviet war memorial known as the Bronze Soldier of Tallinn, an act that led to two nights of rioting by Russian-speakers who comprise nearly half the capital’s population. When the EU proposed a ban on the use of Nazi symbols in 2005, Vytautas Landsbergis, Lithuania’s first post-Soviet head of state and now a member of the European Parliament, responded by calling for a ban on “symbols of equally cruel communist dictatorships.”

The same year, Estonia and Lithuania declined official invitations to attend the Victory Day celebrations in Moscow and were duly rewarded with a visit by George W. Bush. “For much of Germany, defeat led to freedom,” Bush announced in Riga. “For much of Eastern and Central Europe, victory brought the iron rule of another empire.”

The *reductio ad absurdum* occurred in 2006 when the Lithuanian daily *Respublika* labeled Yitzhak Arad, the long-time director of Yad Vashem in Jerusalem, an “NKVD storm trooper” because, as a young man in the Vilnius ghetto, he was able to escape and join the partisans. Local prosecutors launched a formal investigation and then, two years later, followed up with an investigation into the wartime activities of two elderly Jewish women, Fania Yocheles Brantsovsky and Rachel Margolis, who had also joined the partisans. As Arad points out it, such prosecutions flow from the concept of a double genocide, which holds that there was a “brown holocaust” that was the work of Nazi Germany and a small number of Balts and an equal and opposite “red holocaust” that was the work of the Soviet Union and its local collaborators.

“In order to justify the participation of Lithuanians in the mass murder of Jews,” he writes, “there was a perceived need to invent Jews who similarly killed Lithuanians.”

The way was thus prepared for a Yale professor to turn out a veritable ode to the concept of a double genocide, one equating partisans with storm troopers and blaming anti-Jewish pogroms on the Soviets. When Jews protested the ceremonial re-burying of Juozas Ambrazevičius-Brazaitis, the Nazi puppet prime minister who in 1941 issued the order consigning Jews to a ghetto in the town of Viliampolė, a Lithuanian academic exclaimed, “It’s great that there are historians such as Timothy Snyder, who is helping the West to comprehend what happened here.” *Bloodlands*’ success, as the sociologists say, was over-determined.

America’s *Drang Nach Osten*

America is not a fascist country, at least not yet. But over the years, it has adapted effortlessly to various fascist regimes, from Mussolini (“that admirable Italian gentleman,” as Roosevelt described him in 1933) to Franco and Pétain (with whom the U.S. maintained diplomatic relations even after the invasion of French Algeria in 1942). Even Hitler had his pockets of support. Roosevelt wondered whether giving Germany greater “living room” might avert war, while Breckinridge Long, FDR’s ambassador to Italy, wrote in 1935: “While a German domination would be hard and cruel — at least in the beginning — it would be an intensification of a culture which is more akin to ours than would that of Russia.”

After the war, the US adopted a policy of letting bygones be bygones, with Eisenhower declaring in 1951 that “the German soldier fought bravely and honorably for his homeland” and Matthew Ridgway, Ike’s successor as Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, requesting the Allied High Commissioner in 1953 to pardon all German officers convicted of war crimes on the Eastern Front. A massacre like that of Oradour-sur-Glane, in which Waffen SS mowed down 642 men, women, and children in June 1944, remained unforgivable. But in the east, where Oradours occurred by the hundreds, they were merely an *excès de zèle*.

By the 1980s, Munich-based Radio Liberty was beaming explicitly anti-Semitic and pro-fascist propaganda into the Soviet Union, claiming that *Banderivtsi* who joined the SS Galizien Division did so not to aid the Nazis but “to fight against occupiers, regardless whence they came.”

But while the Radio Liberty incident created a small furor in Washington, such constraints fell by the wayside once the Soviet Union was no more. During the Euromaidan protests, US officials went out of their way to whitewash the *Banderivtsi* of the Svoboda Party and the Right Sector, insisting that their presence among the barricades was of no consequence and that the giant poster of Bandera festooning the Kiev city hall could be safely ignored.

The press dutifully parroted the official line. In February 2014, while the Yanukovich government was hanging by a thread, the *New York Times* assured its readers that the ultra-right was a minor element in the protests, quoting one participant as observing, “You don’t hear people yelling about Stepan Bandera. People just want to live in a free country.” Adding that depictions of the Kiev protesters as fascists and anti-Semites were “caricatures in the Russian media’s fun-house mirror,” the *Times* wrote a few weeks later that Svoboda “has moderated” and that the Right Sector was likewise taking “pains to reach out to Russian speakers and to convey a message of moderation.”



Soviet partisans marching in Kiev, 1943.

In late April, the *New Republic* reported that “most Ukrainians would no longer call the [Svoboda] party ‘radical.’ Many jokingly call it ‘white and fluffy’: harmless as a bunny.” What Humbert Wolfe said about the British press goes double for the Americans.

Yet no one was more aggressive than Snyder. In February, he accused Russia of “manipulative exploitation of the memory of World War II” for daring to suggest that Ukrainian ultra-nationalists were tainted by anti-Semitism. He attacked the Kremlin in the *New Republic* for “surreal warmongering” and then, in the *New York Review of Books*, announced that the individual most responsible for the rise of Svoboda was none other than Viktor Yanukovich, the man

Svoboda had helped overthrow: “One of the moral atrocities of the Yanukovich regime was to crush opposition from the center-right, and support opposition from the far right.” Once Yanukovich was gone, evidently, a defanged Svoboda would gravitate toward the center.

On CNN.com, Snyder compared the annexation of the Crimea to Hitler’s *Anschluss* in 1938, while, in April, he hinted in the *Guardian* that Russia was responsible for an ominous circular calling on Ukrainian Jews to report to the “separatist authorities.” This was too much even for that paper’s notoriously anti-Russian editors, who inserted a correction noting that it was obvious to all that the leaflets were a hoax. In May, he accused Russia of sending troops to Donetsk and Luhansk, a deployment that no other journalist has been able to detect. A few days later, he accused Putin of not only seeking to destabilize Ukraine, but the EU as well.

The evil-doers had fallen from two to one, but otherwise the *Bloodlands* message was the same. Putin was the font of all evil while the militants of Euromaidan were ordinary people fighting for freedom and democracy. While Svoboda bore watching, its rise was not the fault of the Ukrainians, but a problem imposed from without. Putin’s sweep was no less global than Stalin’s, and unless Europe did something to stop him, he would impose slavery across all Eurasia.

But the best way to understand such arguments is as a case of psychological projection in which the aggression that Snyder attributes to Russia is really a reflection of his own. After all, NATO has added a dozen countries to its roster since the collapse of the USSR, all within the former Soviet sphere of influence. Neocons such as Richard Perle, Elliott Abrams, Kenneth Adelman, Midge Decter, Frank Gaffney, Michael Ledeen, and James Woolsey attempted to drum up support for the Chechen rebels beginning in the 1990s while, in August 2008, John McCain encouraged Georgian president Mikheil Saakashvili to launch an “ill-planned reconquista” of the breakaway province of South Ossetia, which, had it proved successful, might well have led to the unraveling of Russia’s entire southern tier.

This was far more aggressive than anything Russia has done in return. Indeed, a significant portion of the US foreign policy establishment has gone even farther, following up on the breakup of the Soviet Union with a call to break up post-Soviet Russia. As the independent journalist Robert Parry has pointed out, Dick Cheney, according to former defense secretary Robert M. Gates, “wanted to see the dismantlement not only of the Soviet Union and the Russian empire but of Russia itself, so that it could never again be a threat to the rest of the world.”

Zbigniew Brzezinski, Jimmy Carter’s national security adviser, urged a similar policy in his 1997 bestseller, *The Grand Chessboard*, in which he declared that “a more decentralized Russia would be less susceptible to imperial mobilization.” Hence, he called for Russia to be transformed into a “loosely confederated” alliance “composed of a European Russia, a Siberian Republic, and a Far Eastern Republic.” Brzezinski also urged that America surround Russia — or, rather, the Russias — with a pack of smaller states to hem it in:

A clear choice by Russia in favor of the European option over the imperial one will be more likely if America successfully pursues the second imperative strand of its strategy toward Russia: namely, reinforcing the prevailing geopolitical pluralism in the post-Soviet space. . . . The consolidation of a sovereign Ukraine, which in the meantime redefines itself as a Central European state and engages in closer integration with Central Europe, is a critically important component of such a policy. . .

Formerly part of the Russian sphere of influence, Ukraine now had to be detached and brought within the orbit of the European Union. This was a remarkable foreshadowing of the policy that Victoria Nuland, Cheney’s former national security adviser and now the Obama administration point man in Kiev, would institute in early 2014 while passing out cookies to fighters on the barricades, posing for photos with Svoboda Party leader Oleh Tyahnybok, and vetting members of the new nationalist government.

While Russian power has waned, NATO has expanded. Contrary to Snyder, the problem is not a Russian push to the west, but an American drive to the east that has only intensified since Euromaidan. While the State Department argues that a democratic wave is sweeping across Eastern Europe, the claim is belied by the mass disenfranchisement of Russian-speaking minorities, the growing Baltic identification with the Third Reich, and the exaltation of Bandera in places like Lvov and Kiev.

The rise of the double-genocide movement, which has enjoyed backing from Václav Havel, German President Joachim Gauck, and Vytautas Landsbergis, is perhaps most dangerous of all since it represents a major step toward the relativization of Nazi war crimes by equating them with the atrocities of Stalin. *Bloodlands* is important because it is less an effort to understand what happened in 1933–45 than a milestone in the process of engagement with local revanchist forces.

The rapturous reception that it received in the mainstream media is a sign that intellectual resistance to America’s drive to the east has all but collapsed. Conceivably, the US might respond to an increasingly dangerous situation in the Ukraine by cutting off support for the ultra-right, lowering temperatures all around. But don’t bet on it.

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