

CHAPTER «HISTORICAL SCIENCES»

THE STRUGGLE OF THE OUN AND UPA FOR INDEPENDENCE IN 1944–1947 IN ZHOVKVA DISTRICT

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Abstract. It is important to analyze the activities of fighters for the Ukrainian national idea, who found themselves in extreme conditions. After all, they had to fight against different occupation regimes at the same time. The political changes that took place during this time affected the tactics and methods of the fighters for the Ukrainian national idea. The analysis of OUN and UPA activities during the World War II and in the postwar period is important. The relevance of the study of organizational and military-political activities in the Zhovkva district is explained by the peculiarities of this region. Among them are the following: this territory during the World War II was under the influence of various military and political formations in (UPA, OUN, AK – the regional army, guerrillas from the Soviet Union); some ideological sprouts for the future struggle were born on the territory of the Zhovkva district; this region was a kind of spiritual and religious center of Eastern Galicia. There were Zhovkva and Krekhiv monasteries of the Greek Catholic Church; having endured a lot of suffering of the Polish, Soviet and German occupation regimes, the population did not want to contribute to the restoration of Soviet power in the region; residents of Zhovkva region were forced to go underground. They wanted to avoid direct conflicts with the new government; the population was looking for alternative ways to gather contingent, serve in the army, ideological influence.

The study of OUN activities in the Zhovkva district will help fill the gaps in understanding the processes and phenomena of World War II and the postwar years, to reach a new level of preparation of generalized works

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on the political history of Ukraine in this period. In order to properly assess the actions of the OUN members, it is necessary to follow their reaction to the change of political regimes and to find out whether these fighters were consistent in achieving their task – in defending national interests. Now that Ukraine is again under threat of occupation, it is important to pay attention to the experience of predecessors in the struggle for independence, point out the positive aspects of the OUN and take into account the mistakes made by Ukrainian nationalists.

1. Introduction

At the end of spring 1944 with the appearance of Soviet troops in Galicia, Ukrainians were again threatened by the occupier, who, under the guise of internationalism, introduced Russification everywhere, fought against the church, including the Greek Catholic Church, and resisted national and patriotic sentiments in the region. The authors of the historical essay «Zhovkivshchyna» note: in the spring, Soviet bombers appeared, carrying a deadly cargo to Lviv. The Second World War was coming to the end, but the anxiety did not disappear: the Red-Bolshevik was approaching to replace brown totalitarianism [29, p. 235].

Zhovkva, Kulykiv, Velykomostiv and Mageriv districts were created on the territory of the former Zhovkva district. In Zhovkva district, 17 village councils were formed, the centers of which were the largest villages: Turinka, Dobosyn, Krekhiv, Vyazova, Mokrotyn, Matsoshin, Hlynsko, Nova Skvaryava and others. The population of the district was 35,000, and the city of Zhovkva – only 1,700 (on the eve of World War II in the city lived more than 8,000 people).

From the first days of the restoration of Soviet power, the population came under severe pressure, and new trials awaited the people who had been under German occupation in previous years. The mobilization of all those capable of carrying weapons into the Red Army began. But under the influence of the UPA and the OUN underground, most conscripts did not show up at the military registration and enlistment office. On November 2, 1944, the district military commissar complained that only 175 people had been assembled. In February 1945, he reported at a meeting of the bureau of the district committee of the party that the mobilization plan had been fulfilled by only 15%. Attempts to forcibly mobilize young men went into

the woods, joined UPA units, or went underground and became members of the OUN underground network. In order to register conscripts and identify members of the Resistance movement in January-February 1945.

2. Analysis of research and publications

It should be noted that the post-war period was of interest to many historians for the activities of the OUN and UPA. The works of V. Sergiychuk [35], A. Kentiy [31], V. Moroz, L. Shankovsky [23] and others. Thus, it is pointing out the new methods of struggle of Ukrainian nationalist forces in the Zhovkva district, and changes in their structuring.

We could find the information from archival documents that after the liberation of Western Ukraine from the Nazis from February 1944 to December 1945, the insurgents carried out against the Soviet units almost 6 thousand operations, 14.5 thousand acts of sabotage and terrorism. The NKVD troops of the Lviv and Prykarpattia military districts conducted 27,000 combat operations against the OUN and UPA. This is confirmed by archival data, according to which 650 UPA groups were found in the OUN Ravsky district (Zhovkva, Rava-Ruska and Lyubachiv districts), and more than 18,000 OUN and UPA members were killed during operations organized by the NKVD and the MGB. More than a thousand people were taken to prison [10, p. 118].

In P. Mirchuk's work «Ukrainian Insurgent Army 1942–1952» Zhovkva district is repeatedly mentioned. The author tries to demonstrate the looting of the Ukrainian population by the Soviet authorities, he is using statistics concerning the Lviv region in general and the territories around Zhovkva in particular and shows that the contingents of bread and meat at that time were excessively high [32, p. 96]. This was certainly one of the reasons for the opposition to the occupying Soviet authorities. P. Mirchuk emphasizes other reasons for resistance. He analyzes the management of the Bolsheviks on Ukrainian soil, who also established «forest norms» (the village was obliged to cut down 1000-1200 cubic meters of wood per month), cash taxes, did not care about compliance with sanitary norms, which led to mass typhus and etc. The author traces the activities of the Soviet government in various directions: demonstrates insidiousness in relation to the peasants, workers, intellectuals, points to methods of influencing various spheres of society: culture, language, church, and others. and concludes that the

Bolsheviks used all possible means to exterminate the Ukrainian people and Ukrainian culture, their methods of terror were incessant searches, arrests, deportations, robberies, murders, destruction of «kulak farms», public torture. In this situation, the only defender of the Ukrainian people was the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) [32, p. 105]. Considering the tactics of the UPA's struggle against the Soviet government, P. Mirchuk states that the UPA widely practiced raids. The author gives many examples of such raids [32, p. 97]. P. Mirchuk's research shows that in Zhovkva and Rava-Ruska districts, as well as in any other districts of Western Ukraine, there was oppression by the Soviet authorities, so in these areas, as in all of Ukraine, dissatisfaction with the occupation regime grew, which prompted to fight.

The struggle against the Soviet authorities is also mentioned in the essay «Zhovkivshchyna» [29, p. 232]. The essay «Zhovkivshchyna» shows us that the struggle against the occupation regime took place in every county, in every smallest settlement. The power and scale of the Ukrainian insurgent movement is proved by the documents processed by historians I. Patryliak and O. Lysenko, published in the collection «Materials and documents of the OUN (b) Security Service in the 1940s.» [20; 21]. The authors tried to use documents to reproduce the evolution of the fundamental tasks set by activists during the 1940s, depending on the changing general situation of the entire Ukrainian national liberation movement. The collection contains a number of esbist instructions, orders, reports, circulars, orders and leaflets of the Second World War.

V. Serhiychuk studied the development of the Ukrainian national liberation movement for the restoration and establishment of his own state with the beginning of the Second World War on the territory of Zakerzonnia. The scientist showed on concrete facts how the revival and resistance to the occupation regimes took place. This topic was also studied by M. Romanyuk, P. Gai-Nyzhnyk, O. Pagirya, J. Primachenko, D. Vedenev, G. Bystrukhin, and others.

3. Methods of struggle of Ukrainian nationalist forces in the Zhovkva district

The first clashes with the Bolsheviks in the Zhovkva district took place in May 1944. Under the heading «Chronicle» we read about the fighting between the divisions of Ukrainian nationalists and guerrilla units of the

Soviet resistance movement operating in Lviv region: To destroy that group, a unit of 25 men was sent under the command of Yanka. A Bolshevik gang of 11 people, including a Pole, was dropped off by our unit at the Nyvka filwark south of the village of Lisova, Zhovkva district. After a short fierce battle, the Bolshevik gang was defeated: 5 Bolsheviks were killed, 2 were caught alive, and four (including one wounded) managed to escape into the woods. From soviet losses: 3 killed, 2 wounded. Obtained: 4 PPSH, 1 rapid-fire rifle («Dehtiarova») and 4 disks, 1 rifle, ammunition, about 10 kg of explosives and grenades [25]. This newspaper report indicates that the Ukrainian nationalists of the Zhovkva district reacted promptly to the appearance of Soviet guerrilla units. We can also understand that Ukrainian nationalists attacked Soviet units as soon as they learned that they had appeared in or near a settlement. That is, Ukrainian nationalists conducted offensive operations.

Here is another message: On June 6, 1944, a Bolshevik gang with the strength of 1 tent moved from east to west and came across the «Siromantsi» and «Prolom» units in the forests of Zhovkva district. A battle ensued, which ended in the defeat of the Red Army. The Red Army soldiers are reluctant to allow themselves to be involved in the fighting. The battle lasted from 2.30 pm until late at night. Enemy losses: more than 15 corpses, about 30 wounded, including Mr. Chizhov, 4 prisoners. Own losses: 1 killed, 1 lightly wounded. Obtained: 2 PPSH (Finns), 4 rifles, mugs with ammunition, grenades. Bolshevik guerrillas are in dire need. Corrodes scabies and lice. The appearance is just ugly [27]. The newspaper «Streletski Visti» also tries to assess the fighting spirit of the opponents. In the descriptions of hostilities on the territory of the Zhovkva district in the «Stiletski Visti» («Rifleman's News») the characteristics of the general condition of the Bolshevik partisans are given.

It is obvious that the Soviet partisans did not receive support not only from the locals, but were also abandoned by their command. This can be confirmed, for example, by the following information: «On June 16, 1944, the VO Bug unit raided the hospital of a Bolshevik gang with 15 wounded partisans inside. One of them said that their commanders claimed that they had agreed with the UPA on the remains of the hospital» [26]. Thus, the Soviet partisans left without command were often taken prisoner by the soldiers of the Ukainian insurgent army (UPA).

In June 1944, isolated battles with regular units of the Soviet army continued. Under the heading «Chronicle» we read about the landing of Soviet troops: «On June 16, 1944, the UPA unit fought a short battle with Soviet paratroopers who tried to plunder the village of Storonne (possibly referring to the village of Stronyatyn – SK). One paratrooper was caught and 1 cross was obtained. On his own side, 1 was wounded» [2].

In the summer of 1944, Soviet troops made a real invasion of Zhovkva district. The essay «Zhovkivshchyna» states this: in mid-July 1944, the armies of the right wing of the First Ukrainian Front, bypassing Lviv, launched an offensive on Rava-Ruska direction. Units of General Pukhov's 13th Army, together with tankers and cavalry of General Baranov's cavalry mechanized group, swept through the Zhovkva region. On July 19-20, they occupied Velyki Mosty, Rava-Ruska, and on July 23-24, Dobrosyn, Hlynsko, and Zhovkva. 205 Soviet soldiers and commanders died in the battle for the city [29, p. 239]. The restoration of Soviet power began in the OUN's Rava district. Pro-Ukrainian forces considered it their duty to obstruct the process.

From the pages of the «Striletski visti» we could find the information that by the end of 1944 the opposition of the Soviet military group had intensified considerably.

In August 1944, an action of Chekist-military operations against the activities of the OUN and UPA in the Lviv region began. On August 22, together with the border troops of the Border Troops Department of the Ukrainian District, rear guard of the 1st Ukrainian Front with the participation of two motorcycle and one cavalry regiment specially assigned by the 1st Ukrainian Front, the operation began in Sokolsky, Mostovelsky, Megerivsky, Horokovsky Yarodotsky and Zhovkva districts of the region [28, p. 82].

It is not known for sure how many locals joined UNS units, units and units of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army to fight against the Soviet occupation authorities. However, in his reports, one of the regional departments of the NKVD of the Lviv region reported that in October 1944 there were two huts with about 800 insurgents in the Zhovkva district. Later, in March 1945, it was noted that UPA units were operating in the area, usually at night «in groups of 100 to 200 people, armed with machine guns, submachine guns, and rifles with sufficient ammunition».

The fact that battles with Soviet regular troops took place on the territory of the Zhovkva district is evidenced by the following information of the press body: «The enemy surrounded our units on all sides and fired heavy grenade launchers and rapid-fire rifles. Under cover of night, our units unnoticed. The enemy suffered casualties» [24].

The «Streletski Visti» repeatedly mentions clashes with fighter battalions, including many Komsomol, party activists, and local residents who helped NKVD troops fight against the OUN and UPA: with the so-called «Fighter» battalions. Dozens of «strybky»¹ were disarmed, more than 20 people were killed and wounded, and many were punished and warned about the future. Even in the town of Kulikov, which benefited from more criminal elements, many of «strybky» refused to do their job, generally doing it reluctantly» [22].

Under the heading «From their own battles» we could also read about other conflicts with those who helped the Soviet occupation authorities to fight against Ukrainian nationalists:

On May 9, several militants and one «srybok» were killed by Ukrainian Insurgent Army at the village of Rudantsi. It was happened because they tried to rob the loan. One of the Enkavedists drove away.

May 16 in the village of Hlynsko SKV (Self-Defense Department (Departments of Ukrainian Self-Defense, formed to protect Ukrainian villages, as well as to create a rear for the UPA)) disarmed a group of «strybky» and Enkavedist. Seven rifles, one machine gun and a submachine gun were obtained.

On May 17, the militant raided the «strybky» station in the village of Zabiria (Ravska district), where a terrorist group was dispersed, and two enemy servants were killed. Weapons were obtained.

On May 21, four militants were ambushed near the village of Chestyna (near Kulykiv), where the head of the investigative department of the district NKVD Filipov was killed. He was a threat to the whole district and was especially distinguished in terrorizing the Ukrainian population. In addition, two more Enkavedists and one «srybok» were killed.

By the way, numerous clashes between NKVD and VO «Bug» are evidenced not only by the materials of the «Streletski Visti» magazine, but

¹ «strybky» –party activists, and local residents who helped NKVD troops

also by NKVD reports on the results of separate KGB-military operations to eliminate OUN and UPA formations in the western regions of Ukraine.

The press named «Striletski Visti» provides, for example, a detailed description of the political educator Kruk about the course of the military operation led by Mikhail Gren («Griznyi», «Volotsyuga»): «On February 20, 1945, our unit was housed in the village. Z. [Possibly, village Zabiria or village Zavadiiv – SK] After breakfast we went to the forest to continue training. Intelligence reported that in the village. K. [Possibly, village Krekhiv – SK] there are still Enkavedists, who have been registering the population for the second day. When it was reported that the Bolsheviks were preparing to leave, the unit prepared for an ambush. Mr. Griznyi and other officers developed an ambush plan. At 2 p.m., we went to the ambush site. We took up positions above the road, and at the same time the Enkavedists, who were riding in carts, found themselves in front of our positions. We opened a thick fire. Those who were not killed or wounded from the enemy group escaped. In 15 minutes we finished catching and destroying enemies. The enemy lost 15 killed and several wounded. Weapons, uniforms and important documents were obtained. At this ambush, friends showed their courage and hatred for their enemies: political educator Surmach, cornet Ivanchuk and subdivision commander Kruk. They captured and destroyed many enemies from a few meters away» [26]. The same operation described by the «Striletski visti» is covered in the NKVD report: Krekhiv, Zhovkva district, Lviv region, an operative of the NKVD and a unit of the NKVD internal troops conducted a KGB military operation to eliminate the UPA gang led by Griznyi. During the operation to eliminate the gang of «Griznyi», the latter, divided into two groups, began to retreat in different directions. One of the groups was overtaken and defeated by organized persecution. In the battle, 30 soldiers of UPA were killed, 2 were wounded, and 15 were captured alive. Trophies that were taken: 4 machine guns, 30 rifles, 4 revolvers and pistols, 2,000 rounds of ammunition. Our losses: 1 killed and 2 wounded» [19, p. 200].

The studied materials make it possible to understand that the Ukrainian-Soviet conflict was accompanied by significant losses of people on both sides. On the basis of publications we can draw a conclusion about the differences in the conduct of hostilities of opponents. If the soldiers of VO «Bug» organized ambushes near the probable movement of enemy

troops, the NKVD tried to surround the troops of the Ukrainian insurgent army (UPA), using a numerical advantage. Retreating, the fighters of VO «Bug» maneuvered in such a way as to avoid the encirclement. They made a breakthrough, and in that way Ukrainian nationalists could avoid the encirclement.

KGB and NKVD conducted well-prepared operations, but also closely monitored the actions and moods of the local population, sent their agents to settlements, and conducted raids and ambushes in order to eliminate the influence of the OUN and UPA. This was reported by the newspaper «Striletski visti». Such information can be gleaned from official documents, such as: «On February 6, 1945,» wrote the deputy head of the Zhovkva regional department of the NKVD, Lieutenant Dupak, an ambush was held under my leadership in the village of Mokrotyn of Zhovkva district. As a result of the ambush, two members of the UPA were killed. After this action a handgun, five rifles, five horses and food carts were confiscated» [15].

In a special message to the head of the UNKVD of the Lviv region, S. Dupak informed that he arrests one of the leaderships of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army and the underground of OUN on February 27, 1945 in the village of Loshchivska Stefania Vasylivna (she was born in 1926, a native of the village of Mokrotyn, unmarried, 6th grade education, member of the OUN since 1944, subdistrict network of the OUN underground). At the same time, Pelekh Kateryna, (sobriquet «Kalyna») a native and resident of the village of Mokrotyn, a member of the OUN since 1941, the chair of the women's network of the Mokrotyn cushch [15, p. 73].

Another report stated: «On May 29, 1945, under the leadership of Junior Lieutenant Vakulenko, during a Chekist operation on hamlet Terniv of the Mokrotyn village council detained Puzhak Hryhoriy (he was born in 1923, (sobriquet «Yasen») a native and resident of Terniv, who is the gendarme of the field gendarmerie of the Hundred «Griznyi»). During the delay, a PPSH submachine gun, 150 rounds of ammunition and three grenades were confiscated from him. Lypka Paraskoviya (she was born in 1925) Lypka Olena Hryhorivna (she was born in 1927) residents of the village of Maidan, Dukhan Hryhoriy Vasyliovych (he was born in 1920, (sobriquet «Dudenko»), resident of the village of Krekhiv, who was an ordinary soldier of the «Griznyi» unit [14, p. 62].

The NKVD, tracking down hundreds of soldiers which were lead by Griznyi, Zalizniak, and Peremoha, on March 22, 1945, in the Kulykiv district of the Lviv region (the territory of the OUN Zhovkva District), ordered a military operation. As a result of hostilities, VO «Bug» had significant losses [19, p. 258].

Documents confirm what was said in the «Striletski visti»: VO «Bug» during the armed operations often failed and had significant losses in the fight against the enemy. However, the spirit of indomitability and the desire for independence added strength to Ukrainian fighters. Thus, only one unit «Galaida I» led by Commander Vasyl Vasylyashko (sobriquet «Peremoha», «Virnyi») in the battle near the village. On March 22, 1945, the Zhovkva district opposed numerous Soviet troops. The detachment of 167 soldiers for two hours resisted the offensive of two regiments of the Red Army, reinforced by NKVD units. Successfully repelling enemy attacks, UPA units broke through the encirclement [16, p. 47–48].

In the newspaper we can also find some reports that confirm information about the engage of VO «Bug» in armed clashes with the troops of various occupiers. Here is an example: By order of the VO «Bug» in May 1945, units of Galaida's went on a raid beyond the Curzon line. There, the unit commanded by «Peremoha» fought several battles with Polish government troops. On his return on September 2, 1945, Galaida's Division 1 was pursued by Soviet border guards in the woods south of Mageriv. Thousands of enemy units were reinforced by aircraft and artillery. The retreat with the battle lasted almost in the afternoon. Only the sanity of the centurion, who managed to properly organize the tactics of battle, allowed the rebels to get out of the environment. The newspaper writes about this as follows: «The exhausted army betrayed the desire to lie down and create new Kruty. But commander «Peremoha» leads his department to life, not death. He raises his punitive army with great effort to a decisive blow, going in the first ranks to the break. With a loud shout of «Glory», like a storm, the army followed its commander. Enemy outposts were torn down or pushed apart, the siege ring was broken, and the detachment went out of the field of enemy action, taking with it several dozen of its wounded soldiers. Throughout the battle, the unit met the enemy in a close combat at a distance of three to five steps» [22]. The unit had a big loses, but retained their fighting capacity. Part of the scattered riflemen soon joined their unit.

We find a description of the fighting near the Polish border in the same area in the NKVD reports of September 6, 1945: «Measures were taken to search for the gang... Surrounding the gang ... the border guards fought, killing 58 bandits ... 8 prisoners, 4 of them were wounded» [19, p. 288].

However, the fighting near the border did not end there. Two weeks later, on September 18 and 19, 1945, Galaida II's unit engaged in a night battle with an enemy outpost, which was rushed to the aid of border outposts from other villages. The subdivision went on the offensive and in close combat threw the enemy out of the trenches, defeated the enemy outpost and, maneuvering, retreated into the woods. It is known that during this battle the Soviet commander of a frontier post and several Soviet fighters were lost. At the same time, the losses of Galaida II's subdivision are as follows: 1 killed, 1 wounded and 1 missing. In combat, the rebels captured one sniper rifle and several conventional rifles.

After analyzing the materials of the underground publication «Striletski visti», which were about armed actions in the Zhovkva district, we can draw the following conclusions:

During 1944–1945, VO «Bug» resisted German, Soviet, and Polish combat units. When circumstances called for a struggle against the German occupiers, the VO «Bug» took it cruelly, on a large scale, and uncompromisingly, though often unplanned. The publications of the «Striletski visti» suggest that the VO «Bug» was fulfilling its mission of liberating the territory of the OUN Zhovkva District from German enslavement.

VO «Bug» held actions against Poles on the territory of Zhovkva district. Armed clashes with them arose suddenly: Ukrainian nationalists also attacked the «nests of Polish units» and killed some «Polish fighters.» There were no clear front lines in the struggle against the Poles. By the way, since September 1944, there have been almost no reports of clashes with Poles in «Striletski Visti». Apparently, at this time the interethnic confrontation has subsided a bit. We believe that this is due to the fact that on September 1, 1944, the UPA members received an order from the leadership to stop fighting the Poles [35, p. 326]. From that time on, we learn could find on the pages of «Striletski Visti» only about isolated clashes between Ukrainian nationalists and united Bolshevik-Polish partisans.

From May 1944, the press body of headquarters VO «Bug» began to actively report on the armed clashes of VO «Bug» with the Bolsheviks,

mainly with the Soviet guerrillas, who intensified with the approach of regular units of the Soviet army. The soldiers of the Military District had to fight with the troops of the KGB and the NKVD. Thus, VO «Bug» was a powerful structure of the liberation movement of the Ukrainian people in the Zhovkva district. The publications of the newspaper «Streletski Visti» testify that in the struggle against the armed occupation groups, the VO «Bug» was guided primarily by the desire to gain independence for its homeland, and this led to uncompromising, desperate battles.

In the exhausting struggle of the VO «Bug», like its opponents, it suffered significant losses. Nevertheless, she tried not to reduce her activity, sometimes carrying out several actions against the occupation regimes during the day. Our observations proved that in the territory of the Zhovkva district the VO «Bug» offered considerable resistance to all occupation regimes.

We take into account the fact that VO «Bug» was administratively subordinated to the OUN. Commander of the VO «Bug» with a decisive vote had to be guided in all the work of the OUN, in particular in the functioning of its administrative apparatus, which was at the same time the same apparatus of the Military District [34, p. 137]. Since the activities of the Zhovkva district and the VO «Bug» were closely intertwined, the facts concerning the activities of the VO «Bug» in the Zhovkva district were involved in the study.

At the final stage of World War II it was already clear that the Soviet government will seek to annex Western Ukraine to the USSR and destroy the Ukrainian national liberation movement. However, the OUN saw the future of Western Ukraine differently. Ukrainian nationalists sought to prevent the communist superpower from gaining a foothold in Ukraine and launched a large-scale struggle against the Bolshevik government. Since the OUN and the UPA continued their activities even after the end of the Second World War, it is important to determine the place of these structures in the national liberation process. Taking in to account that after the end of the Second World War, the Ukrainian national liberation movement underwent structural changes and the UPA VO «Bug» actually existed until 1947, we will limit the time frame of our study to this year. However, it should be noted that the liberation movement in the study area of the now Zhovkva superdistrict of the Sokal-Rava district of the OUN was active even after the

demobilization of the VO «Bug» units in the summer of 1946. Rava-Ruska entered the Zhovkva superdistrict, and Lyubachiv region found itself on the territory of Poland. Commanders and riflemen went to work in the OUN underground network. The UPA chronicle shows us that the activities of the OUN and VO «Bug» underwent significant structural changes after the Second World War, but the armed underground in the region did not stop [18, p. 30–31]. Formally, the activities of the UPA in the Lviv region of the OUN did not cease to exist.

To destroy the resistance of Ukrainian nationalists and quell the unrestrained independence movement, the NKVD devised propaganda combinations: organized ambushes in places where members of the OUN and UPA near their homes and near the homes of their relatives; near the corpses of dead Ukrainian nationalists who remained at the scene of hostilities; near the shops after the delivery of goods; near the houses where Soviet party workers and servicemen stayed for the night; in places of firewood harvesting in the forest, etc. [11]. In many cases, these ambushes yielded positive results.

The following measures were also practiced: transports with food and uniforms were provided with enhanced security under the guise of drivers. The attackers on the transport (who were Ukrainian nationalists) were killed or detained [36].

Bright examples of the insidious struggle of the NKVD-NKDB bodies with OUN members are given in V. Serhiychuk's study. Here is one of them. The NKVD operative group, under the guise of members of the OUN Security Service, detained Danilkiv and announced charges of links with the NKVD. Danylkiv said that he was indeed a member of the OUN under the pseudonym «Boytur» and that he had previously kept a secret apartment where the OUN district headquarters was located. OUN. Danylkiv named Stanichnyk and other OUN members who could confirm his devotion to the organization. A task force under the guise of the Security Service arrested these OUN members and established that an OUN asset would soon be convened in the village of Dubrov. According to the operation carried out according to these data, 6 members of the OUN were killed, including the supra-district officer of the Security Service and his deputy [37, p. 32].

Unfortunately, the Soviet punitive authorities managed to carry out insidious operations involving the recruitment of members of local OUN units. Here is an example:

For a long time, there was a large group of Ukrainian nationalists in the Lviv region, which was led by the member of UPA Gren, who had previously been part of the SS division. After investigating the composition of the group, the Zhovkva Regional Department of the UNKVD of the Lviv Region planned to recruit one of the UPA members, to whom a letter was sent with a proposal to appear secretly with the conscript in the Regional Department. He was guaranteed security. This member of UPA appeared and was recruited under the sobriquet «Kucheriavyi». He was ordered to kill Gren and promised to release his brother, who had been arrested by the NKVD. «Kucheriavyi» performed the task, in connection with which his brother was fired, «Kucheriavyi» was given a monetary reward. Continuing to cooperate with the NKVD, «Kucheryavyi» established a shelter in which the printing house of the Lviv regional branch of the OUN and the headquarters of the 2nd military district of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army were located. During the operation, the editor of «Maria» and other members of the OUN were killed. 5,000 leaflets and other OUN literature, an easel machine gun, and duplicating equipment were seized in the vault [8, p. 48].

Agencies and special militias organized by the NKVD-NKDB were trying to brand the Ukrainian liberation movement, often acted under the guise of the OUN and UPA. This is stated in the study of V. Sergiychuk [37]. The insidiousness of the Soviet government in the struggle against the Ukrainian national forces is evidence that these forces were powerful and it was impossible to defeat them in a transparent and open struggle.

After the Second World War, the Ukrainian national movement gained wide scope, which prompted the Soviet authorities to take more decisive measures. To combat the activities of Ukrainian nationalists, the Soviet leadership planned an action that became known in history as the «Great Blockade.» As a result of this action, the OUN and UPA were to be completely cut off from villages and hamlets, the insurgents were to be closed in the forests and destroyed by famine, cold, disease, and military operations. For this purpose, since January 1946, 3,349 army garrisons from the 52nd, 13th and 38th armies have been stationed in western Ukrainian villages. Almost 4,000 garrisons were formed by internal troops of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and fighter battalions. The Soviet border troops, together with Polish troops, blocked the state border of the Soviet Union and the administrative border between the USSR and the BSSR. In total, at least 229,000 people

from the Soviet side took part in this «Great Blockade,» of which 109 were Red Army soldiers, about 60,000 were internal and railway troops, border guards, state security officers, and 60,000 were fighters of fighter battalions and support groups [30, p. 400].

Many reports to the secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (b) M. Khrushchev about the course of the struggle against the Ukrainian nationalist underground of the Zhovkva district during this period are in the archives. Here are some examples:

On January 14, 1946, a military unit of the 109th Border Regiment was trying to carry out the evidences of a captured Ukrainian nationalist under the sobriquet «Bir», conducted an operation in the village of Vyazova, Zhovkva district, where he encountered a group of singers led by a Ukrainian nationalist under the sobriquet «Crook». This group was defeated. Six Ukrainian nationalists were killed and two were seriously injured. Members of Ukrainian Insurgent Army were resisting and blew themselves up with grenades [37, p. 54]. From this report we find out that even in small settlements there were small groups of Ukrainian nationalists who were ready for imminent death.

On January 15, 1946, were the special Bolshevics operation in the village of Vilkhove of the Boyanets village council. According to information from locals, the members of Ukrainian Insurgent Army were coming to a local resident, Mykola Begay, for a night. By the end of the day, in order to create visibility, a military unit of the Red Army was withdrawn from the village, and an ambush was set up near Begay's house for the night. As darkness fell, a woman left Begay's house and headed for the village of Boyanets. She was wounded and captured while trying to escape. She turned out to be Begay's daughter – Begay Maria, a UPA liaison [37, p. 56]. This report demonstrates the insidiousness of the Soviet punitive authorities against Ukrainian nationalists and proves that the UPA soldiers were fully supported by the local population.

On January 16, 1946, the Kulykiv Regional Department of the NKVD received a report about the village of Blyshchyvody near the town of Zhovkva. A peasant who lived there, Khrushch Mykhailo, had a hiding place for the few ukrainian nationalists. To verify these data, a task force of NKVD employees and Red Army soldiers of the 62nd Division was sent under the command of Sergeant Panayev and the

operative officer of the NKVD regional department of Junior Lieutenant Kulikov. During the operation in Khrushch Mykhailo's house, a cache was found under the stove, where the ukrainian nationalists were staying. The Ukrainian nationalists carried out an armed resistance and were killed. Ivan Yosypovych Temish, under the sobriquet «Sokil», 20 years old, was killed. Weapons – a submachine gun, a grenade and 20 rounds of ammunition were found. Khrushchev Mykhailo and his wife Olena were arrested. In the same village, three UPA liaisons were found: Zhyvka Mykhailo Ivanovych, Kotovych Stefania and Kurhan Anna Ivanivna – residents of the village of Blyshchyvoda [37, p. 65]. This report testifies to the armed resistance to the Soviet punitive authorities and proves the popular support of the Ukrainian national movement. Unit 109 of the NKVD Border Regiment with the participation of the operative staff of the NKVD regional department of Zhovkva district in the village of Sklyari in the yard of a peasant Svistun found a hiding place in which there were two singers from the unit «Crook» – Prytula Vasily under the sobriquet «Cobel» and Glushko Mikhail «Crook». Along with them was a bush doctor who cared for the wounded, Godie Petro Mykolayovych under the sobriquet «Tykhy», a resident of the village of Dobrosyn, Zhovkva district. Two pistols belonging to the wounded and a bag with medical instruments of the doctor «Tykhy» were found in the hiding place [8, p. 98]. This report, like others, testifies that the Soviet authorities used considerable forces, large sections, and units of their punitive organs against the Ukrainian insurgents and their supporters. It should be noted that acting in the usual mode of struggle, the insurgents and the underground did not perceive the beginning of the «Great Blockade» as something hitherto unseen and unheard of. During the first weeks, UPA units actively attacked Soviet garrisons located in settlements, tried to block district centers, and so on. From January 10 to January 17, 1946 Ukrainian insurgent army carried out 22 attacks on Soviet garrisons, shelling military positions with automatic weapons. During these attacks, 9 Soviet servicemen were killed and 13 wounded [34, p. 412]. However, as early as the second half of January, when it became clear that the Soviet secret services were trying to completely block the activities of the underground with their garrisons, the Ukrainian units began to actively destroy communications that allowed enemy fighters to report the movement of insurgent units. From

the descriptions of the battles of unit «Kholodnoyartsy 1» we learn that the hundred was divided into four groups. Each group had its own tasks. The group, led by the sobriquet «Dream», together with the commander of the unit under the sobriquet «Deaf», mined a railway near the village of Matsoshin and cut off enemy lines. After that, moved away 300 meters from the railway. When the train leaving Zhovkva overturned, it turned out that there were 15 Bolshevik officers in one of the carriages, some of whom were killed or wounded [1, p. 14]. The group, led by the Ukrainian nationalist under the sobriquet «Sagaydachny», destroyed the telephone connection between the cities of Zhovkva – Rava-Ruska and Zhovkva – Yaniv. Bunchuzh's Tsika group destroyed a telephone line on the Mageriv-Zhovkva road, cutting off 10 telephone poles. This insurgent group dismantled 22 pillars that provided telephone communication between the cities of Lviv and Rava-Ruska [3, p. 143]. Members of UPA were also ready to destroy everything that contributed to the establishment of Soviet power: the equipment of the occupier, its warehouses, institutions and more. From the certificate of the head of the Sector of the Central Committee of the CP(b)U Bogomolov about certain facts about the activities of the OUN-UPA in March 1947, we learn that on March 26, 1947 a group of Ukrainian nationalists, consisting of 8-10 people, arrived by truck in the village of Soposhyn, set fire to the MTS workshop and warehouse, a village house and fled. Two tractors burned down in the workshop [4]. It is significant that since 1946, Ukrainian nationalists have changed their tactics. Now they operated in small groups of 6-12 fighters. Here are the statistics taken from the archives: At the beginning of 1946, small insurgent detachments were active in the Zhovkva region: «Shram» (12 fighters) near the village of Pid Buchok, «Kruk» (10 fighters) near the village of Vyazova, and «Viter» (8 fighters) near the village of Zhury Skira. «Bogdan» (8 fighters) near the villages of Hlynsko and Nova Skvariava, «Chumak» (25-28 fighters) near the villages of Mokrotyn and Khytreyky, «Borys» (7 fighters) near Mokrotyn, «Baida» (8 fighters) near the villages of Krekhiv and Maidan and others [5, p. 2–3].

Thus, in order to withstand the pressure of the first stage of the Great Blockade, Ukrainian nationalists had to be less visible and therefore grouped only 6-12 people (more than 3,000 army garrisons and almost 4,000 garrisons of the NKVD internal troops were directed against

Ukrainian nationalist forces). But even such small groups of UPA soldiers terrified the Soviet occupier and forced him to invent new ways to stop the national liberation struggle.

The Soviet authorities began the second stage of the «Great Blockade» for a more active armed and propaganda struggle against the OUN and UPA underground On February 11, 1946. A huge army was concentrated on the territory of the Ukrainian SSR, including several divisions and separate NKVD brigades. Many troops were stationed in the town of Zhovkva.

Several army units stationed here, which formed the garrison of the city. In addition, in large villages – centers were units of Enkavedists with groups of fighter battalions. It should be noted that the combat potential of groups and fighters of the fighter battalion – «strybky» was very low. It happened that they came under pressure from NKVD officers or to avoid conscription. Insurgents often disarmed them without any resistance. Some of the «strybky» even cooperated with the insurgents, sided with them. Thus, on June 13, 1946, under the command of the district inspector of the village of Volya-Vysotska Borysova near the village of Zavada, two insurgents were captured, one of whom – a resident of the village of Hlynsky Yakub Noi – a former of «strybky» battalion [17, p. 65].

Convinced that direct repressive measures, raids, mass searches, and deportations to Siberia did not yield positive results, in 1946 the MGB began to use even more insidious, provocative methods of fighting the UPA and the OUN. Under the guise of UPA units, they created special units whose task was to expose the location and composition of insurgent units, the OUN underground, and also aimed to compromise the insurgents through terrorist acts against civilians. We learn about the organization of «Strybky» by the NKVD in March 1946 in the settlements near the town of Zhovkva from reports and indictments drawn up by the OUN [6, p. 281]. There were often cases when people who were relatives of the underground were selected to cooperate with the NKVD. The OUN reports also state that the Soviet special services involved the Komsomol, MTS, military enlistment offices and other organizations in the struggle [7, p. 242–245]. One of the Soviet special forces under the guise of the UPA – «Kavka» operated in the Zhovkva region in 1947. In particular, on June 24, he managed to seize and «interrogate» the OUN liaison officer under the pseudonym «Star». On the basis of the confessions received from her, the next day the MGB company

surrounded Oleksiy Baran's house in the village of Hlynsko, where there were three insurgents. After a short battle, they died. It was as a result of the actions of the Kavka detachment that the Soviet special services arrested the residents of the village of Hlynsko: OUN resident Oleksandra Vorotsyanko under the sobriquet «Nadia», OUN liaison officer Fekla Pelekh and the owner of the house who helped OUN members Oleksiy Baran [8, p. 172–173]. These facts show that only opaquely, by cunning, the Soviet authorities fought against the patriots of Ukraine.

The OUN was also constantly working to identify hostile agents. We learn about this from the orders to fight the agency, which clearly indicates the methods of work of the OUN Security Service. According to these documents, the villages of the OUN Security Service were considered executive bodies and had no right to act independently [13, p. 232].

Thus, the second stage of the blockade by the Soviet authorities in the Zhovkva subdistrict (Sokal-Rava district of the Lviv region of the OUN) was marked not only by repressive but also by insidious provocative methods of fighting Ukrainian nationalists, attempts to artificially discredit pro-Ukrainian enemies and betray them. people.

Now the Soviet repressive authorities paid attention to the search and liquidation of underground leaders and UPA commanders. Realizing that the scattered insurgent units may reunite in the spring, the leaders of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Republican Communist Party focused their efforts on the destruction of leadership and demoralization of ordinary soldiers by brutal public executions and promises of pardon in case of voluntary captivity [34, p. 506].

Military operations under the Great Blockade ended on April 1, 1946, when the Soviet leadership decided that the underground had been completely destroyed and bled to death. Soviet special services sent reports that during the blockade 3295 insurgents were killed, 12000 UPA soldiers and 5000 members of the OUN network were taken prisoner [17, p. 157]. The insurgent command acknowledged the death of 5,000 people, while claiming that the Soviet side lost as many as 15,000 people [38, p. 635]. According to the Ukrainian researcher L. Shankovsky, such a difference in the number of killed may be due to the fact that almost 2,000 insurgents were executed after being taken prisoner. Therefore, in Soviet statistics they appeared as arrested, and in the insurgent – as dead [38, p. 636]. All these

statistics are evidence not only of the Soviet government's active attack on the Ukrainian underground, but it also proof that the UPA army was numerous within its region. Huge Soviet military groups were involved in its elimination. These powerful Soviet forces could not stop the national liberation struggle of the OUN and UPA for independence.

UPA High Command developed a new tactic of armed struggle in July 1946. All major groups of the insurgent army (up to a smallest unit) were disbanded. The huts continued to operate only in the Zakerzon. Hundreds of cadres were stored only in large forests of the Carpathian region. In all other territories of Galicia, Bukovina, Western Podolia and Transcarpathia, the insurgents had to act in pairs (30-40 people), swarms (10-12 people), individual militants (3-7 people) [30, p. 403]. The leadership of the liberation movement sought to disperse its forces as much as possible and to act by means of petty attacks, attacks, ambushes, individual terror, sabotage, which would take place every day and would not allow the Soviet authorities to gain a foothold and feel confident.

In the summer of 1946, there was also a restructuring of the OUN. Orders were received to dissolve women's referees and to transfer OUN women to the Ukrainian Red Cross. Counties were renamed into subdistricts. The subdistrict included 3-5 district organizations of the OUN. District organizations were now divided into *cushcz*. The districts consisted of 3 to 5 bushes. Each *cushcz* united 4-6 villages. The village numbered about 7-10 people. OUN members and sympathizers were involved in a large-scale and long-term underground struggle. However, the Soviet authorities encouraged the local population (from the above examples we can understand that such an incentive was often violent) to report to the underground.

From the report of the instructor of the Lviv regional committee of the CP (b) U dated January 21, 1946, we learn that as a result of receiving information from the population of the Zhovkva district, it became known about the OUN hideout near the village of Nova Skvaryava. According to the data on the OUN members, the NKVD task force conducted an operation and discovered the OUN underground printing house. One device for duplicating literature, a glass graph, fonts, a number of slogans and posters, two typewriters and a number of documents were confiscated. Women who were in hiding at the time blew themselves up

with grenades [11, p. 39]. This report is evidence of the OUN's active underground struggle. It was underground that Ukrainian nationalists were able to conduct propaganda and explanatory work. In 1945–1947, the relevant Soviet authorities revived activities to «recruit» local residents and resorted to violent methods of «knocking out» information about OUN members and their sympathizers. Since any such information was accompanied by arrests and «neutralization», of course, OUN members had to be especially secretive not only for the sake of their families, but also to prevent anyone from testifying about the nationalist movement, because anyone who had any information about the OUN, could even forcibly become a whistleblower.

Thus, in the post-war period from 1946 to 1947, the transition from insurgent to underground struggle took place on the territory of the Zhovkva district. The tactics of hostilities at this time were reduced to conducting operations with the help of small units (militants) and was aimed at maintaining their own forces for long-term resistance to Soviet rule.

4. Conclusions

Our observations showed that the struggle of Ukrainian nationalists against the Bolshevik, German, and Polish armed formations in 1944–1945 was aimed primarily at restoring the identification of the Ukrainian people.

Ukrainian nationalists also opposed the Germans and Poles. This struggle was due to good reasons: people did not want to support another's army and give their sons to serve in it; the population did not accept new methods of management, opposed collectivization, trying to preserve what was given by hard work and was acquired over the years; the inhabitants of the study area had their own ancient traditions, principles and beliefs based on religion, and could not give in to them, were ready to defend them, and the new ideology seemed unacceptable.

In 1944–1945, the OUN (b) directed its actions against the Soviet occupiers. An important part of the OUN's (b) work in this regard was propaganda work. With the help of leaflets, brochures, agitation at rallies, as well as through individual work with people, members of the OUN (b) tried not only to encourage the population of Zhovkva district to actively support the Ukrainian national idea, but also to influence the enemy.

In 1944–1945, Ukrainian nationalists also put up armed resistance to the occupiers. According to our research, during this period we had to defend our land with weapons in our hands from the military bodies of the KGB, the NKVD, from regular units of the Soviet army and from Soviet guerrillas. The struggle against the German occupiers was fierce and active. There were often armed clashes with the Poles, although we can say that since 1944 the Ukrainian-Polish confrontation has subsided in the OUN Zhovkva district. Thus, in 1944–1945, Ukrainian nationalists in the Zhovkva district had to fight various military formations at the same time.

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