

DOI <https://doi.org/10.30525/2592-8813-2025-3-18>

STRIKES AND SABOTAGE ACTIONS IN WESTERN UKRAINE (1926–1929): DIPLOMATIC AND MILITARY-POLITICAL CONTEXTS OF SOVIET INFLUENCE ON THE POLISH STATE

Andrii Shcheglov,

Doctoral Student, Hetman Petro Sahaidachnyi National Army Academy

(Lviv, Ukraine)

ORCID ID: 0000-0002-6484-0864

deepinfaigh@gmail.com

Abstract. Between 1916 and 1926, protest and sabotage actions took place in the territories of Western Ukraine, actively supported and fueled by the Soviet Union. This process involved special services operating illegally, which carried out counterintelligence activities and developed an agent network within Ukrainian circles. The aim of this network was to obstruct the functioning of the state administrations of the Polish Republic. Socio-economic slogans were used as a cover for organizing destructive actions by activists of the Communist Party of Western Ukraine, the legal association "Sel-rob," pro-Soviet trade unions, and public organizations. The author seeks to conduct a source-based and historiographical analysis of this influence, also examining the USSR's diplomatic and military-political efforts.

Key words: Western Ukraine, Republic of Poland, act of sabotage, strike, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Introduction. The preparation and launch of a full-scale war by the Russian Federation against the Ukrainian state is, among other things, based on the earlier Soviet experience of hybrid influence aimed at destabilizing neighboring countries through latent mechanisms of pressure, particularly by exacerbating external political and military crises. Given the applied novelty of the proposed research topic, its aim is not only to identify and evaluate analogies with the current Russian-Ukrainian war, but also to address pressing questions of historical reassessment and modern conceptualization of earlier contributions by Ukrainian historians and legal scholars in studying the complex processes of a century ago. This research is grounded in the introduction of valuable documents into public scholarly circulation from the collections of the Central State Archive of Public Organizations of Ukraine, the Central State Historical Archive in Lviv, and the State Archive of Lviv Oblast. These materials reveal the mechanisms behind the orchestration of certain strikes and acts of sabotage in Western Ukraine during the second half of the 1920s in the context of Soviet diplomatic and military-political instruments of influence on the Second Polish Republic.

The archival materials in question make it possible to supplement contemporary historiography of Soviet influence over the socio-political situation in Western Ukraine by highlighting the financial and organizational support provided to both legal and banned ultra-left political parties and public organizations, as prohibited by the Polish authorities. This dimension has been reflected in the works of T. Bortnik, I. Vasyuta, R. Husak, Z. Zakhochai, O. Kozoriz, M. Mazypchuk, Yu. Perha, M. Pyrih, I. Soliar. While positively assessing the contributions of Ukrainian historians and legal scholars, it is important to point out the absence of a comprehensive study on the diplomatic and military-political instruments employed by Soviet special services and diplomacy to influence Poland – particularly through various forms of support for protest actions, primarily of a socio-economic nature, in towns and villages of Western Ukraine from Józef Piłsudski's May Coup in 1926 to the onset of sabotage actions in 1930. The purpose of this study is to conduct a source-based and historiographical analysis of strikes and sabotage actions in Western Ukraine during 1926–1929, through the lens of the USSR's diplomatic and military-political efforts aimed at destabilizing the internal political situation in the

Polish state in general, and in the newly established southeastern voivodeships with a predominantly Ukrainian population in particular.

Presenting main material. Soviet foreign policy in the interwar period (1918–1939) was carried out on the basis of the strategy and tactics of the “world revolution,” which, in turn, envisioned the unification of all “anti-imperialist forces,” including the so-called oppressed peoples (Makarchuk, 2024: 173). In doing so, the Soviet government organized clandestine activities, conducted agent-based, intelligence, and counterintelligence operations, and carried out acts of sabotage and terrorism (Zakhozai, 2017: 31). In this context, particular attention was paid to Eastern Galicia and the Ukrainian lands along the Zbruch and Horyn rivers, which formed a new geographical region. The Polish state, restored in 1918, inherited Eastern Galicia from Austria-Hungary and Western Volhynia and Western Polissia from the Russian Empire – territories collectively known in historical literature as “Western Ukraine” (Zuliak & Makar, 2023: 96).

Contemporary historians and political scientists generally agree that Polish policy toward Ukrainians was, overall, repressive and implemented in various forms. A particularly distinctive feature of this policy toward the peasantry was the implementation of a colonization program (Zuliak & Makar, 2023: 99).

Acknowledging the incorporation of Eastern Galicia into the Second Polish Republic, the Soviet leadership in 1923–1925 conducted active intelligence and sabotage operations against the newly established Polish state in the borderlands of Western Volhynia and Eastern Galicia, a topic summarized in the author’s previous works (Shcheglov, 2024a, Shcheglov, 2024b,), emphasizing, among other things, the national-political and socio-economic oppression by the Polish authorities.

The imposition of martial law and the escalation of mass repressions led to a decrease in protests against the Polish state with social and national-political demands, which were actively promoted by certain pro-Soviet political forces and individual Ukrainian activists. While in 1924 there were 5,585 group and individual protests recorded across the four voivodeships of Western Ukraine, in 1925 this number dropped to 3,417. The number of statistically recorded attacks on manor estates and government representatives also decreased from 267 to 150 (Vasiuta, 2001: 415).

Alongside this, one of the reasons for the Soviet special services to curtail “active intelligence” was the Yampil incident. As a result of an internal review and a subsequent meeting of the RCP(b) Politburo in February 1925, a resolution was adopted to cease “active intelligence” activities. By the end of 1925, the vast majority of Soviet “partisan” units operating in the eastern voivodeships of the Second Polish Republic were disbanded and partially withdrawn from the country by clandestine means (Humennyi, 2021: 119–120).

Specifically, clandestine outposts were established in the Soviet Union’s neighboring countries, tasked with establishing necessary contacts, preparing and gathering valuable materials and information, and studying military facilities, among other duties. Small covert and armed groups organized in the borderlands of the USSR were responsible for conducting partisan warfare and disrupting enemy operations. The border zone was to be cleared of partisans, who were expected to independently cross the border to carry out active combat operations within the interior districts (Bortnyk, 2015: 121).

Despite the decline in acts of armed resistance, workers’ and peasants’ strikes did not cease. The acknowledgment by some historians that many strike actions were composite in nature, and that some were continuations of workers’ strikes in Poland’s industrial centers (Vasiuta, 2001: 48), should not diminish the influence on the strike movement of both Ukrainian legal and illegal political parties, particularly those under varying degrees of influence or even direct control by Soviet special services, the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), and the Comintern.

In particular, to “softly” encourage pro-Soviet orientations, the government appointed Ukrainians as its consuls in Lviv, sought to attract the Western Ukrainian intelligentsia and students by promoting the achievements of Soviet Ukraine and promising them a warm welcome, and financed various

public organizations. Communist propaganda easily influenced young, semi-literate individuals (with only 1–2 grades of primary education), who fell under the sway of well-trained Bolshevik agitators, trained in special courses in Kharkiv (Zakhochai, 2006: 234).

One of the main directions of Soviet leadership activity in Eastern Galicia was considered to be control over political parties. This work was conducted in a differentiated manner, depending on the ideological orientation of each party. The Communist Party of Western Ukraine (CPWU) received the greatest “patronage” from the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) and the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine (CP(b)U). Formed essentially at the initiative of the Bolsheviks, it was financed from the budget of the Ukrainian SSR and supplied with literature and personnel (Zakhochai, 2017: 31).

After the crisis of the early 1920s, which affected all political parties in Western Ukraine, the CPWU underwent intensified “Bolshevization” at the initiative of the CP(b)U and the Communist Workers’ Party of Poland (CWPP). In April 1924, the party held its 5th conference under this slogan. Ordinary party members and their local leadership became hostages to the aggressive and far-sighted intentions of Kremlin politicians – the “export of revolution” (Husak, 2014: 52).

A turning point in the policy of the CPWU was its 2nd Congress, held in October 1925. The main goal of the party’s activity became the communization and proletarian revolution in Poland, as well as the integration of Western Ukraine into socialist Ukraine. The Congress emphasized that at that time the party was primarily supported by the peasantry due to the region’s industrial backwardness and the ethno-social composition of Western Ukraine (Perha, 2014: 43).

Meanwhile, the domestic political situation in Poland escalated to such a degree that on the night of May 12, 1926, Marshal Józef Piłsudski began his march to power once again. Piłsudski’s supporters had the advantage and started pushing government troops out of downtown Warsaw. Piłsudski had influence over the Polish Socialist Party (PPS), of which he was once a founder, and the trade unions, and through them – over the railway workers. As a result, railway workers allowed troops loyal to Piłsudski to enter the capital, while detaining government-loyal regiments (Mel’nyk, 2016).

The Ukrainian factor also played a role during the coup. In particular, General Władysław Sikorski, a graduate of the Lviv Polytechnic and former prime minister, evidently hesitated to send troops to Warsaw because he was unsure who would win. Meanwhile, there was an opportunity to intimidate the capital somewhat with “Ukrainian movements” (Mel’nyk, 2016).

Unlike the Communist Party of Poland (CPP), the CPWU did not support Piłsudski’s coup. At the same time, as party members noted, the coup took place with the direct support of the Polish Socialist Party (PPS), which declared a railway workers’ strike, followed by a general strike across the country. On May 14, 1926, the CPP called on workers to launch a general strike and later urged armed support for Piłsudski (Behei, 2015: 103).

In the first days following Józef Piłsudski’s coup in May 1926, the CPWU “set out to correct its mistake.” In their leaflet, the communists stated that “the hopes of workers and peasants who, singing the ‘Red Banner,’ helped Piłsudski to victory, were not fulfilled: instead of a workers’ and peasants’ government, the bourgeoisie came to power, preparing to decisively crush the working people.” Therefore, the CPWU called on the working masses to form a united front to fight fascism and to achieve their own workers’ and peasants’ demands, as expressed in the slogans of the Communist Party (Behei, 2015: 103–104).

The most high-profile trial after the May 15, 1926, coup d’état, aimed against the communist movement, was the mass trial accusing individuals of membership in the banned CPWU. This trial took place from November 1926 to January 1927 in Volodymyr-Volynskyi (Yarosh, 2005: 316). At that time, 151 workers and peasants stood trial, of whom 9 were sentenced to life imprisonment, 19 were acquitted, and the rest received various prison terms (TsDAHO Ukrainy, F. 233, Op. 1, Spr. 66, Ark. 45).

Despite the repressions by the Polish authorities against local communist activists, figures from Soviet Ukraine were constantly present in Western Ukraine, sent there by decision of the Central Committee of the CP(b)U. On August 5, 1926, the training courses for intelligence agents were completed, among whom were also ethnic Poles. Prior to this, around 80 members had already been sent out for assignments (DALO, F. 271, Op. 1, Spr. 32, Ark. 19). They returned after being exposed by the police, as in the case of O. Yavorskyi, who stayed in Poland from November 1926 until May 1927 (TsDAHO Ukrainy, F. 6, Op. 1, Spr. 371, Ark. 118).

The movement of communist activists across the country was strictly controlled. In the event of their relocation from one voivodeship to another, a notice of approximately the following content was immediately sent: "Command of the Voivodeship State Police Directorate in Kraków to the Investigative Authority in Lviv. We inform you that on September 4, 1927, Frant (a communist activist and Soviet spy) arrived in Lviv. He will be speaking at one of the local casinos. Please begin surveillance on him" (Kozoriz, 2018: 154).

The CPWU, led by K. Savrych (Maksymovych), Y. Krylyk (Vasylkiv), and R. Kuzma (Turiansky), at that time "stood" on the position of Ukrainian communism and expressed solidarity with the opposition of O. Shumsky against the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the CP(b)U L. Kaganovich. In connection with this, in 1927 the Party again split into the "majority" and the "minority." The "majority" defended K. Savrych, who, at the February–March plenum of the CP(b)U Central Committee, supported O. Shumsky on the national question. The split indicated the disagreement of Ukrainian communists, especially Western Ukrainians, with the dictatorial methods of J. Stalin and his circle. At the beginning of 1928, by joint measures of the Comintern, the CP(b)U, and the CPP, the "majority" was removed from the leadership of the CPWU. After liquidating the Maksymovych–Vasylkiv–Turiansky group, M. Zaiatchkivskyi (Kosar), H. Ivanenko (Baraba), and others came to lead the CPWU. As a result, the party lost two-thirds of its members and numbered about 600 communists in its ranks (Husak, 2014: 52).

One of the key milestones in the interaction between the CPWU and the CP(b)U was the financing of the Western Ukrainian movement. The Soviet communists generously funded the party: for example, by September 1926, 6,000 US dollars were transferred from the CP(b)U fund to the CPWU (Zakhochai, 2006: 325). However, starting from April 1927, all subsidies for the CPWU's operations from the CP(b)U funds were discontinued, and the party's existence was put at risk. On the eve of these events, a special resolution of the Politburo allocated 50,000 US dollars for the election campaign in connection with the threat of dissolution of the Sejm (Pyrih, 2016: 108).

At the same time, in an atmosphere of growing pro-Soviet sentiments and communist propaganda, in 1924 a left-radical group led by K. Valnysky separated from the Moscovophilic Galician Ruthenian Organization and declared itself the Socialist Peasant Party "People's Will" (Kuhutiak, 1993: 176). In the special supplement to the newspaper "Volya Naroda" dated October 24, 1926, particular interest is drawn by the thesis that "Only socialism will break the chains of national oppression," demonstrating that the party gradually adopted the ideological positions of CPWU (TsDIA u Lvovi, F. 351, op. 1, Spr. 99, Ark. 20).

As I. Soliar convincingly argues, the subsequent merger of the "Selsoviet" and "Narodna Volya" did not come from these Western Ukrainian parties or their leadership, but directly from the Comintern and the KPZU, which later influenced the split within the structures (Soliar, 2006–2007: 126).

Since communist activity was banned in Poland, the KPZU operated underground. The Ukrainian Peasant-Worker Union ("Sel-rob") and some other organizations served as legal covers for communist activities (Zakhochai, 2012: 197).

Ideologically and financially supported were the legal pro-communist parties under the influence of the KPZU – the Ukrainian Social Democratic Party and "Selrob." Partially funded was also the party of Yevhen Petrushevych (UPP), which adopted pro-Soviet positions, though it did not enjoy

particular trust. Through these parties, the communist regime sought to spread pro-Soviet sentiments among the population of Eastern Galicia (Zakhozai, 2017: 32).

At the outset, 10,000 rubles per month were allocated to support “Selrob” – for newspaper publishing, the General Secretariat, organizing local secretariats, and supporting cooperative and cultural-educational organizations. Later, this amount was reduced to 6,500 rubles. These funds did not include election expenses for the Sejm. Separate budget items covered work aimed at destabilizing UNDO internally, particularly through support for the “Rada Group” and the left-wing social radicals, as well as efforts to undermine the “Khliboid” organizations. Additionally, 1,200 rubles were allocated for émigré activities. Since the left-radical forces actively competed for influence among cultural-educational organizations and student societies, a significant portion of the budget was dedicated to these activities. Altogether, 2,300 rubles per month were planned for these purposes, including press manipulation, organizational, and representative expenses (TsDAHO Ukrainy, F. 6, Op. 1, Spr. 261, Ark. 14).

У 1927 р. Політбюро ЦК КП(б)У виділяло на діяльність “Сельроб” вже 4 тис руб. щомісячно. За ці кошти видавалися газети “Світло”, “Наше слово”, журнал “Культура” (легальні видання) та “Земля і воля”, “Наша правда” (нелегальні) (TsDAHO Ukrainy, F. 6, Op. 1, Spr. 371, Ark. 171).

Therefore, it is quite understandable that “Selrob” placed its main emphasis on the “struggle against the UNDO-fascist camp” and the so-called “anti-war campaign” against the Soviet Union, taking into account the alleged plans of Poland, with the help of Great Britain, to organize a “second march on Kyiv” (TsDAHO Ukrainy, F. 233, Op. 1, Spr. 112, Ark. 30), What should we focus on in more detail.

As is known, the year 1927 entered diplomatic history as the “military alarm” – a crisis in Anglo-Soviet relations with the threat of a full-scale war between the USSR and the British Empire. This crisis began with the statement on February 23 by British Foreign Secretary N. Chamberlain, who threatened to sever diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union if it did not cease its subversive activities against Great Britain and its allies. In response, the USSR launched a propaganda campaign titled “Our reply to Chamberlain.” In defense of the USSR and against the “provocations of international imperialism,” separate rallies were held under slogans such as “Hands off the USSR!,” “Long live Soviet power!,” and “Long live the reunited Soviet Ukraine!” (Zakhozai, 2017: 31).

Continuing further in implementing the Bolshevik strategy of internal political destabilization of Poland, for example, in the openly provocative article “Polish Fascism and the Threat of War,” published in February 1927 in the KPZU journal “Pravda”, the author under the pseudonym Turiansky clearly defined the party’s task: “to respond to the imperialist war with a civil war” (TsDAHO Ukrainy, F. 233, Op. 1, Spr. 66, Ark. 23).

The inhabitants of Western Ukraine became targets of Soviet propaganda even regarding events that did not directly affect the region. In particular, the issue of the Vilnius conflict between Poland and Lithuania was constantly kept in the spotlight by the leadership of the USSR. Thus, at the end of 1927, Polish-Lithuanian relations once again worsened, and Moscow took up the usual role of either trying to normalize them or, rather, pouring oil on the fire. In translation from the Aesopian language of Soviet diplomacy into plain terms for the general public – cease pressuring Kaunas to recognize de jure the established border (by signing a peace treaty) (Makarchuk, 2024: 177).

Meanwhile, among other things, the KPZU distributed a leaflet stating that “The recent Polish-Lithuanian conflict, provoked by its fascist governments, must be a prelude to the world imperialist war against the dictatorship of the proletariat, against the Workers’ and Peasants’ Republics, against the great achievements of the October Revolution,” because “The fascist Piłsudski, acting on the orders of the world imperialists and in their interest, wants to drive you and your sons into a new bloody massacre... The faithful allies of Piłsudski’s designs are the PPS, Bund, UNDO, and the Radicals...,” and therefore “Stand up in defense of the USSR. You must transform the imperialist war

against the USSR into a class war against the capitalists and landlords” (TsDIA u Lvovi, F. 205, Op. 1, Spr. 567, Ark. 1).

Soviet-Polish relations further deteriorated after the assassination on June 6, 1927, of the Soviet permanent representative (later ambassador) P. Voikov by the Russian émigré B. Koverda. Following the assassination of Soviet ambassador P. Voikov, the CPP held a loud anti-war month in defense of the USSR, during which various events were organized “against the fascist dictatorship of Piłsudski and his henchmen” (Zakhozai, 2017: 31).

The level of communist propaganda in Eastern Galicia is evidenced by documents from that time. For example, in a decree of the Metropolitan Ordinariate dated March 21, 1927, it was stated that “... the general meetings of the ‘Prosvita’ society and the ‘Ridna Shkola’ society were notable for revealing the outstanding successes of communist propaganda... They showed that Bolshevik agitation had found access to the masses and was crowned with significant successes” (Zakhozai, 2006: 236).

Following the example of Soviet practice, so-called “revolutionary holidays” were celebrated in Eastern Galicia by communist and pro-communist forces – including May 1st, the anniversary of the October Revolution, the International Day of the Fight Against War (August 1st), International Youth Day, the Day of the Paris Commune, and others. These celebrations took place under slogans supporting the USSR, the necessity of reunification with the Ukrainian SSR, and the international unity of workers and peasants (Zakhozai, 2017: 31).

Communist activists effectively provoked certain categories of citizens to take violent actions against the Polish authorities, which held full control over the police and military apparatus used to suppress uprisings. For example, in January 1926, at a meeting attended by communist Sejm deputies Voityuk and Pashchuk, a new committee of unemployed persons of the Carpathian region was elected. The delegations of unemployed repeatedly appealed to the starostwo (district administration) and magistrate, demanding work and regular payment of assistance (Stryi, Stryis'kyi raion..., 1968). Next, in response to the protest of nearly 2,000 unemployed people in the city of Stryi on March 31, 1926, the authorities ordered to open fire (Vasiuta, 2001: 48). On March 31, 1926, during a demonstration in Stryi, the police killed 11 participants and wounded 22 (TsDAHO Ukrainy, F. 223, Op. 1, Spr. 66, Ark. 41).

Some archival data testify to the dynamics of the strike movement in Western Ukraine in the second half of the 1920s. Thus, according to available archival materials, only in the first half of 1927, 50 strikes were recorded in the Lviv Voivodeship alone (TsDIA u Lvovi, F. 351, Op. 1, Spr. 7, Ark. 1–3). Among them, the largest strikes included the strike of 1,000 brick factory workers in Sykhiv near Lviv, which lasted 8 days; 650 tailor workers in Lviv (19 days); 320 shoemakers in Przemyśl (8 days); 270 workers at the oil refinery in Krosno (8 days); and others.

In the second half of 1928, agrarian strikes began in the Lviv region – in the Rava-Ruska and Zhovkva districts. The following year, they spread to the landed estates of 130–150 villages across twenty districts of the region, involving about 50,000 permanent and seasonal agricultural workers and peasants. Alongside economic demands, they also put forward political demands: the establishment of a workers’ and peasants’ government, the redistribution of landlord land without compensation among hired workers and peasants, and so on (Vasiuta, 2001: 50). In 1929, the strike movement encompassed about 50,000 peasants across 18 districts of Western Ukraine (Chopovskyi, 1993: 78).

During the economic strikes of workers and peasant unrest, political slogans were inevitably added to the purely economic demands – the struggle for the abolition of the bourgeois order, national oppression, and for the establishment of Soviet power. A telling example of this is a leaflet from the strike committee of agricultural and forestry workers of the village of Potoky in June 1929, which stated:

“Brothers peasants! Our program is your program. Breaking the strike is breaking the united front of agricultural workers and the poorer peasantry. Fight fascism, disrupt the preparation for war against the USSR. Demand an 8-hour working day for adults and 6 hours for minors. Demand wage

increases and payment of arrears. Long live the workers' and peasants' government! For land without redemption! Long live the united front of Polish, Ukrainian, and Jewish workers and peasants!" (Zakhozhai, 2017: 31).

It is also important to highlight that in this very year there were intensified attempts to carry out sabotage actions by patriotically minded former military members of Ukrainian armed formations, who were clearly under the influence of Soviet intelligence services. These individuals spread communist propaganda narratives such as: "Our brothers beyond the Zbruch River have taken land from the landlords, have their own communal and district self-government, have their own Ukrainian national schooling, and have open doors to the highest authorities of their Ukrainian Soviet Republic" (TsDAHO Ukrainy, F. 233, Op. 1. Spr. 88, Ark. 1).

The subject is the Western Ukrainian People's Revolutionary Organization (ZUNRO). ZUNRO was a clandestine military-political association. It was founded in 1925 by a group of military émigrés led by Colonel O. Dumin, based on the Western Ukrainian Club – supporters of the ZUNR president Yevhen Petrushevych. The organization was formally established in 1926 in Berlin (Germany). Its program and statute aimed at consolidating the Ukrainian nation in the struggle against Polish occupation authorities and acknowledged the legitimacy of using terrorist methods. According to historian K. Naumenko, ZUNRO had a pro-Soviet orientation, opposed the "compromise" policy of UNDO and the "radical" policy of UVO (from which it had split), and advocated for the incorporation of Western Ukraine into the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR). It maintained a network of cells to carry out sabotage actions, mainly in the Pokuttya region (Naumenko, 2005).

In one of the leaflets of this organization, particular emphasis was placed on preparing for an armed uprising through gaining military experience in the Polish army (by analogy to the Ukrainian Sich Riflemen during the Austro-Hungarian period – ed. A. Shcheglov), specifically stating: "Send your sons to the Polish army, and tell them, and command them, that they are not going there to serve the Polish state, but so that, at the call of the Western Ukrainian National Revolutionary Organization, when the right time comes, they may join the ranks of the Ukrainian national-revolutionary army and help drive out the Poles..." and "Organize yourselves into underground revolutionary groups, inform each other, form a resistance front against all Poles, whether they be landlords, their stewards, Polish priests or teachers, or finally Polish officials – bailiffs, executors, and policemen – for they are all your enemies, to whom no indulgence can be shown, because they all uphold Poland on our land" (TsDAHO Ukrainy, F. 233, Op. 1. Spr. 88, Ark. 1).

In 1928, 15 members of ZUNRO (including two sons of the famous writer V. Stefanyk) were sentenced at the Lviv trial, and the following year the organization ceased its activities (Naumenko, 2005).

Conclusions. Thus, it can be asserted that protest actions in Western Ukraine during 1916–1929 played an important role, being directed against the institutions of the Polish state and instigated from the Soviet Union. Soviet special services actively engaged in clandestine operations, conducting intelligence and counterintelligence activities among various Ukrainian communities aimed against the Polish military and civil administration in the southeastern regions of the country, which formed the new geographical region of Western Ukraine.

A characteristic feature of this stage of the Soviet strategy and tactics of destructive influence was the practical abandonment of armed actions in favor of strikes, demonstrations, and other protest activities, disguised under socio-economic slogans. The real initiators of protests in Western Ukraine in the late 1920s were not only activists of the banned Communist Party of Western Ukraine but also the effectively controlled legal party "Selrob," as well as certain trade unions and other pro-Soviet public organizations. At the same time, direct funding of these structures and their individual leaders was often provided directly by Soviet diplomats from Warsaw and, after 1928, from the General Consulate in Lviv.

It is also important to note that the protest actions of a socio-economic nature, conducted by segments of peasants and workers in Western Ukraine, were actively directed by Soviet special services during certain periods to weaken the foreign policy positions and military potential of the Second Polish Republic, as occurred in 1927 during the escalation of its conflict with Lithuania, behind which the USSR clearly stood.

Separate, more detailed attention should be given to the origins, activities, and significance of the underground Western Ukrainian National Revolutionary Organization (ZUNRO), in light of the obvious role of the USSR's special services in combining the national-patriotic and socio-economic foundations of its program and tactics with a pronounced pro-Soviet orientation.

References:

1. Behei, I. (2015). Ideino-teoretychna spadshchyna ta praktychna diialnist ukrainskoi livytsi Halychyny (kinets XIX – persha tretyna XX stolittia) [The ideological and theoretical legacy and practical activity of the Ukrainian left in Galicia (late 19th – first third of the 20th century)]. Dysertatsiia na здobuttia naukovooho stupenia doktora politychnykh nauk zi spetsialnosti 23.00.01 – teoriia ta istoriia politychnoi nauky. Lvivskiy natsionalnyi universytet imeni Ivana Franka. Lviv, 503 s. (In Ukrainian).
2. Bortnik, T. (2021). Uchast “Selianskoho soiuzu” u stvorenni Ukrainskoho seliansko-robotnychoho sotsialistichnoho obiednannia (“Sel–Rob”) [The Participation of the “Peasant Union” in the Establishment of the Ukrainian Peasant-Worker Socialist Association (“Sel–Rob”)]. Novitnia doba, 9, 50–62. (In Ukrainian).
3. Bortnyk, L. (2015). Korpus okhorony prykordonnia na Volyni u 1924–1939 rr. [The Border Protection Corps in Volhynia in 1924–1939]. Dysertatsiia na здobuttia naukovooho stupenia kandydata istorichnykh nauk zi spetsialnosti 07.00.01 – Istoriiia Ukrainy. Skhidnoievropeiskiy natsionalnyi universytet imeni Lesi Ukrainky. Luts'k. 284 s. (In Ukrainian).
4. Chopovskyi, V. (1993). Ukrains'ka intelihentsiia v natsional'no-vyzvol'nomu rusi na Zakhidnii Ukraini (1918–1939) [Ukrainian intelligentsia in the national liberation movement in Western Ukraine (1918–1939)]. L'viv: Krai, 168 s. (In Ukrainian).
5. Humennyi, S. (2021). Nelegalni mihratsiini protsesy na polsko-radianskomu kordoni (v administrativnykh mezhakh USRR/URSR) u 1921–1939 rr. [Illegal migration processes on the Polish-soviet border (within the administrative borders of the Ukrainian SSR) in 1921–1939]. Dysertatsiia na здobuttia naukovooho stupenia doktora filosofii zi spetsialnosti 032 “Istoriiia ta arkhеolohiia”. Kyivskiy natsional'nyi universytet imeni Tarasa Shevchenka. Kyiv, 249 s. (In Ukrainian).
6. Husak, R. (2014). Livoradykal'nyi rukh Skhidnoi Halychyny ta Zakhidnoi Volyni mizhvoyennoho periodu [The left-radical movement of Eastern Galicia and Western Volhynia in the interwar period]. Naukovi zapysky Ternopils'koho natsional'noho pedahohichnoho universytetu imeni Volodymyra Hnatiuka. Ser. Istoriiia, 2, ch. 3, 51–56. (In Ukrainian).
7. Kozoriz, O. (2018). Orhanizatsiia ta diial'nist' politsii na zakhidnoukrains'kykh zemliakh u skladi Respubliky Pol'sha (1921–1939) [Organization and activities of the police in the western ukrainian lands within the Republic of Poland (1921–1939)]. Dysertatsiia na здobuttia naukovooho stupenia kandydata yurydychnykh nauk zi spetsialnosti 12.00.01 – teoriia ta istoriia derzhavy i prava; istoriia politychnykh i pravovykh vchen'. L'vivskiy natsional'nyi universytet Ivana Franka. Lviv, 254 s. (In Ukrainian).
8. Kuhutiak, M. (1993). Halychyna: storinky istorii: Narys suspil'no-politychnoho rukhu (XIX st. – 1939 r.) [Halychyna: pages of history: an outline of the socio-political movement (19th century – 1939)]. Ivano-Frankivs'k, 200 s. (In Ukrainian).
9. Makarchuk, V. (2024). Timeo danaos et dona ferentes, abo yak Kreml' druzhiv z nezalezhoiui Lytvoiui proty Druhoi Rechi Pospolytoi (1918–1940): istorychna ta istoryko-pravova rozvidka [Timeo danaos et dona ferentes, or how the Kremlin befriended independent Lithuania against the Second Polish Republic (1918–1940)]. Visnyk Natsional'noho universytetu «L'vivs'ka politekhnika». Seriia: “Yurydychni nauky”. T. 11, № 1, 173–182. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.23939/law2024.41.173> (In Ukrainian).

10. Mazypchuk, M. (2016). Ukrains'kyi livoradykal'nyi rukh na Halychyni ta Volyni (1920-ti roky) [Ukrainian left-radical movement in Halychyna and Volynhia in the 1920s]. Rezhym dostupu: <https://commons.com.ua/ru/ukrayinskij-livoradikalnij-ruh-na-galichini-ta-volini-1920-ti-roki/> (In Ukrainian).
11. Mel'nyk, I. (2016). Perevorot Pilsuds'koho ta l'vivs'kykh politekhniv [Pilsudski's Coup and the Lviv Polytechnic personnel]. ZBRUC. Rezhym dostupu: <https://zbruc.eu/node/51374> (In Ukrainian).
12. Naumenko, K. (2005). Zakhidnoukrains'ka narodno-revoliutsiina orhanizatsiia [Western Ukrainian National Revolutionary Organization]. Entsyklopediia istorii Ukrainy: T. 3: E–I. Instytut istorii Ukrainy. Kyiv: V-vo «Naukova dumka», 672 s.: il. Rezhym dostupu: <http://www.history.org.ua/?termin=ZUNRO> (In Ukrainian).
13. Perha, Yu. (2014). Evoliutsiia diial'nosti komunistychnoi partii Zakhidnoi Ukrainy na Kholmshchyni ta Pidliashshi v 1923–1926 rr. [Evolution of the activities of the Communist Party of Western Ukraine in Chełm and Podlasie regions in 1923–1926]. Visnyk Kyivs'koho natsional'noho universytetu imeni Tarasa Shevchenka: Istorii. № 5. S. 42–44. (In Ukrainian).
14. Pyrih, M. (2016). Ukrains'kyi livoradykal'nyi rukh u Pol'shchi (1919–1929 rr.) [Ukrainian Left-Radical Movement in Poland (1919–1929)]. Dysertatsiia na zdobuttia naukovooho stupenia kandydata istorychnykh nauk zi spetsialnosti 07.00.01 – istoriia Ukrainy, L'vivs'kyi natsional'nyi universytet imeni Ivana Franka. Lviv, 245 s. (In Ukrainian).
15. Shchekhlov, A. (2024a). Radians'ki rozviduval'no-dyversiini operatsii na zakhidnoukrains'kykh zemliakh u skladi Druhoi Rechi Pospolytoi pershoi polovyny 20-kh rokiv XX st.: vitchyzniani istoriohrafichni vymir [Soviet intelligence and sabotage operations in the western ukrainian lands within the Second Polish Republic in the first half of the 1920s: a domestic historiographical dimension]. Aktual'ni pytannia humanitarnykh nauk, 81, T. 2, 41–48. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.24919/2308-4863/81-2-5> (In Ukrainian).
16. Shchekhlov, A. (2024b). Rozviduval'na ta dyversiina diial'nist' SRSR proty Pol'shchi na ukrains'kii dilians'i kordonu v 20–30-kh rokakh XX st.: suchasna vitchyzniana istoriohrafiiia [Intelligence and sabotage activities of the USSR against Poland on the ukrainian border section in the 1920s–1930s: contemporary domestic historiography]. Aktual'ni pytannia u suchasni nautsi. 6 (24), 1244–1256. DOI: [https://doi.org/10.52058/2786-6300-2024-6\(24\)-1244-1256](https://doi.org/10.52058/2786-6300-2024-6(24)-1244-1256) (In Ukrainian).
17. Soliar, I. (2006–2007). “Sel'rob” vid stvorennia do rozkolu (1926–1927 rr.) [“Selrob” from formation to disunity (1926–1927)]. Halychyna, 12–13, 126–132. (In Ukrainian).
18. Stryi, Stryis'kyi raion, L'vivs'ka oblast'. Istorii mist i sil Ukrains'koi RSR [Stryi, Stryi District, Lviv Region, Histories of cities and villages of the Ukrainian SSR] (1968). Rezhym dostupu: http://ukrssr.com.ua/lvivska/striyskiy/striy-striyskiy-rayon-lvivska-oblast#google_vignette (In Ukrainian).
19. Vasiuta, I. (2001). Natsionalno-vyzvolnyi rukh u Zakhidnii Ukraini (1918–1939 rr.) (Ch. 2) [The National Liberation Movement in Western Ukraine (1918–1939)]. Ukrainskyi istorychnyi zhurnal, 6, 35–64. (In Ukrainian).
20. Vasiuta, I. (2010). Halytsko-Volynske selo mizh svitovymy viinamy: monohrafiiia [The galician-volynian village between the World wars: monograph]. Lviv: Kameniar, 507 s. (In Ukrainian).
21. Yarosh, B. (2005). Ukrains'ki partii ta politychnyi rukh u Druhii Rechi Pospolytii v mizhvoyennyi period (1931–1939 rr.) [Ukrainian parties and political movement in the Second Polish Republic in the interwar period (1931–1939)]. Ukraina i Pol'shcha: dialoh kultur (Movno-literaturni ta suspil'no-politychni vidnosyny), 312–320. (In Ukrainian).
22. Zakhozhai, Z. (2006). Pro radianofil'ski nastroi u Skhidnii Halychyni v 20–30-ti roky XX storichchia [About pro-soviet sentiments in Eastern Galicia in the 1920s–1930s]. Naukovi zapysky Instytutu politychnykh i etnonatsional'nykh doslidzhen', 32, 233–243. (In Ukrainian).
23. Zakhozhai, Z. (2012). Politychne zhyttia Skhidnoi Halychyny v mizhvoyennyi period XX stolittia [Political life of Eastern Galicia in the interwar period of the 20th century]. Politolohichni visnyk, 63, 194–202. (In Ukrainian).
24. Zakhozhai, Z. (2017). Mizh pol's'kym “molotom” i radians'kym “kovadlom” (Skhidna Halychyna v 20–30 rr. XX st.) [Between the polish “Hammer” and the Soviet “Anvil” (Eastern Galicia in the

- 1920s–1930s)]. Naukovi zapysky Ternopils'koho natsional'noho pedahohichnoho universytetu imeni Volodymyra Hnatiuka. Seria: Istoriia, 1, 29–35. (In Ukrainian).
25. Zuliak, I., Makar, Yu. (2023). Skhidna Halychyna i Zakhidna Volyn': osoblyvosti kulturno-osvitn'oho i sotsial'no-ekonomichnoho stanovyscha u mizhvoyennii Pol'shchi [Eastern Galicia and Western Volhynia: features of the cultural-educational and socio-economic situation in interwar Poland]. *Litopys Volyni*, 28, 95–102. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.32782/2305-9389/2023.28.12> (In Ukrainian).
 26. Derzhavnyi arkhiv L'vivs'koi oblasti (dali – DALO) [State Archive of Lviv Oblast]. F. 271. Dyrektsiia politsii u L'vovi L'vivs'koho voievodstva [Police Directorate in Lviv of the Lviv Voivodeship]. Op. 1. Spr. 32. Nahliadova sprava za diial'nistiu Komunistychnoi partii Zakhidnoi Ukrainy (KPZU) z dodavanniam lystivok, hazety (kopii) “Komunistychnyi shtandar” [Supervisory case on the activities of the Communist Party of Western Ukraine (CPWU) with the addition of leaflets, newspapers (copies) “Kommunistychniy Shtandar”], 05.01.1926 – 16.08.1927 r., 156 ark. (In Ukrainian).
 27. Tsentralnyi derzhavnyi arkhiv hromadskykh ob"iednan' Ukrainy (dali – TsDAHO Ukrainy) [Central State Archive of Public Organizations of Ukraine]. F. 6. Komunistychna partiia Zakhidnoi Ukrainy [Communist Party of Western Ukraine]. Op. 1. Spr. 261. Protokol zasedannia komisii Politybiuro TsK KPZU, rezoliutsiia, dokladni zapysky i pysma, pryslani v TsK KPZU po pytanniam natsional'noi polityky i polozhennia v Pol'shchi. 17/XI – 3/XII 1926 r. [Protocol of the Meeting of the Politburo Commission of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Western Ukraine (CPWU), Resolution, Reports, and Letters Sent to the CPWU Central Committee on Issues of National Policy and the Situation in Poland. November 17 – December 3, 1926], 37 ark. (In Russian).
 28. TsDAHO Ukrainy. F. 6. Komunistychna partiia Zakhidnoi Ukrainy [Communist Party of Western Ukraine]. Op. 1. Spr. 371. Vypysky z protokoliv zasedannia TsK KPZU i perepyska po orhanizatsiynym pytanniam stanu partiyno-politychnoi roboty, 1927 r. [Extracts from the Protocols of the Central Committee Meetings of the Communist Party of Western Ukraine (CPWU) and Correspondence on Organizational Issues Regarding the State of Party-Political Work, 1927], 246 ark. (In Russian).
 29. TsDAHO Ukrainy. F. 233. Predstavnytstvo Komunistychnoi partii Zakhidnoi Ukrainy v pol'skii sekti vykonavchoho komitetu Komunistychnoho internatsionalu [Representation of the Communist Party of Western Ukraine in the Polish section of the Executive Committee of the Communist International]. Op. 1. Spr. 66. Zhurnal “Nasha pravda” – orhan TsK Kompartii Zakhidnoi Ukrainy. 1926–1934 rr. [Journal “Nasha Pravda” – organ of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Western Ukraine], 188 ark. (In Ukrainian).
 30. TsDAHO Ukrainy. F. 233 Predstavnytstvo Komunistychnoi partii Zakhidnoi Ukrainy v pol'skii sekti vykonavchoho komitetu Komunistychnoho internatsionalu [Representation of the Communist Party of Western Ukraine in the Polish Section of the Executive Committee of the Communist International]. Op. 1. Spr. 88. Lystivka Zakhidno-Ukrains'koi natsional'no-revoliutsiinoi orhanizatsii [Leaflet of the Western Ukrainian National Revolutionary Organization]. 1927 r., 1 ark. (In Ukrainian).
 31. Tsentralnyi derzhavnyi istorychnyi arkhiv Ukrainy u m. Lvovi (dali – TsDIA u Lvovi) [Central State Historical Archives of Ukraine in Lviv]. F. 205. Prokuratura apeliatsiinoho sudu, m. Lviv [Prosecutor's Office of the Court of Appeal, Lviv]. Op. 1. Spr. 567. Obizhnyk i zverennya komunistychnoi partii Zakhidnoi Ukrainy pro sviatkuvannia II-kh rokovyn Zhovtnevoi revoliutsii v Pol'shchi (kopiia), 1927 r. [Circular and appeal of the Communist Party of Western Ukraine on the celebration of the 2nd anniversary of the October Revolution in Poland. (Copy)], 6 ark. (In Ukrainian).
 32. TsDIA u Lvovi. F. 351. Ukrains'ke selians'ko-robotniche sotsialistychne ob"iednannia “Sel'–Rob”, m. L'viv [Ukrainian Peasant-Worker Socialist Association “Sel–Rob”, Lviv]. Op. 1. Spr. 7. Statystychni dani pro kil'kist' straiyv, mistse i yikh tryvalist' u L'vivs'komu voievodstvi, 1927 r. [Statistical data on the number of strikes, their locations, and duration in the Lviv Voivodeship], 3 ark. (In Ukrainian).
 33. TsDIA u m. Lvovi. F. 351. Ukrains'ke selians'ko-robotniche sotsialistychne ob"iednannia “Sel'–Rob”, m. Lviv [Ukrainian Peasant-Worker Socialist Association “Sel–Rob”, Lviv]. Op. 1. Spr. 99. Vyrizky z statei i zamitok z ukrains'kykh, bilorus'kykh i pol'skykh hazet pro sotsial'no-ekonomichne stanovyshe Halychyny, 1926–1928 [Clippings from articles and notes from Ukrainian, Belarusian, and Polish newspapers about the socio-economic situation of Galicia], 23 ark. (In Ukrainian).