



# UPA WARFARE IN UKRAINE

Yuriy Tys-Krokhmaliuk

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*UPA Warfare in Ukraine* depicts the Ukrainian war of liberation during the years of World War II and continuing until 1953. This was the struggle of the Ukrainian people for independence under the political leadership of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists with its military arm, the Ukrainian Partisan Army.

Until the years following World War II, the Ukrainian war of liberation was the only partisan conflict in which the partisans were not supplied or supported by a foreign government. They were totally dependent on themselves and the Ukrainian people.

The Ukrainian nation was placed in the unenviable position of fighting two foreign empires, the Communist Russian and the Nazi, whose goals were identical: the occupation and colonization of Ukraine with its fertile lands and many natural resources.

In preparing to write *UPA Warfare in Ukraine*, the author did extensive research, utilizing existing documents, manuscripts, reports, and other materials in the Ukrainian, Polish, and Russian languages. To date, this is the most extensive work about the Ukrainian resistance during World War II and postwar years.

(Continued on back flap)

# UPA WARFARE IN UKRAINE

*Strategical, Tactical and Organizational Problems  
Of Ukrainian Resistance in World War II*

By

*Yuriy Tys-Krokhmaliuk*

## PREFACE

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The views expressed in this book are those of its author and are not necessarily those of the Society of Veterans of Ukrainian Insurgent Army.

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CONTENTS

Page

PREFACE

By Prof. Ivan Wowchuk . . . . . i

INTRODUCTION

By Yuriy Tys-Krokhmaliuk . . . . . v

Chapter One: GEOGRAPHICAL CONFIGURATION OF THE TERRAIN . . . . . 1

Chapter Two: UKRAINE: HISTORY AND PEOPLE . . . . . 5

Chapter Three: UKRAINE IN WORLD WAR II . . . . . 17  
Restoration of Ukrainian Statehood on June 30, 1941

Chapter Four: THE ORGANIZATION OF THE UPA . . . . . 29  
Partisan Training

Chapter Five: STRATEGIC AND OPERATIONAL THINKING OF THE UPA COMMAND . . . . . 35

Chapter Six: MILITARY TASKS OF ORGANIZATION OF UKRAINIAN NATIONALISTS . . . . . 49

Battle Near Town of Kolky—Battles in the Area of Yapolot-Lubasha—Battle at Radovychi, September 8-9, 1943—Battles in the Kropyvnyk-Mizun Areas, December 11-12, 1943—German Operations Against the UPA in Carpathian Foothills, November-December, 1943—Raid on Slave Labor Camp in the Village of Sviatoslav—Battle Near the Villages of Kamianka and Lypa



# UPA WARFARE IN UKRAINE

		<i>Page</i>
<i>Chapter Seven:</i>	THE UNDERGROUND NETWORK OF THE UPA	75
	Security Service of the OUN—Underground Printing Shops	
<i>Chapter Eight:</i>	UKRAINIAN RED CROSS	89
<i>Chapter Nine:</i>	GENERAL TACTICS OF THE UPA	99
<i>Chapter Ten:</i>	PRINCIPLES OF PARTISAN TACTICS IN CLASSICAL MILITARY LITERATURE	115
<i>Chapter Eleven:</i>	ATTACK	125
<i>Chapter Twelve:</i>	RAID	133
	Raid on the Town of Radekhiv (April 26-27, 1945)—The Plan of Action—Raid on the Town of Yabloniv (July 27, 1945)—Raid of Soviet Partisans on UPA Military School “Li- sovi Chorty” of UPA-North—Raid on the City of Kamin Koshyrsky	
<i>Chapter Thirteen:</i>	TACTICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF RAIDS	143
	March of the Raiding Unit—The Rear Guard —Rest—March Discipline—Encounter with the Enemy—Example of Combat Initiative by the Rear Guard—Encirclement and Roundup —Bivouac and Defense in the Forest—Brief Instruction for Raiding Units in Slovakia—Bil- leting and Defense in the Village—Memoir	
<i>Chapter Fourteen:</i>	HARASSMENT AND DIVERSION	161
	Harassment—Diversion	
<i>Chapter Fifteen:</i>	AMBUSH	165
	Ambush Near Khyriv—Ambush on the Tysna- Balyhorod Highway—Ambush of Gen. Lutze, SD Chief in Ukraine—Ambush Near Chornyi Mist—Ambush “Lovy”	
<i>Chapter Sixteen:</i>	BUNKERS, HIDE-OUTS AND CAMPS	181
	Gas in the Hide-Out	
<i>Chapter Seventeen:</i>	DEFENSE	211
<i>Chapter Eighteen:</i>	UKRAINIAN INSURGENT ARMY UNDER GERMAN OCCUPATION	225

## CONTENTS

### *Chapter Eighteen—(Cont'd)*

Battle at the Village of Stizhok—Operations of the “BB” Staff—Operations of General Prutzmann and Cooperation of Germans with Soviet Partisans—German Operations Against the UPA in the Carpathians (October 4 to December 4, 1943)—Another German Attack on a Partisan Camp—Raid on German SD Police Between Villages Yapolut and Vilka (July 18, 1943)—Attack on German Military Train Near the Village of Nemovychi (June 23-24, 1943)

*Chapter Nineteen:* THE POLISH FRONT . . . . . 261

*Chapter Twenty:* THE RUSSIAN FACTOR IN THE UPA STRUGGLE . . . . . 269

Table of Russian Aggressive Conquests—UPA vs. the Russians

*Chapter Twenty-one:* MOSCOW AGAINST THE UPA . . . . . 295

The First Operation of Khrushchev Against the UPA—The Second Operation of Khrushchev Against the UPA—The Third Operation of Khrushchev Against the UPA

*Chapter Twenty-two:* UPA’S RELENTLESS STRUGGLE AGAINST THE SOVIET ARMIES . . . . . 313

Battle at Hurby (April 22-25, 1944)—The Insurgent Army—Units of UPA-North—Units of UPA-South—The Soviet Troops—The Battle—Battle of UPA With Soviet Partisans for the Black Forest (April 23 to June 15, 1944)—Battle With Shukayev’s Partisans—Battle With Soviet Partisans in Siurazh Forest (Volhynia)—The Shift of the Eastern Front—Battle for Kosmach—Armed Encounters Between UPA and Soviet Troops: Soviet Attack on UPA Hide-Out—Death of Tamara, Ukrainian Red Cross Nurse—Soviet Manhunt Against UPA Company “Letuny” (February 4, 1946)—Ambush Against Soviet Party Officials: Report of UPA Commander Warrant Officer—Ambush Between Villages of Strilbychi and Bilychi



<i>Chapter Twenty-three:</i>	UPA ON THE WEST SIDE OF THE CUR- ZON LINE	343
	Assassination of General Swierczewski by the UPA—Polish Official Reports on UPA Activi- ties—Polish Report on Deposition of Captured UPA Fighter—The UPA in the Curzon Line Country: Testimony of Captured Commander Dalnych—Report of a Polish Deputy Com- mander—Organization of Counterinsurgency in Poland—Polish Communist Appraisal of UPA Struggle in Curzon Line Areas—Operation “Wisla” Against the UPA in Poland—Appraisal of the Polish Side by Blum—The Polish Forces —Forces and Tactics of the UPA—The “Wisla” Operation—Results of the UPA-Polish Army Operations	
<i>Chapter Twenty-four:</i>	OPERATIONS OF UPA IN THE CURZON LINE TERRITORY	375
	Attack on the Town of Bircha (January 6-7, 1946)—Attack against the Village of Viazov- nytsia (April 24, 1946)—Polish Attack on the Village of Uliuch (March 21, 1946)—Attack Against the City of Lubachiv (March 8, 1946) —Attack Against Komancha and Lupkiv (March 22 and 26, 1946)—Battles for Khresh- chata Forest	
<i>Chapter Twenty-five:</i>	RAIDS OF UPA INTO WESTERN EUROPE	389
	EPILOGUE	399
	APPENDIX A	401
	Nomenclature of Ukrainian Names, Transcrip- tion in Other Languages	
	APPENDIX B	403
	Abbreviations of Political and Military Organi- zations: Ukrainian—Russian—German—Po- lish	
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	406
	PICTORIAL SECTION	413
	INDEX	437
	1. <i>Index of Names</i>	
	2. <i>Index of Localities</i>	
	3. <i>Index of Geographical Features</i>	

## PREFACE

The three letters—UPA—embody the whole epoch, spirit and content of the armed political struggle of the Ukrainian nation during World War II and for a decade after its formal termination. This book about the UPA or the Ukrainian Insurgent Army, is unmatched in depicting the struggle of a nation for its freedom and statehood.

*UPA Warfare in Ukraine*, by Yuriy Tys-Krokhmaluk, illuminates a struggle that, in one form or another, continues unabated. Indeed, the Russian imperialists in the last few years have intensified their assault against the Ukrainian national ideal, in defense and realization of which the UPA fought so determinedly and gallantly.

Fully thirty years have elapsed since the Ukrainian Liberation Army sprang into being. At that time, Ukraine was both the total war battleground and prize for two totalitarian behemoths: German National Socialism and Russian Socialism.

Early in this all-out contest, the Russian occupation was replaced by the German occupation with its savage *Ostpolitik*. In reaction to these circumstances the Ukrainian nation, spontaneously and unaided, created an armed political force. Its appearance can be compared to the formation of a full river which, gathering waters from small streams, becomes a powerful and dynamic force. That it should have formed at all testifies to the undying sentiment for freedom in the Ukrainian breast.

In the fall of 1942 in the northern part of the western lands of Ukraine, the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN), under the leadership of Stepan Bandera, began forming armed units for the struggle against the occupiers. The insurgent movement quickly engulfed the Western Ukrainian lands and a part of the Right-Bank of Ukraine.

By their ruthless and unabashed colonial policy the German occupation



forces rapidly evoked resentment and then hatred among the Ukrainian people. The German Eastern policy was responsible for the fact that, in the words of Peter Kleist, it generated the first anti-German partisans—the Ukrainian nationalists.

In organizing armed units for the struggle against the German aggressors, their creators had a double task in mind. The first and immediate one was to protect the Ukrainian youth from deportation to slave labor in Germany and to prevent the physical destruction of the people and to forestall their economic exploitation. But the political future demanded another postulate: to create and develop one's own national forces in depth so as to give the nation a means of defense against the two imperialistic powers, both of which were wholly hostile to the principle of Ukrainian statehood.

In Moscow, the Soviet Russian leadership quickly perceived in the senseless and cruel colonial policy of the Germans in Ukraine an unexpected boon. Their joy was tempered, however, by the swelling growth of the Ukrainian partisan movement. In consequence Moscow set up large-scale plans to infiltrate and combat this menacing force. To Volhynia and Polisia, where the first Ukrainian insurgent groups had come into being, the Soviet command dispatched its own Soviet partisan units. Thus, in extremely difficult conditions, the Ukrainian insurgent groups had to wage partisan warfare against German troops and Soviet partisans at one and the same time.

The need for the Ukrainians of a unified and coordinated center became evident. Small and scattered partisan groups merged to form a strong insurgent army, an indispensable military army at the time for a nation seeking the establishment of freedom and national independence.

The strength and greatness of the UPA lay in the profound idealism of its soldiers and commanders, in their boundless patriotism, which generated a total and common understanding of the necessity to wage the struggle that, in turn, relied on the full and unqualified support of the Ukrainian people. This identification with the UPA on the part of the people, who instinctively sensed in it their own strength, provided the UPA with moral and material support, enabling it to wage the liberation struggle for several years.

Under unimaginably adverse conditions, without any outside help whatsoever, neither moral nor material, and against numerically vastly superior and technically better equipped enemy forces, the UPA, under the political leadership of the OUN and the UHVR (Supreme Ukrainian Liberation Council), succeeded in creating its own highly heroic style of struggle. In countless battle encounters, the warriors of the UPA refused to recognize surrender and capitulation.

The noble and deeply humane ideas, embodied in the motto, "Freedom to peoples—and freedom to man," under which the UPA waged its struggle, reverberated among the other non-Russian peoples enslaved by Russian Communism. Organized in UPA ranks were national units of Georgians,

Azerbaijanis, Cossacks and others, who voluntarily came to offer their services in the struggle against Russian imperialism and for the establishment of their own independent states.

The UPA contributed greatly to the unity of the enslaved peoples in the struggle for their liberation. The Soviet leaders in Moscow understood well the great danger to the unity of the Russian empire—the USSR—which the UPA represented in its political ideology. Hence the harshness of the struggle.

After the reoccupation of Ukraine by Moscow, the Ukrainian people for two years (1946-1947) totally boycotted the elections to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and the Ukrainian SSR on the territory that was under the jurisdiction of the UHVR, thus signalling their refusal to recognize the alien power of Moscow. This development was unique in the history of the USSR.

In order to mount a more effective campaign against the UPA, the Soviet government concluded in 1947 a tripartite treaty with Czechoslovakia and Poland. In the unequal struggle that ensued, weapons were literally knocked out of the hands of the UPA. In the fall of 1950 near the city of Lviv in Western Ukraine, ambushed and killed was General Roman Shukhevych (Taras Chuprynka), head of the underground government of the UHVR and UPA commander-in-chief. The military operations came to a halt, but this did not mean the end of the liberation struggle. It only assumed different forms, and continues to this day.

—\* \* \*—

A few years after the death of General Shukhevych, the Ukrainian poet of the national idea, Vasyl Symonenko, called Lviv, which blossomed as a center of the national and political struggle in the 1940's and 1950's, a "capital of my dream, a center of joy and hope." The poet and his generation fully grasped the meaning of the loss of the UPA Commander. This loss, he writes, causes a "soul to erupt," the soul of the entire nation. The poet turns to Lviv as a political center of the Ukrainian struggle at that time, and begs his readers for their understanding. He comes to the city where the Supreme Commander fell, "with the elation of a son from the steppes, where the Slavuta (Dnieper River) weaves a legend," and he hopes "that your fearless lion's heart could breathe into my heart a bit of strength" (from the poem, "The Ukrainian Lion").

Symonenko and the whole cohort of the poets of "the 1960's," as we call them, under the roof of dominant Moscow have awakened the Ukrainian spirit, which "calls on the body to struggle." Thus lives on the struggle of Ukrainian nationalism against Russian imperialism, with its brutal policy of denial and destruction of freedom of man and nations alike.

The sparks of the national idea, thrown into a Ukrainian society controlled by force and fear, continually generate new winds against Russian

tyranny. In the national depths of the social life of the Ukrainian people, enchanged by the principles of "profound internationalism of the Russian people," the national idea is burgeoning and is being expressed in concrete political force. Throughout the national and social spheres we hear the demand of Ukrainian nationalism: remove the rusty props of the Russian imperialist structure of the USSR. It calls for the removal of abuses, national discrimination and the building of strong foundations for a sovereign and independent Ukrainian state.

Yesterday, the United States and its allies won the war, but at the same time they ensured the survival of the Russian empire, an empire of lawlessness with a built-in institutional denial of freedom.

*UPA Warfare in Ukraine*, which describes the origin and struggle of the UPA, will help the reader to understand the present in terms of the past. Without an understanding of the past it is futile to cultivate hopes for a better tomorrow.

*Prof. Ivan Wowchuk*

## INTRODUCTION

Customarily, it is through the study of military history proper that we gain our understanding of the military developments which have unrolled over the course of many centuries in the West and, specifically, in Western Europe.

Serving as an introduction to these developments are the most important events of the ancient world, that is, those marking the history of the Greek and Roman cultures. All other cultural centers, empires and nations have been left out of military history. Yet even then, important acts, events and phenomena which materialized in the rest of the world contributed to and influenced substantially the flow and formation of Western history.

Today, as the twenty-first century looms into view, instant communications have knit peoples and lands together inextricably. Not only military history, but history in general is now forced to embrace events taking place over the entire globe. There is a general recognition of the fact that all cultural, economic and military events impinge upon one another, interpenetrate and act together in shaping the future of every people, not excluding those that are geographically remote. We are witnessing gigantic spiritual and social movements, proceeding hand in hand with intense development and exploitation of new sources of energy and nature. The entire world is in ferment, seething with hot and cold wars. Before our eyes are being laid the foundations of life for centuries to come.

It is not within the province of this work to dwell upon these phenomena of planetary scope. We may note, however, that whoever takes no cognizance of and does not deal with the forces transforming the world automatically relegates himself to a secondary role in the history of mankind.

One phenomenon merits emphasis: the ideological conflict between Communism and the rest of the world. The outcome of the struggle between those who espouse the doctrine of Marx, or some form thereof, and those embrac-

ing capitalism wedded to democracy will be either universal slavery or universal freedom.

But, to return to our own theme, it is our contention that of no little value is an investigation and study of the military history of other peoples that heretofore have been neglected. (Even the Russian empire has received scant attention, with the consequence that its basic nature is wholly misunderstood.) Thus we come to the introduction in the realm of military warfare of the partisan tactics of struggle as an inevitable means of insuring a final victory.

Partisan warfare is not novel in history. We need only recall the great difficulties Caesar had with the people of what today are France and Germany.

During World War I and World War II, Ukraine struggled for its independence by partisan methods of warfare. Specifically, the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) in 1942-1952 and, to some extent, up to the present day, amassed a rich experience in combatting Communism. Regrettably, this experience has not been utilized effectively except by that totalitarian empire called the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

The Ukrainian struggle against the Russian empire for freedom was not honored with the attention of the West. Yet the elements on which the Ukrainian Insurgent Army was based—elements of the spiritual and military domain—are beyond price, extraordinary and eternal. Durable and bearing principled characteristics and virtues, they are to be extensively dwelt upon in this work.

Hopefully, this work, dedicated to the freedom fighters of the UPA, will stimulate study of a form of warfare that can be effectively utilized in the global struggle against Russian Communist imperialism and towards lasting peace and freedom for all the nations of the world.

Ukraine, we have noted, has had specific historical experience in conducting partisan warfare.

As early as the first centuries after Christ we find mention in Roman sources of the horsemen warriors of Ukraine, who were celebrated for their great mobility, maneuvering in the terrain and the use of ambush and unexpected and sudden attack. During the Middle Ages the continued proximity with the nomadic tribes of Asia, continually thrusting towards Europe, necessitated the adoption of these tactics of struggle, inasmuch as heavy armor proved totally useless. Atilla and Genghis Khan left a bloody legacy of experience in Ukraine in partisan warfare. The same type of warfare characterized the struggle of the Ukrainians against the Tartars until the XVIIIth century. The Ukrainian military, especially the Zaporozhian Kozaks, made extensive and successful use of the tactics of mobile warfare and partisan encounter in their wars against Poland and Muscovy.

In the XXth century, the partisans of the Ukrainian state at the time of the Russian Revolution heroically defended Ukrainian independence and waged



an armed war against Communist Russia until 1926. During World War II and afterwards the Ukrainian Insurgent Army valiantly waged unequal warfare against both the Nazi armies and the Soviet troops, thereby distinguishing itself as a unique force in the modern world in challenging two of the greatest military powers simultaneously.

Partisan warfare is being conducted today not only by peoples who are struggling for the attainment of liberty, but also by states which, by placing partisans in the *hinterland* of the enemy, gain a real second front, especially when the enemy, by ignoring the significance of partisan warfare, is utterly unable to cope with or oppose effectively such partisan warfare.

Ukrainian military literature divides partisans into two categories:

*Insurgents*—Military units or formations which wage a war or wars against an imperial, frequently alien, power for the liberation of their own people by engaging in partisan warfare and tactics. Springing from the people, insurgents cooperate with them, protect them, and in general are intimately connected with them;

*Partisans*—Also irregular units which operate in the rear of the enemy during a war. They necessarily do not have contact with the alien populace, which, more often than not, is hostile to the partisans. On the other hand, the partisans are, as a rule, provided with arms and food supplies by their own government, usually by parachute drop, in the tactically important terrain in which the partisans either commit acts of sabotage and diversion or conceal themselves until the regular armies of their government appear on the terrain and require their cooperation. Both the regular army and the partisans have a common governmental headquarters in war.

Common to these two categories are their tactics, making up what is generally known as partisan warfare.

Insurgents may or may not receive support from foreign powers. But the partisans always enjoy the full and continuous support of their government. Classic partisans during World War II were the Soviet partisans led by Kovpak, Medvedev, and others. On the other hand, the insurgents were the soldiers of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army who relied exclusively on their own resources and strength, and the support of their people and who provided their own political and military leadership. Behind them stood all the people, fully aware and conscious of the common objective of freedom.

Since the French Revolution, a new military doctrine has evolved that defies the old precept that wars could be waged effectively only within the rigid and artificial doctrines of the XVIIIth century. Curiously, this evolution still continues today: the accelerating growth and increasing ramifications of technology prevent foreseeing the further development and perfection of tactics of the new doctrine, inevitably to be adjusted to new technologies.

Prussian military strategist Clausewitz expounded his theories on the basis

of the first Napoleonic wars, stressing in them the value of individuality in combat and what is more, the value of the moral factor. Thus his notion of a "people's war," in contrast to the previous conflicts waged by wilful and ambitious rulers. Yet these notions were not new, having been known in Eastern Europe as far back as the middle of the XVIIth century. In the XIXth century some French military specialists came to recognize that the Ukrainian military leader of the XVIIth century, *Hetman* Bohdan Khmelnytsky, actually was the creator of the "war of national liberation," but their acute observation was soon lost in a flood of other authoritative opinions that suffered from an inability to see or acknowledge anything east of Germany. We may note, however, that the most important students of Clausewitz' theories on war were the Russians after the Bolshevik Revolution—under the influence and upon the direct instructions of Lenin.

Individuality in the modern warfare of the XXth century was relegated to a secondary role simply because of the revolutionary mechanization and technological advances of warfare. The mass armies of the First World War made for a narrowing of combat knowledge in the individual soldier. The Second World War went even farther in the direction of specialization of the fighting man. The result is that a soldier no longer grasps the entire phenomenon of war, being confined to his own military specialty. This holds as well for officers of the highest grades, who are unable to envision war in its economic, political and technical matrix. We know today that military technology and the soldier-specialist cannot alone win the war.

We have yet to consider the most important factor: the person of the soldier himself. The individuality of a soldier manifests itself with a force in partisan warfare that is unmatched elsewhere. This phenomenon will be amply illustrated with examples drawn from the combat of the Ukrainian armed underground.

The UPA depended wholly on itself and on the people for which it arose to defend, protect and set free. The UPA received no support from any other quarter, not even an expression of sympathy which could have been utilized for propaganda purposes. It was completely isolated. No wonder, then, that every soldier of the UPA should have been an individual with highly developed initiative and resourcefulness. No wonder that the Russians in postwar years should have refought, for study purposes, not only the major encounters in the terrain, but even the small skirmishes and ambushes of the UPA. At the same time the West has almost totally ignored what took place in Ukraine, and has naively swallowed the Soviet propaganda about the "brave Red partisans."

Neither the West nor Russia is unaware of the inherent properties of the soldier as a person, including his initiative. But the two take radically different military approaches to the individual soldier. The West, enamored of speciali-

zation in technical armament, places the soldier within a mold of perfect specialization, creating special forces for partisan warfare only as a departure from the norm. Russia, although gripped by its concept of world revolution, cannot permit itself the luxury of tapping the initiative of the individual. Russian Communism fears a soldier free in thought and action not a whit less than it does any freely thinking and acting inmate of its empire. And here is the most vulnerable spot of Russian Bolshevism in any war.

In contrast, the Ukrainian Insurgent Army could wage a war for ten years thanks to the freedom and unhampered initiative of each of its soldiers. Military technique, no matter how modern, and even the atom bomb lose their potency when we call upon, for military purposes, man's forgotten nature. And it is in partisan warfare that the nature and moral values of man play a primal role.

The flaring up of partisan warfare over the globe in recent years makes its study especially timely—a prime motivation underlying the writing of this work.

Throughout the centuries the West has been able to discover new continents and oceans and to explore the cosmos. But it has remained totally indifferent toward its Eastern hinterland, failing to appraise it critically. The West has permitted the strengthening of an empire whose *raison d'être* is to enslave mankind through dictatorship, terrorism and genocide. This indifference of the West long condemned to obscurity the history of Eastern Europe and its political and national aspirations.

The U.S. involvement in Vietnam, however, indicates a growing awareness of the menace posed by Communism. Despite the overwhelming superiority of American armament, the drawn out struggle in that Asian country suggests that wars may be decided by man as such. As a result, the record of partisan warfare in the last World War has finally attracted the interest of the West.

In that war, the UPA, alone and unaided, became a nemesis to both the Nazis and the Communists in Ukraine. In order to destroy and liquidate the UPA Stalin appointed Nikita S. Khrushchev, a man who had a proven record as Ukraine's oppressor before World War II. When, however, Khrushchev's unbridled terrorism and massive military operations proved unsuccessful, Stalin resorted to still another method. In 1947 a special treaty was concluded between the USSR, Communist Poland and Communist Czechoslovakia to mount a joint effort against the UPA. It was double-pronged. The Soviet, Polish and Czechoslovak security troops overwhelmed the UPA forces militarily. But what was even more telling was the brutal resettlement of 500,000 Ukrainians from the Polish-Soviet-Czech frontier zone. But while the Ukrainians were largely forced to give up their overt resistance, the UPA continued to operate for several years longer, its soldiers and fighters switching from armed combat to underground resistance. That the Ukrainian underground

resistance was both active and effective for a period of several years after the end of World War II was indicated by the numerous appeals of the Soviet government and its puppet administration in Ukraine to the people to fight and destroy "Ukrainian bourgeois nationalism." Trials and executions of Ukrainian patriots went on in Ukraine for several years, and indeed, are taking place now as well.

For fully seven years after the termination of World War II in 1945 the UPA waged an unequal struggle against the Russian Communist occupier of Ukraine, a fact that could not escape the attention of the West. Nevertheless, this struggle of the Ukrainian underground is insufficiently known in the West today, at a time when the Soviet military experts are conducting serious studies and analyses of the Ukrainian military resistance. (The Soviet military staff, in lesser degree, did the same thing after the fall of the Ukrainian independent state that existed in 1918-20, during which period Ukrainian armed forces used partisan warfare extensively against the Soviet army and security troops.)

The illusion propagated by Moscow that wars of national liberation are things of the past seemed to dissipate at an accelerated pace. In fact, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union perhaps inadvertently boosted this tendency in 1961, at which time Khrushchev proclaimed that the USSR would support "wars of national liberation," meaning the liberation movements in Africa, Asia and South America, which increasingly began to be fought with Communist arms. Thus, in the Soviet lexicon, the Communist takeovers in Cuba, North Korea, North Vietnam and Tibet, and attempts at takeover elsewhere, are "genuine wars of national liberation." But the national aspirations of Ukrainians, Byelorussians, Georgians, Armenians, Cossacks, the Moslem peoples of Central Asia and the Baltic nations—all these are "fascist and counterrevolutionary interventions," "bourgeois banditry," and the like.

As history has so amply demonstrated time and again, the non-Russian nations of the USSR are the "Achilles' heel" of the Soviet Russian empire. Moscow's nationalities policy consists of a ruthless destruction of the national feelings of these nations, but at the same time Moscow is exploiting the national desires and feelings of the colonial peoples over the world for its own political ends. In the USSR any such appeal for the support of the national aspirations of the captive nations is acutely dangerous for the unity and integrity of the Russian empire. Even the cultural developments of the non-Russian peoples are deemed pernicious unless they are attuned to the concept of Russian cultural and political superiority. The non-Russian nations of the USSR, which constitute the weakest link in the Soviet Russian empire, are potential and important allies of any military operations that are undertaken against the USSR. An understanding of the aspirations to freedom and national independence of the captive nations can only deepen if we take into consideration the partisan warfare possibilities in the event of a future war against the Soviet Union.

It is to be recalled that Soviet soldiers mobilized into service during World War II kept deserting *en masse* to the German lines until that time when the National Socialist German government under Hitler revealed its true intention in Eastern Europe, namely, the continued enslavement of the captive nations. Nevertheless, the military and political leaderships of the USSR played safe by judicious distribution of soldiers of non-Russian nationalities among units with a preponderantly Russian majority—in regiments, companies, even platoons. Not infrequently, units containing large components of non-Russian elements were removed from the combat zones and placed under guard by Soviet security troops to prevent desertion.

This Soviet practice is in sharp contrast to that of some governments which welcomed the formation of national military units within the framework of their own armies. There were cases of such in both World Wars. In the first war, for example, the Austro-Hungarian government granted the demand of the Ukrainians for the creation of Ukrainian legions within the Austro-Hungarian armies. These legions, known as *Ukrainski Sichovi Striltsi* (Ukrainian *Sich* Riflemen), played an important part in the Austro-Russian war in 1914-1918, and also played a vital part in the creation of the Ukrainian independent state in 1918-1919. In World War II the Germans agreed at first to the formation of Ukrainian military legions when they were preparing for war against the Soviet Union. These, however, were soon dispersed. Because the Germans adopted a totally negative attitude toward Ukrainian national statehood, these legions of necessity became an uncertain element for the Nazis. Most of the soldiers of these legions eventually joined the ranks of the UPA. Towards the end of the war the Nazi government allowed the organization of a Ukrainian National Division, which was to fight exclusively against the Soviet troops on the Eastern front. This arrangement allowed both sides to pursue their own specific objectives: the German High Command wanted to have additional troops to help check the Soviet steamroller, while the Ukrainians believed that such a military unit could become the nucleus of a future Ukrainian national army. These objectives, of course, were contradictory and mutually exclusive. Experience has shown that peoples seeking national liberation may fruitfully create their own military units within the framework of other, alien armies only if their eventual full state independence is guaranteed. In the absence of such a basic understanding serious conflicts and antagonisms are inevitable between captive peoples and any invader or occupier.

This axiom is well known to the military circles of the various Western states, although it is less appreciated by their statesmen.

A Dutch military writer, J.M.M. Hornix, stated:

It is necessary not only to count men and manipulate with divisions; it is also necessary to act upon their morale. Military strength should attain the greatest possible disunity between the military leadership



and the nationally-inclined military units, between front and hinterland. It is necessary to attain the maximum coordination between the partisan struggle of the captive non-Russian nations of the USSR and that of the satellites, which strive for freedom. The problem of insurrection is of the greatest importance in a possible armed conflict not only because an internal front could be established in the enemy's rear, but also because an atomic attack would bring to the fore partisan warfare on the part of the captive nations. Such a war should have the character of civil war, because from such warfare erupts revolution. . . . \*

At the beginning the Germans paid scant attention to the significance and weight of partisan warfare. When they did begin to realize its potentialities, it was too late for them to do anything about it. Their methods of combatting the partisans were characteristically primitive and cruel. They treated the partisans with contempt, relegating the task of fighting the partisans in the main to small police units, usually ill-trained and poorly-led. Only as their defeat loomed were the operations against the UPA conducted by the SS units.

Polish sources that have come to light only in the last few years are utilized and cited in appropriate places of this work.

Although there are many Russian sources on the struggle against the UPA, they have not been made public. Moscow keeps them a tightly guarded secret. What has appeared is in the form of memoirs by Soviet partisans. Designed for popular consumption these bear a literary character and carry the inevitable propaganda messages; the little that is worthwhile is examined herein. On the other hand, the Soviet government publicizes at great financial cost the "wars of national liberation," such as in Cuba, South Vietnam and elsewhere.

The Ukrainian sources of the UPA partisan warfare constitute the basis of this book. These include first-hand publications printed in exile and materials and reports that were collected by the author from those officers and soldiers of the UPA who succeeded in escaping from Ukraine to Western Europe.

Nonetheless, it is extremely difficult to recount in detail the story of the UPA in its valiant struggle for the freedom of Ukraine. Many sources have been either destroyed or hidden underground in Ukraine. The spiritual, non-material values that characterized the partisan army are difficult to depict in full after the passage of many years. Finally, a great deal of the diverse methods of struggle, the organizational work and operations of the underground resistance, and its liaison under the Soviet domination must understandably remain a secret even today. Some information may never become known, for instance, how UPA intelligence succeeded in finding out the time and route of travel of such important leaders of anti-Ukrainian warfare

\* Hornix, J. M. M., "Het Psychological Effect in Een Militar Conflict Tussen Sovjets en Het Westen," *Centurio*, October, 1965.

as Nazi General Lutze, Polish General Swierczewski and Russian General Vatutin. All these were ambushed by UPA units and killed.

Today we are witnessing how the U.S. forces in Vietnam and Laos are being compelled to resort to guerrilla or partisan warfare, despite the fact that they make up the best technically trained and equipped regular army in the world today. As long as the Communist leaders, be they in Moscow, Peking or Havana, are still preparing for a "D-Day" of the Communist takeover of the entire world, the West must not only be eternally vigilant, but also must become fully conversant with a type of warfare that it may well be called upon to wage in the future.

This work is written not so much to shed light on the political significance of the Ukrainian underground resistance movement as it is to capture its military character.

It is hoped that the author's efforts to explain the cardinal problems of the peoples of the USSR, and especially their inherent military significance, will contribute to a fruitful and beneficial revision of the thinking of the West with respect to Russian communist imperio-colonialism and the captive non-Russian nations. Whether these nations become the strength or the weakness of the present Russian Communist empire is a matter largely in the hands of the free world.

*Yuriy Tys-Krokhmaliuk*

1. The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions and activities. It emphasizes the need for transparency and accountability in financial reporting.

2. The second part of the document outlines the various methods and techniques used to collect and analyze data. It includes a detailed description of the experimental procedures and the statistical analysis performed.

3. The third part of the document presents the results of the study. It includes a series of tables and graphs that illustrate the findings of the research. The data shows a clear trend of increasing activity over time.

4. The fourth part of the document discusses the implications of the findings. It suggests that the results have significant implications for the field of study and may lead to further research in this area.

5. The fifth part of the document concludes the study. It summarizes the key findings and provides a final statement on the importance of the research.

U P A WARFARE IN UKRAINE





# Chapter One

## **GEOGRAPHICAL CONFIGURATION OF THE TERRAIN**

At the very beginning of its existence the Ukrainian Insurgent Army operated in the northwestern part of Ukraine, namely, the areas of Volhynia, Polisia and Pidlasia. These areas were ideal for partisan warfare: they were inaccessible, possessed a poor network of roads and had a sparse population. As such, they not only were highly suitable as operational bases for the UPA, but also as bases for training of officer and NCO cadres, organizational schemes and the storing of war equipment and supplies.

The northwestern areas of Ukraine are flat lands, averaging 650 feet above sea level and studded here and there with low, flat hills and elevated stretches.

The wide valleys of small rivers are swamp or muddy sands; the banks of lakes and ponds are equally boggy. The sandy hills and dunes are overrun by huge forests with heavy underbrush; in general the land is covered with moss and grass. Both the flora and fauna of the whole area are extremely rich and almost virgin, and the annual rainfall is 20 inches on the average.

The great plain extends through the whole of northern Ukraine, from Polisia to the Chernihiv province, then vaults the Dnieper River and continues as far as the Donets Basin.

Sandy roads and narrow paths connect the scattered villages and cities; the unbridgeable marshes preclude all but a rudimentary network of communications. Winding paths, more often mere trails, lead to settlements and villages situated far from the principal highways. The inhabitants live isolated for months at a time, untouched by the civilization of the cities. Yet they know

intimately the meandering roads and paths, dipping into the marshes, in which strangers are soon lost.

Further to the south a broad plateau, beginning as far west as the Vistula River, extends through Western Ukraine, crosses the Dnieper and stretches east to the Don River. The landscape, with high river banks and deep ravines, has a definitely erosive character. The Dniester River, for instance, courses in a 500 to 650 foot-deep ravine. Here we find huge forests which extend back to the city of Lviv in Western Ukraine and the Carpathian Mountains. The great plains of Western Ukraine, known historically as Galicia, are cut by river ravines and creased by small hills. There to be found are many villages and densely populated towns, with good communicating roads. Farther east the landscape soon assumes steppe character.

Dominating the south of Western Ukraine are the heavily forested Carpathian Mountains, with gentle slants and narrow valleys. The mountain range reaches its highest point with Mount Hoverla (6752 feet high). The Carpathians leave the Ukrainian territory in an arc, dipping down into Rumania. (The Crimean Mountains and the Western Caucasus embrace Ukraine from the south and southeast.)

Ukraine as an entity belongs geographically to Eastern Europe, with a moderate climate. The temperature ranges from 19° F to 68° F.

The watershed of Western Ukraine, which runs by the city of Lviv, divides the rivers of that area: some fall into the Dniester and Prut Rivers and then flow into the Black Sea, others join the Vistula River, which empties into the Baltic Sea. Ukraine's largest river is the Dnieper (1420 mi.) which falls into the Black Sea. Second largest river is the Dniester (853 mi.) followed by the Boh and Prypiat Rivers (532 mi. and 494 mi., respectively).

Throughout the watershed of Western Ukraine historically great military operations have been conducted. Its significance, therefore, in the history of Eastern Europe also is great. For example, we find here the military road, running through Byelorussia, which is called the Smolensk Road, or Smolensk Gate. This road was used in the past by the Poles and the French armies of Napoleon. In World War II the Germans used it in their unsuccessful drive on Moscow. The watershed's importance remains undiminished to the present insofar as military techniques need be adapted to various factors, not least in importance being the nature of the terrain.

In Western Ukraine proper, the main military road coming from the west, runs through Peremyshl, hits Lviv and wends eastward to Kiev and beyond. This road, too, is well known in the history of Eastern Europe. Along it was rammed the vast offensive of the Russian armies in World War I in an attempt to shatter the Austro-Hungarian armies. Along it in the other direction, the Germans drove in 1941, only three years later to flee along it, pursued by the onrushing Soviet armies.

Near the city of Lviv the road splits in the direction of Volhynia and toward the city of Ternopil. Both roads are connected by a road near the city of Brody, surrounded by a terrain adaptable to swift and mobile partisan warfare. This area was extensively used by the UPA against Soviet troops. Here, too, the Ukrainian Division in the German army engaged advancing Soviet troops in 1944 in defense of the city of Lviv.

Through the Carpathians are a few roads connecting Western Ukraine with Carpatho-Ukraine, which up to the outbreak of World War II belonged to Czechoslovakia. Further to the west the Ukrainian territory borders on Slovakia, which is now part of Communist Czechoslovakia. Here the UPA units conducted bold and extensive operations and established a strong partisan stronghold and base in the mountains, from which the UPA operated effectively, first against the German troops and later against the Soviets. From its base the UPA raided Communist outposts in Rumania and Czechoslovakia; and it was also from here that a strong UPA unit broke through Czechoslovakia and reached the American zone of Germany (Bavaria) in 1947. The Carpathian Mountains were also the terrain of the final fighting waged by the UPA: here they were assaulted by the joint forces of the Soviet Union, Poland and Czechoslovakia.

The population of these areas in which the UPA was active was uniformly Ukrainian in both the villages and the towns. Only their cities frequently changed their demographic character, depending on who was their master at any given time. Thus, from 1918 until the outbreak of World War II, these cities had a great percentage of Poles, simply because the Polish government kept sending in Polish officials, police and administrative apparatus in order to Polonize them. All schools and other institutions of learning were Polish. The Jewish element, quite numerous in the cities, understandably was on the side of the governing nation, lending the cities an even more Polish character. The Ukrainians were reduced to the status of second-class citizens on their own ethnographic territory, ruled by an alien government and state.

With the arrival of the Bolsheviks, the cities quickly resumed their Ukrainian character, especially during the first Soviet occupation of Western Ukraine in the fall of 1939. During this period the Soviet government conducted, at least initially, a self-restrained policy in order not to inflame the Ukrainian population. Thus a superficial "Ukrainization" was tolerated by Moscow for some time. Soon, however, the NKVD began large-scale arrests and deportations of Ukrainian patriots to Siberia and to concentration camps in the various areas of the USSR.

With the coming of the Germans into Western Ukraine the pattern repeated itself. The larger cities quickly became Germanized. Government offices, stores and schools were taken over by the Germans; only on the lower rungs of the administrative ladder were Ukrainians and Poles to be found. The

city of Lviv became a German city with a steadily increasing influx of German civilians and army officials.

With the return of Soviet troops in 1944 the pattern held true: the Soviet occupier forced all the major cities to take on a Soviet character.

This see-saw phenomenon had its inevitably comical aspect. Unfortunately, thousands upon thousands of human beings were involved. Whoever the ruling master of the land, the Ukrainians stubbornly clung together, organized their own organizations, cooperatives, banks and a series of cultural, youth and women's organizations. They were not to be denied their birthright of their own free life regardless of the cost in lives—and suffering.

Their military spokesmen were the UPA and the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN). Both had a well-organized network of underground organizations dedicated to freedom.

# Chapter Two

## UKRAINE: HISTORY AND PEOPLE

The beginnings of social and cultural life on the territory of present-day Ukraine go back into antiquity. Recent archeological discoveries suggest that some five thousand years ago Ukraine or its present area possessed a highly developed cultural life.<sup>1</sup>

Both historians and archeologists are in total agreement that with the passage of time Ukraine became part and parcel of the same Mediterranean cultural cycle which formed a basis of our Western civilization. The country maintained very active relations—commercial, cultural, and military—with ancient Greece, Rome and Europe. (At the same time the population of Muscovy was isolated from these cultural trends by a “marshy and woody curtain,” forerunner of the present-day Iron Curtain.)

The ancient empires of Greece and Rome waged frequent wars against the states existing on the territory of Ukraine. At other times, however, friendly relations existed with these empires, so that we find the troops of the Ukrainian princes participating jointly in the military campaigns led by the Greek and Roman emperors in Europe, Africa and Asia.

Subsequently, in the VI-VIIth centuries the migration to Europe of the Asian tribal peoples considerably weakened Europe, including the Byzantine empire and the states on the Ukrainian territory. Frequent wars and migrations caused the complete destruction of historical monuments of that time. Only in the IXth century did there develop a well-organized and established state in Eastern Europe. This was Kievan *Rus*, the actual forefather of modern Ukraine (the name *Rus* was usurped by the Muscovite empire under Peter

<sup>1</sup> Pasternak, Yaroslav, *Arkheologia Ukrainy* (Archeology of Ukraine), Toronto, 1961.



the Great, making it synonymous with Russia). Under the dynasty of the Rurykovichs, Kievan *Rus* was a flourishing and powerful state. Its capital city of Kiev was one of the greatest cultural, military and commercial centers in Eastern Europe. In 988 *Rus* officially embraced the Christian faith (although there already were many Christians in Ukraine before that date, including Princess Olha, who ruled in the years 945-969). The ruling families of *Rus* maintained strong dynastic ties with Europe and Asia and, through marriage, were related to the courts of England, France, Germany, Austria, Norway and Sweden and, of course, with the courts of their neighboring states.

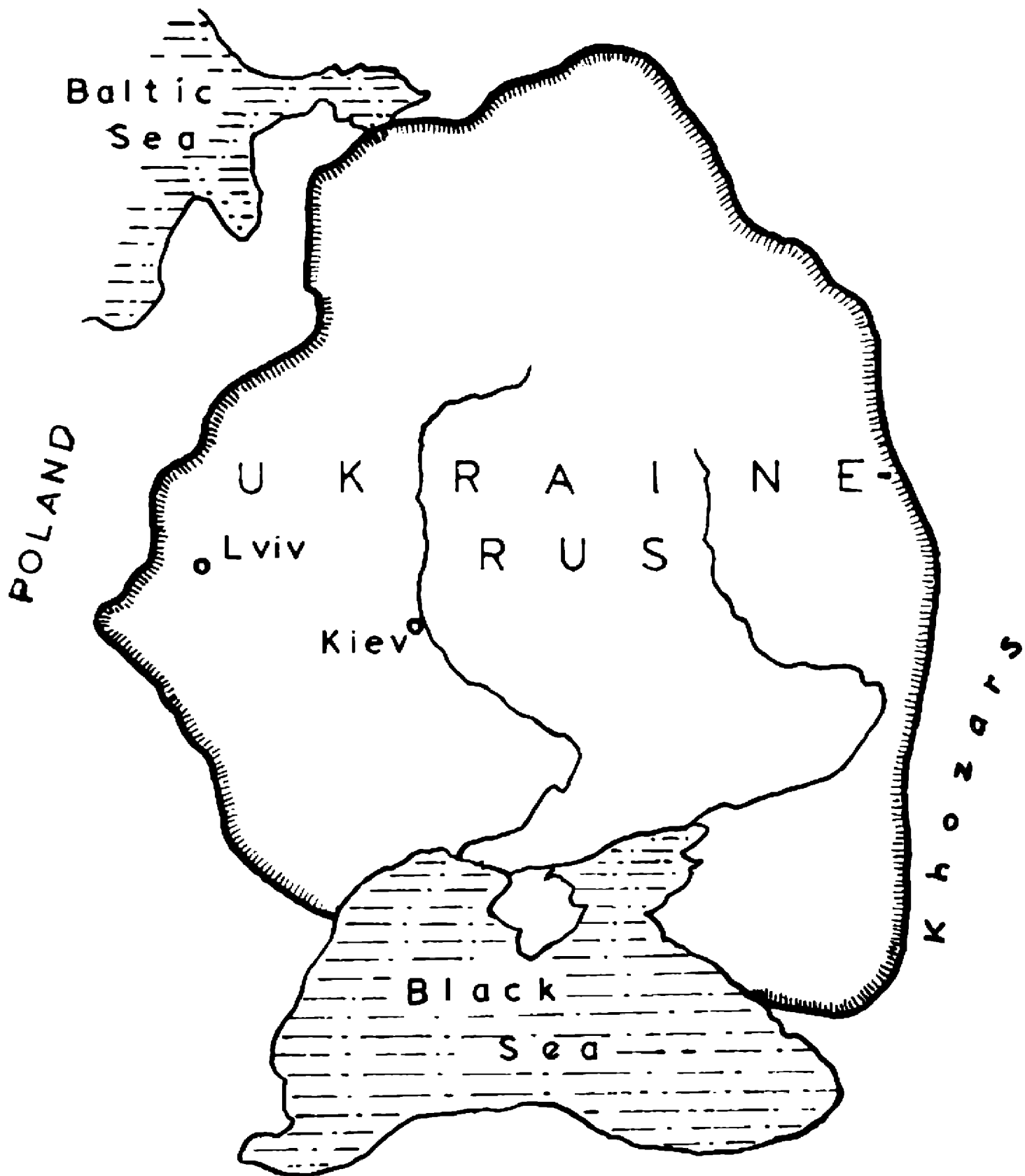
As an independent state *Rus* lasted until the middle of the XIIIth century (Kingdom of Galicia and Lodomeria until the middle of the XIVth century) when, after several wars with the invading Tartars and Mongols of Asia, it finally lost its dominant significance and power. For at least three centuries *Rus* had prevented the Mongol invaders from overrunning Europe. In the defense of Europe, *Rus* was truly all *antemurale Christianitatis*; despite several promises from the Western rulers to come to its support against the Mongols, *Rus* had to bear the brunt of the Asian invasions alone. The Principality of Muscovy was soon swallowed by the Mongols; eventually it turned against *Rus* as well.

In the XVIth century *Rus* entered into the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth as one of three independent components. Subsequently, the Poles began to dominate the Commonwealth to the extent that the roles of *Rus* and Lithuania became relatively insignificant. Eventually *Rus* lost its name, and the country began to be known as Ukraine (the name was already known in the Middle Ages).

Under pressure by the Poles on the one hand and by the Tartars on the other, the Ukrainians resorted to defensive measures: they organized a new military order on the Dnieper River, known as the Zaporozhian *Sich*, or the Kozak *Sich*. The Kozak army, organized by outstanding military leaders of the time, developed into a powerful military force. In the XVIIth century it grew to such proportions that it was able to challenge effectively the Kings of Poland in a large-scale war for the liberation of Ukraine under *Hetman* Bohdan Khmelnytsky (1648-1657). But this nascent Ukrainian state could not manage alone against Poland and Turkey, and Khmelnytsky was compelled to enter into an alliance with the Czar of Muscovy in 1654, which date initiated the gradual enslavement of Ukraine by Russia. In 1667, by the terms of the Treaty of Andrusiv, Ukraine was partitioned between Poland and Russia.

The harsh and systematic oppression and terror introduced by the Russians in Ukraine evoked continual rebellions and unrest among Ukrainians, culminating in a Swedish-Ukrainian alliance between *Hetman* Ivan Mazepa of Ukraine and King Charles XII of Sweden. The Battle at Poltava in 1709 and

PRINCIPALITY  
of  
MUSCOVY



the decimation of the Ukrainian elite brought forth still harsher oppression of Ukraine by Muscovy, now known as Russia. The policy of Peter I and his successors was directed toward the full incorporation of Ukraine into Russia, with the destruction of the separateness of the Ukrainian people as the ultimate goal. For all practical purposes Ukraine had become a province of the Russian empire; in the XIXth century the Ukrainian language was banned in Ukraine; Russian Minister Valuyev asserted: "There is no Ukraine, there never was one, and there never will be one."

Before World War I the majority of the Ukrainian lands belonged to Russia: Galicia and Bukovina were part of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy.

World War I aroused among Ukrainians a new wave of hope and expectation for the final fall of the Russian empire. But for the liberation struggle the Ukrainians needed an army, or at least the nucleus of one.

It was with great difficulty that, at the beginning of World War I, the Ukrainians in Western Ukraine (Galicia) succeeded in organizing a Ukrainian volunteer legion, *Ukrainski Sichovi Striltsi* (Ukrainian *Sich* Riflemen), within the framework of the Austrian army. This first Ukrainian military formation in modern times took part in some of the heaviest campaigns launched against the Russian troops.

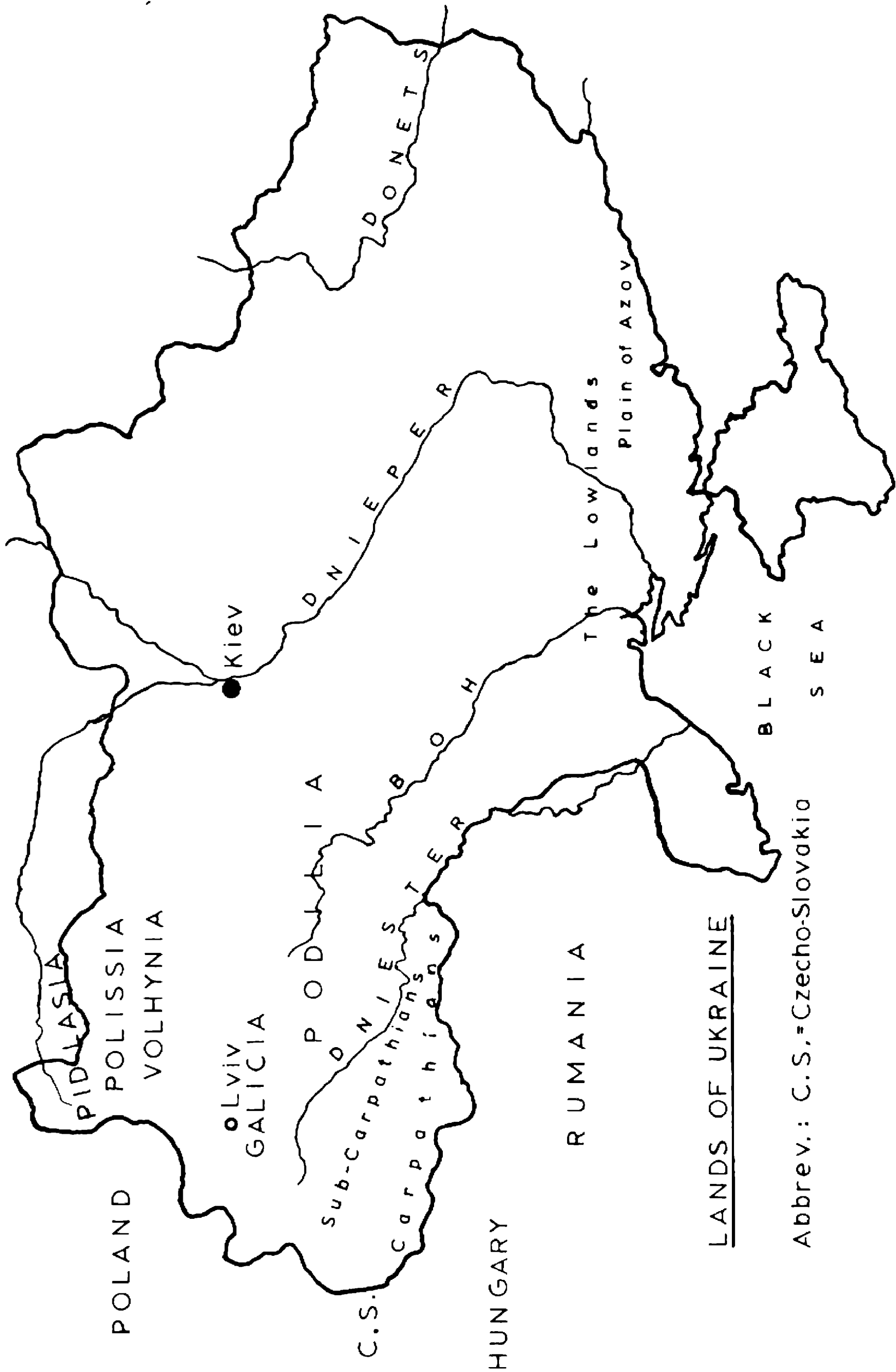
With the outbreak of the Russian Revolution in 1917, Ukrainian soldiers in the Russian armies heeded the call of the Ukrainian Central *Rada* (established in Kiev in March, 1917) and began organizing Ukrainian military units, which were put under the command of Ukrainian officers. By the fall of 1917 there were several "Ukrainized" divisions which served the newly-established Ukrainian national government. But, regrettably, the Ukrainian government, composed chiefly of Socialists who believed in the goodwill of the Russian Provisional Government under Alexander Kerensky, did not advocate a strong national army. On January 22, 1918, Ukraine proclaimed its full sovereignty and independence, encompassing all the Ukrainian lands which had been part of the pre-1917 Russian empire. (The remainder of the Ukrainian territory, Galicia and Bukovina, remained in the Austro-Hungarian empire until November 1, 1918, on which date the Western Ukrainian National Republic was proclaimed.) On February 9, 1918, Ukraine concluded a separate peace treaty with the Central Powers in Brest Litovsk, receiving subsequently *de jure* and *de facto* recognition from Germany, Austria-Hungary, Turkey and Bulgaria. On December 17, 1917, the new Soviet Russian government, headed by Vladimir I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky, also recognized the Ukrainian National Republic, only to launch an armed aggression against Ukraine shortly thereafter.

The chaos of revolution engulfed Ukraine, and increasing pressures were exerted by Germany, Austria and Russia throughout the country. In April, 1918, the Ukrainian Central *Rada* was replaced by the new Ukrainian monarchic government of *Hetman* Paul Skoropadsky, who remained in power until the fall of 1918. Then the Directorate of the Ukrainian National Republic, headed by Simon Petlura, was installed as a third government of reborn Ukraine.

Western Ukraine proclaimed its independence on November 1, 1918, and was immediately attacked by the government of new Poland, which received substantial military, political, economic and financial aid from France, Great Britain and the United States. Thus in 1919 Ukraine (on January 22, 1919, both Ukrainian republics had united into one Ukrainian state) was compelled to wage a war against the Red Russians under Lenin, Trotsky and Stalin, the

MUSCOVY

BYELORUSSIA



LANDS OF UKRAINE

Abbrev.: C.S.=Czecho-Slovakia

White Russians under General Anthony Denikin, and against the Poland of Marshal Josef Pilsudski. By 1920 the Ukrainian armies could no longer sustain the crushing pressures; some of the units crossed into the neighboring countries and were disarmed, others were captured by the Russians and incorporated into their own armies or executed.

But Ukraine had not capitulated. Partisan warfare carried on the struggle for several years, despite the fact that Moscow had succeeded in establishing a Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic which, in 1923, became a member of the Soviet Union.

Western Ukraine, i.e., Galicia and part of Volhynia, was assigned to Poland in 1923 by the Council of Ambassadors, while Carpatho-Ukraine went to Czechoslovakia, and Bukovina and a part of Bessarabia to Rumania.

The political life of the Ukrainians under Poland, Czechoslovakia and Rumania had some limited possibilities of development. In any event, Poland for one could not Polonize or eradicate over 7,000,000 Ukrainians who constituted about one-fourth of its entire population. Soon a flourishing economic and cultural life sprang up; Ukrainian political parties elected an impressive number of Ukrainian deputies and senators to the Warsaw *Sejm*. But Ukrainian schools were systematically Polonized, and Ukrainian lands settled by Polish elements brought in from the West. In virtually all respects the Ukrainians in Poland were treated as second-class citizens. In 1930 the Polish government conducted its notorious "pacification" of Galicia, in the course of which many people were killed and hundreds arrested and tortured.

A similar if less harsh life was led by the Ukrainians in Czechoslovakia and Rumania.

The Russian domination over Ukraine featured the cruel methods of totalitarian oppression and terror. Annihilated through countless purges and trials was the Ukrainian intellectual elite—the university professors, poets, writers and other professional men and women. Moscow pursued a detailed and systematic policy unmistakably aimed at depriving the Ukrainian nation of its enlightened leadership in order to reduce it to an inferior and faceless ethnic group. Toward that end Communism and its bearers in Ukraine also falsified historical facts, elevating the Russians to the level of "supermen" (thereby following the German concept of *ueber-Mensch*), "without whom the Ukrainians were and are helpless and insignificant." Moscow, through its policy of favoring at every turn the Russian culture over the Ukrainian, sought to impart to the enslaved Ukrainians feelings of inferiority and worthlessness.

Another facet of this genocidal onslaught—economic exploitation through the system of collectivization—was intended to reduce the Ukrainians to ill-fed, economically unrewarded and wholly dependent robots. The resistance of the people culminated in a fierce struggle against collectivization. Moscow

crushed it with a man-made famine, during which some 6 million Ukrainians died from hunger and disease in 1932-33.

During World War II, when Ukraine was occupied by the Germans, the Nazi ruler in Ukraine, fellow totalitarian Erich Koch, in an address to Nazi *gauleiters* on August 25, 1943, stated:

There is no need to turn the land over to the Ukrainians. It will be reserved for the Germans. Stalin understood well that if he wanted to draw out all strength from the Ukrainians, he had to establish the *kolkhozes* (collective farms). Thanks to this system of collectivized agriculture it was possible to exploit the Ukrainians more fully than Czarist Russia ever had done.

It is evident why and how both totalitarian systems, the Russian Communist and the German Nazi, wished the Ukrainians enslaved.

The long-range aspect of Moscow's goal of destruction of the Ukrainians entailed their ethnic distinctiveness. A systematic Russification of Ukraine was implemented through the imposition of Russian schools, language and arts over the Ukrainian, and through the physical deportation of Ukrainians to the Asian areas of the USSR, mostly into the many concentration and labor camps Moscow had long ago set up there. This genocidal practice was suspended during World War II, only to be resumed after 1945 by Stalin, Khrushchev and, now, Brezhnev and Kosygin.

Although they were compelled to live after World War I under a steadily intensifying domination, the Ukrainians did not accept the destructive designs of the enemy passively. The Ukrainian youth above all, fired by the recent Ukrainian independence of 1918, continued to harbor thoughts of freedom. Legal parties existed in the Ukrainian territories under Poland, Czechoslovakia and Rumania. Also established, however, was a secret revolutionary organization known as the Ukrainian Military Organization (UVO). Its goal was to prepare an armed force of Ukraine towards the day a new conflict would erupt among the occupiers of Ukraine. Meanwhile, through a number of revolutionary acts, such as sabotage of state institutions and police posts and other forms of anti-state diversion in Western Ukraine, it expressed the resistance of the Ukrainian people to foreign domination and the attempt to destroy the Ukrainian nation as such. The UVO and its revolutionary actions were supported and encouraged by the Ukrainian people, understanding it to be the continuation of the armed struggle for Ukrainian statehood.

In 1929 the UVO, under the leadership of Col. Eugene Konovalets, expanded its organizational framework and, in adopting a series of political theses, transformed itself into a political and ideological organization under the name of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN). In addition to its strictly military-revolutionary acts against the Polish government, the OUN proceeded to establish a well-organized network of underground cells

and to provide youth with ideological and political training. As an active underground resistance organization, the OUN could not avoid significant losses in outstanding and leading personnel, but these sacrifices served to strengthen and expand the ideology of Ukrainian nationalism.

In 1938 Colonel Konovalets was assassinated in Rotterdam, Holland, by a Soviet secret agent, who succeeded in planting a time bomb in his trench coat. (Also assassinated by a Soviet agent was Simon Petlura, head of the Ukrainian national government-in-exile and one of the leading figures of the Ukrainian struggle for independence in 1917-1920; he was shot down in Paris in 1926.)

To be underscored here is that the terms "nationalism" and "nationalist" in the Ukrainian sense do not carry the sinister connotation that they do in the United States or elsewhere in Europe, where they are considered by many to be synonymous with the terms "Nazism" and "Fascism." Ukrainian nationalism, in its ideological concept, is nothing else than Ukrainian patriotism, which stresses above all the liberation of the Ukrainian people and the establishment of a free and independent Ukrainian state. All other questions, relating to economy, administration, and the like, are left to the time when the Ukrainian people are free and in their own state. The motto Col. Konovalets bequeathed to future generations was: "You will establish a Ukrainian state or will die fighting for it."

Consequently, neither Ukrainian nationalism in general nor the OUN specifically had anything in common with Nazism or Fascism or any other similar movement. It never envisioned any racial or discriminatory policies towards any group of citizens in the Ukrainian state. The OUN also never entertained any aggressive plans or tendencies toward territorial aggrandizement, as contrasted with Russian Communism, which preaches slogans of "world revolution" and the like. This confusion in Western thinking about nationalism is due mainly to Soviet Russian propaganda, which terms all opponents of Communism as "Fascists," "Nazis" and "reactionary elements." Soviet Russian propaganda is especially vituperative against "Ukrainian bourgeois nationalism," which it accuses of being Fascist and inspired by "foreign interventionists," usually "West German revanchists," the Vatican and "American imperialists."

A Western writer who has given a comprehensive definition of Ukrainian nationalism is John A. Armstrong.<sup>2</sup>

The underground resistance struggle, which the Ukrainians waged against the Soviet regime immediately following the Soviet takeover of Ukraine in 1920, lasted until 1924. This struggle was conducted mainly through partisan groups and insurgents. Subsequently, the anti-Soviet resistance in Ukraine

<sup>2</sup> Armstrong, John A., *Ukrainian Nationalism 1939-1945*, New York, 1955.



became concentrated in the hands of political and intellectual forces, which, too, were eventually destroyed by the Soviet secret police. Thus, Ukrainian resistance had to adopt different forms and guises so as not to expose the entire Ukrainian people to the ruthless policies of the Kremlin.

By the late 1930's the European situation had become so clouded that a general war loomed more and more certain. The OUN undertook to prepare the Ukrainian people for the impending developments, to enlighten the cadres and to prepare the OUN leadership for eventual military action. The leaders of the Ukrainian resistance movement believed that the inevitable World War should be met by Ukrainians, fully prepared both morally and materially.

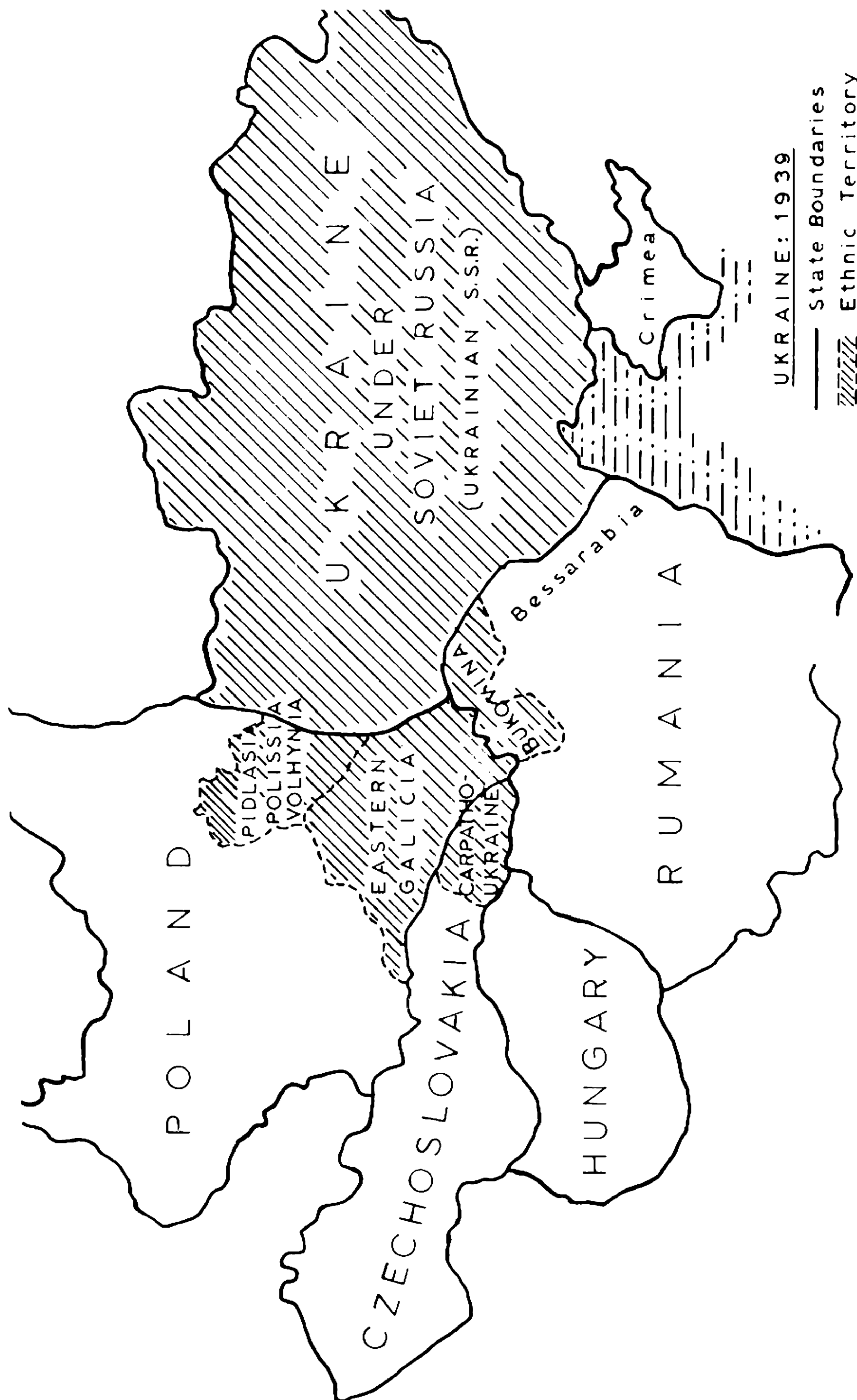
The forerunner of what the Ukrainians hoped would happen were the events occurring in Carpatho-Ukraine in the fall of 1938. This small portion of the Ukrainian ethnographic territory with a population of some 600,000 had been under Czechoslovak rule since 1920. With the breakup of the Czechoslovak Republic in 1938, Carpatho-Ukraine became a focal point when, first, it became an autonomous state and then in March, 1939, an independent state. The sudden rise of the Ukrainians in Carpatho-Ukraine, where the OUN played a vital part, surprised not only the Germans, but the Soviet leaders as well. The Nazi government soon decided to dispose of Carpatho-Ukraine; it allowed the Hungarians, in payment for their political alliance with Hitler, to occupy Carpatho-Ukraine. The ill-equipped Ukrainian militia put up a gallant but brief resistance against the invading Hungarian troops; hundreds of them were slaughtered by the regular Hungarian army.

The case of Carpatho-Ukraine clearly put the Nazis on notice that their plans concerning Eastern Europe, and especially Ukraine, would meet fierce resistance on the part of the Ukrainians.

The reaction of the Soviet Union to the events in Carpatho-Ukraine was even more significant and meaningful. In his speech concerning Carpatho-Ukraine Stalin expressed grave concern; the events taking place there, he feared, would have wide repercussions among Ukrainians in the USSR and elsewhere.

Carpatho-Ukraine constituted also a first test for the OUN: it threw its full support behind the movement to maintain Carpatho-Ukraine as an independent state, despite the fact that there was little attention paid by the world to Carpatho-Ukraine, and that its neighbors, such as Poland, Hungary and Rumania, regarded its creation as a direct and weighty threat to their political life, especially Poland, within whose borders were over 7,000,000 restive nationalist Ukrainians.

It was not until Carpatho-Ukraine fell, soon after it had proclaimed its independence, that Europe and the whole world began studying the Ukrainian problem. Above all, the Ukrainians had been the first people to challenge



UKRAINE: 1939

- State Boundaries
- //// Ethnic Territory

Hitler's concept of a "New Europe." From Hust, capital of Carpatho-Ukraine, *The New York Times* correspondent, the late Anne O'Hara McCormick, sent excellent dispatches praising the courage and determination which the Ukrainians exhibited in the face of a superior force, which was Hungary, backed by Nazi Germany.

Although the independence of Carpatho-Ukraine had been proclaimed by a small fraction of the whole Ukrainian nation, there was no doubt in the minds of Ukrainians that it had been only the first stepping-stone toward a greater and much richer goal: the liberation of the entire Ukrainian people and the establishment of a modern Ukrainian state with its capital in Kiev, the ancient seat of Ukrainian cultural, religious, political, social and economic life.



# Chapter Three

## UKRAINE IN WORLD WAR II

The signing of the nonaggression pact between Nazi Germany and Communist Russia on August 23, 1939, paved the way for the German invasion of Poland, which soon culminated in the rapid defeat of the latter. On the basis of the German-Soviet agreement, almost all the Ukrainian lands which had been part of the Polish state, were given to the Soviet Union. Involved were some 7 million Ukrainians, who never before had been under Soviet or Russian jurisdiction, except for an area of Volhynia which had been part of the Russian empire prior to the outbreak of World War I.

Immediately after the takeover of Western Ukraine by Soviet troops in the second half of September, 1939, the Soviet government initiated a policy of persecution directed primarily against the Ukrainian political parties, the Ukrainian Catholic Church and the Ukrainian intelligentsia. Hundreds upon thousands of Ukrainian leaders at all levels of life were arrested and deported to Siberia, without trial or judicial hearing. These arrests compelled thousands of Ukrainians to flee to the west, across the newly-established German-Soviet border, into the territory of Poland occupied by German troops and ruled by the German administration. The Russians could not seal the frontiers for a number of weeks, a situation which was exploited by the OUN for the establishment of an organizational network and revolutionary cells on most of the Ukrainian territory.

There began for the OUN a new struggle with an unknown new enemy in Western Ukraine, the NKVD (People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs).

The OUN had to find ways of coping with the implacable Soviet secret police and security troops, and the whole system of the totalitarian state. Armed groups of Ukrainian insurgents crossed the border through the Carpathian Mountains and concentrated their activities among the population of Ukraine. These groups in contact with the Ukrainian inhabitants did much to uplift their spirit and to counteract the Communist propaganda, which constantly blared forth that the Communist Party was a friend of the people, and that no one could escape the far-reaching NKVD, the punitive arm of the Soviet government. The very presence of the OUN under the Soviet occupation lightened the hearts of the Ukrainian people. But the OUN went on to act for the people, committing acts of sabotage, for instance, blowing up a Soviet ammunition dump near Peremyshl.

The Ukrainians knew that both the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany were aware that their "alliance," a strictly conjectural and convenient arrangement, was to be short-lived. Hitler never ceased viewing the USSR as an ever-present threat; he devoutly believed that it was the "destiny" of Nazi Germany to remove that threat once and forever. In addition, the rich economic reservoir of Ukraine and the Caucasus beckoned him to the East, which he believed was his natural *Lebensraum* for the settlement of his racially "superior" German nation. But Hitler pondered and mused for over a year as to whether or not to attack the USSR and open up a second front. But the economic factor in German thinking apparently outweighed other arguments, and he decided on his fatal move eastward.

In launching a sudden invasion of the Soviet Union, Hitler concentrated his primary thrust at Ukraine and the Caucasus in order to gain Ukrainian bread and Caucasian oil. Other thrusts were directed against Leningrad and Moscow, the nerve centers of Communist power.

After conquering Ukraine, Hitler became a victim of his own ignorance with respect to the USSR. Instead of breaking up the Soviet Russian Communist empire, Hitler's commissars and *gauleiters* began the ruthless persecution and deportation of the population, retained the Communist collective farms and reduced the population of Ukraine to the status of *untermenschen* (subhumans). The Nazis thus played into the hands of the Soviet Russian oppressors. Cleverly exploiting the shortsighted policies of the new occupiers, the Kremlin overseers managed to strengthen Communist feeling and the concept of the USSR itself.

The German troops crossed the Soviet border on June 22, 1941. The swift and spectacular advances of the German armies created incredible chaos and disorder in the Soviet army. Hundreds of thousands of Soviet troops, particularly those of Ukrainian, Byelorussian, Georgian, Armenian, Cossack, and Moslem descent, broke ranks and without firing a single shot surrendered to the invading Germans. Many of these non-Russian Red Army

soldiers volunteered their services against Stalin, hoping that the Germans would soon announce support of the liberation aspirations of the non-Russian nations in the USSR. The mass defections and desertions from the Soviet ranks manifested patently the instability and corruptness of the Communist regime in the whole of the USSR.

When the German troops entered Lviv, capital of Western Ukraine, and then began moving rapidly deep into the territory of Ukraine, the Ukrainians, so long brutally oppressed by Moscow and by Poland, believed that the time for the rebirth of their national freedom and independence was at hand. They firmly believed that their perennial and mortal enemy, Communist Russia, was well on the road to utter and irrevocable defeat.

Anti-Soviet uprisings and rebellions sprang up here and there. Retreating Soviet and the NKVD security troops met for the first time with the OUN armed groups led by Stepan Bandera; these groups not only pursued the retreating NKVD police force, but also challenged units of the regular Soviet army. The Ukrainian populace welcomed the German troops as true liberators rather than as invaders, as everywhere the German troops displayed friendship and sympathy to Ukrainians. In villages and small towns independent Ukrainian committees began setting up local administrations, which received the support of the German command.

The OUN, which was the most powerful of all organized Ukrainian groups and parties, had split before the outbreak of the German-Soviet war into two blocs. One, overwhelmingly larger and more active, was under the leadership of Stepan Bandera; the other, more conservative, was led by Col. Andrew Melnyk. The war between Nazi Germany and the USSR failed to heal the rift, with the result that the armed resistance against the Soviet troops was initially waged by the two OUN's on a parallel level. In addition, in the north, *Otaman* Taras Bulba (a pseudonym) organized his own partisan groups in the Polisia area. There were also other anti-Soviet insurgent groups acting independently, but which had in common the ultimate goal of a free and independent Ukraine.

At the same time remnants of the Soviet armies were left behind in the forests and marshes in the northwestern areas of Ukraine; their standing orders from the Soviet High Command were to undertake sabotage and disruptive actions in the rear of the German armies. The presence of this enemy posed the threat of complete chaos, which the Ukrainians had experienced in the time of the Russian Revolution in 1917.

In order to forestall this dangerous situation, the revolutionary OUN of Bandera planned to put an end to this mosaic of revolutionary movements and groups by subordinating all armed partisan forces under one center, the OUN under the leadership of Bandera. The plan succeeded in being implemented peacefully. Given birth as a consequence was the great Ukrainian revolu-



tionary force, the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (*Ukrainska Povstanska Armia*) or the UPA. This action of unifying all insurgent forces lasted until 1943.

When the German groups entered the territory of Ukraine in 1941, the overwhelming majority of the Ukrainian population was reeling under the terroristic blows of the dreaded Soviet NKVD. In all cities and towns of Western Ukraine the NKVD, in its haste to retreat, had massacred thousands of Ukrainian political prisoners who could not be taken into the interior of the USSR because of the swiftness of the German advance. They were executed at random and without any trial or hearings. These massacres left an indelible impression not only upon the families and friends of the victims but upon the Ukrainian people as a whole. The German troops investigated these massacres, taking down meticulous data, attested to by witnesses, and burying them in their archives.

But very soon the Ukrainian political leaders began to wonder what the coming of the Germans really meant. Although the German *Wehrmacht* behaved properly with the Ukrainian population, even sympathizing with the Ukrainian revolutionary movement of the OUN, the German attitude as a whole became a puzzle for the Ukrainians. There was no announcement on the part of Hitler or his government spelling out the ultimate objective of Nazi Germany in its war against the USSR. Their slogan was "liberation from Bolshevism," but their cruel and inhuman liquidation of the Jews in Ukraine unmistakably revealed the nature of the new conqueror of Ukraine. The fate of Ukraine and Ukrainians continued to be shrouded in mystery, but those few Ukrainians who knew something about Nazi plans and aspirations in Eastern Europe became extremely pessimistic over the future of Ukraine.

On June 30, 1941, the OUN acted: it proclaimed the restoration and rebirth of the Ukrainian independent state. At a national congress in Lviv which was attended by representatives of all the revolutionary forces of the OUN and other Ukrainian patriotic organizations, a Ukrainian Provisional Government was established, headed by Yaroslav Stetzko, a prominent leader of the OUN. The revolutionary OUN of Bandera was fully aware of the fact that by the Act of June 30, 1941, the OUN had forced Nazi Germany to drop its mask and state its policy and intention with respect to Ukraine.

Taken by surprise by the action of the OUN, the German reaction was swift and violent. Arrested were many members of the Ukrainian Provisional Government and the OUN, including Stepan Bandera and Yaroslav Stetzko. As a condition for their release, the Germans demanded the immediate revocation of the Act of June 30. The OUN leaders promptly refused, including those held in custody by the Gestapo. When a high Nazi official, Bueller, asked who ordered the restoration of the Ukrainian state, Bandera replied: "This was done by my people, and upon my explicit instruction."

With that, arrests and persecution of Ukrainians by the Gestapo began *en masse*.

The OUN did not, as yet, retaliate by declaring a full-scale war against the Nazis. It reacted in limited measure, determined by the needs and requirements of the defense of the Ukrainian population at the moment.

The OUN, which had been preparing for the eventuality of a German-Soviet war, had held in secret its Second Great Assembly in April of 1941. Topping the agenda was a discussion on the military situation which was entrusted to Major Dmytro Hrytsai, Military Director of the OUN Council (subsequently made a general under the name of Perebyinis and who was to serve as Chief of Staff of the UPA). The Great Assembly of the OUN made several important decisions regarding military affairs; they are given here in summary form:

1) The OUN is organizing and training its own military forces for the attainment of its objectives;

2) The tasks of the OUN military forces are:

a) to organize and implement an armed struggle of the OUN for the victory of the Ukrainian National Revolution and the attainment of a free and independent Ukrainian State;

b) to be a striking force and to serve as the basis of the OUN in this struggle;

c) to become the nucleus of a Ukrainian army in the Ukrainian State;

3) In time of political enslavement, the OUN, with the assistance of the Military Staff of the OUN, will organize military centers both in Ukrainian lands and abroad . . . it will train and prepare military specialists . . . coordinate all military work . . . prepare plans with consideration to the political situation;

4) In time of insurrection the task of the Military Staff and military centers is to mount the military force of the revolution and to direct military actions in the country;

5) In an armed uprising the OUN shall organize and lead the struggle of all Ukrainians, regardless of their political views.<sup>3</sup>

This document shows that although the OUN had organized the military force as a cadre skeleton taken only from its own members, it required that in a critical moment the armed force have a national character and that, in the struggle for liberation, the entire Ukrainian people, as such, take part.

The decisions of the Second Great Assembly of the OUN failed to define the power which enslaved Ukraine. This is quite understandable if the situation as it existed at the time is taken into consideration. On the one hand, the

<sup>3</sup> Mirchuk, Petro, *Ukrainska Povstanska Armia 1942-1952* (The Ukrainian Insurgent Army 1942-1952), Munich, 1953.

German-Soviet war presented a series of concrete possibilities in the foreseeable future; on the other hand, the attitude of the Germans toward Ukrainian independence was rapidly becoming negative.

Under the circumstances the audacity and dynamism of the OUN in evaluating the situation and organizing an armed force so vital to Ukraine are not to be minimized.

The so-called favorable attitude of Ukrainians toward the Germans is readily explained by the fact that at that time the Germans were the only enemy of hated Moscow. Anyone who had come with the intention of destroying the totalitarian power of Moscow would have been seen as an ally by the captive and enslaved peoples of the USSR. The Germans, however, made a cardinal mistake by retaining the Russian *status quo* in the occupied non-Russian lands of the USSR, thus reaping the odium of these peoples almost overnight. It was only a matter of time before the Nazis would be lumped with the Russians as detested oppressors.

### **Restoration of Ukrainian Statehood on June 30, 1941**

The proclamation of the restoration of the Ukrainian state on June 30, 1941, was made at what seemed to the Ukrainian political leaders to be an opportune moment. German forces, moving virtually unopposed on Ukrainian territory, had reached Lviv, capital of Western Ukraine. The situation simply called for the leadership of the OUN to act, for here was the opportunity for which the Ukrainians had waited since 1920. But the political actions had to be coordinated with the military situation, which, in a word, was that Ukraine was the terrain of a total war between the armed forces of Germany and the USSR, engaged in a struggle to the death. The timing of the proclamation of the free Ukrainian state merits a brief discussion.

In wartime the political tactics of peacetime are hardly applicable. The thinking and the attitudes undergo rapid changes under the impact of a continuous succession of events, which presents a variety of countless possibilities which must be assessed and exploited. Very often a political act assumes a new historical significance; sometimes a mistake, small and without significance in time of peace, acquires great meaning in time of war. A statesman or politician who cannot cope with a new situation imposed by war events cannot long remain a political leader. His place is taken by others who are dedicated and willing to confront history. Indeed, they themselves are the makers of history.

The war events of 1941 imposed towering demands upon the Ukrainian people. Throughout the centuries they had become familiar with situations as unfavorable for the ideal of Ukrainian statehood as that brought on by World War II. For lack of prophets, however, the outcome of a war remains

in considerable doubt if only because of the element of chance. Therefore, the Ukrainians felt compelled to marshal their military and political forces regardless of how unpromising the situation appeared. However bleak, it was still an opportunity.

At the start of World War II the Ukrainians took part as a mobilized people in an alien and unfriendly Russian army. A number of them were also to be found in the German ranks, inasmuch as the totalitarian governments had enough power and sanctions to utilize alien populations at will. Ensuing developments indicated that the Ukrainian nation could find itself in a situation in which a struggle for the establishment of a Ukrainian state might become a distinct possibility. The political leadership of any mature nation could well have considered it necessary to initiate such a struggle. In any event, it was clear that the Ukrainians had need of some military cadres and formations on which to call should a crucial decision be taken.

That the USSR would survive the war seemed highly improbable. If not the Germans, political logic dictated, then assuredly the Western Allies would avail themselves of this golden opportunity to get rid of the Communist disease once and forever. This conviction was based on the fact that the Russian Communist empire was an avowed threat to the whole free world.

Regrettably for the Ukrainians and other captive nations, the Western world reacted quite differently. Terrified by Nazi excesses and brutalities in occupied Europe, the West shifted its sympathies to the USSR and threw all its military, political and financial aid to Stalin in order to defeat Hitler. The Kremlin dictator was viewed as the lesser of two evils.

A prerequisite of any military force is its own government. If history gives us some cases of military groups without a government, such states were abnormal and could and did not last long. An army without government soon deteriorates into a motley band of brigands. Conversely, combatants with political direction, actual or potential, constitute a power all the more potent for its permanence.

It is thus quite clear why imperial nations eschew creating military groups consisting of the conquered nations, going only so far—and solely for purposes of propaganda—as to establish “legions.” It is to be recalled that during World War I the Austro-Hungarian government agreed to the establishment of the Legion of the Ukrainian *Sich* Riflemen (*Ukrainski Sichovi Striltsi*), and that the Nazi regime consented to the creation of the Ukrainian “Galicia” Division. Even Communist Russia made some concessions to Ukrainian sentiments by naming “Ukrainian” sections of the Soviet front during World War II and by establishing a military decoration bearing the name of *Hetman* Bohdan Khmelnytsky, the leader of the Ukrainian national liberation movement of the XVIIth century.

Basic to all activities in war is not the diplomacy of a captive nation or

the shelter of a constitutional provision, but an expression of will by an armed force; this becomes both law and axiom. This classic definition provides us with an insight into the situation in which Ukrainian nationalism found itself at the moment of the Act of June 30, 1941. The creators and initiators of this Act were hardly so naive as not to understand the grave implications of what they had to do. And the Germans correctly interpreted this Act not only as an anti-Russian act but as an anti-German one as well.

Thus the Ukrainian initiators, the OUN nationalists, by taking events in their own hands on June 30, 1941, well realized that logically acts of armed force would be required from the Ukrainian people in much greater proportions. Such an Act without the backing of arms would be but a quixotic gesture, soon to be buried in some archives, even if the initiators suffered the ultimate penalty at the hands of the enemy for their boldness. Thus the realistic and logical sequence of the Act of June 30 was the nationwide Ukrainian armed resistance movement, the Ukrainian Insurgent Army. The sequence of events was also logical and normal: the Ukrainian state, then the Ukrainian army.

Under normal conditions the political objective guides the operation of the military factor and the means for its attainment. The political objective, if valid, usually affects the masses, and the higher it is pitched the greater is the response of the people and the stronger the military action.

In the Ukrainian case the political goal was the highest: a Ukrainian independent state. This goal attracted and claimed the best elements of the nation, enlisting loyalty, readiness and sacrifice. Similarly, this supreme goal of the OUN affected the enemy, provoking a reaction at all levels.

The timing of the restoration of the Ukrainian state is considered by some Ukrainian historians as having been premature. But the leadership of the OUN under Bandera could no longer delay the date. The Germans were fully aware of the attitude of the Ukrainian nationalists toward the Third Reich's plans for colonizing Ukraine. To have waited under these conditions would have been both dangerous and illogical; ahead was certain annihilation by the Nazi police apparatus. In general, inactivity and inertia only strengthen the enemy. The year of 1941 was deemed the most appropriate, because the Germans had just entered Ukraine and had had no time to realize, even partially, their political plans. An earlier date would have been useless. A latter date was not possible, for then the Nazis, fully organized, would have been able to crush any resistance put up by the Ukrainian people. It was a time when the Germans had not revealed their plans with respect to Ukraine. At the same time the retreat of the Soviet troops from Ukraine provided ample scope for underground activities, especially since the Ukrainian people had been imbued with extreme hatred for the Soviet regime and with a new faith in their own destiny as a free and independent Ukrainian state.

The Act of June 30 was also a blow for the Germans, who had had no inkling of it; initiative had been wrested away from them by the Ukrainians. This act constituted a political and moral setback for the Nazi plans for Ukraine. Therefore, the Nazis strove to compel the OUN leaders in their prisons to revoke the Act of June 30. All refused, however, to bow to the German orders, sustained by their belief that their action would inflame Ukraine with a new feeling and would establish a bridge of continuity for Ukrainian statehood spanning back to the memorable date of January 22, 1918, when the independence of Ukraine had been proclaimed in Kiev.

Another consideration which had impelled the OUN leaders to decisive action was the knowledge that Communism in Ukraine had been implanted by Russians. Unlike Communism in Russia proper, it could be counted on to disappear from Ukraine in a matter of days.

Also to be mentioned is that before the outbreak of the German-Soviet war the Germans had taken several actions which, in fact, had misled many Ukrainians for a while as to the true intentions of the Third Reich in Ukraine. For instance, the German army command had agreed to organize a Ukrainian legion and to admit a certain number of Ukrainian interpreters into the German army. The legion was commanded by Roman Shukhevych, an outstanding member of the OUN who subsequently was to become Commander-in-Chief of the UPA. Any illusions about the Germans began to be dispelled when they arrested some of the officers of the Legion and reduced it to a police unit.

Hunted down by the Gestapo were the so-called "Field Groups" (*pokhidni hrupy*) organized by the OUN. These were staffed by members of the OUN who followed the German front and were charged with organizing Ukrainian administrations and propagating the ideas of Ukrainian liberation. The Field Groups, acting "illegally" for the most part, had short shrift at the hands of the Gestapo. The remnants of these groups as well as of the Ukrainian Legion "Nightingale" eventually joined the ranks of the UPA.

The intentions and long-range plans of Hitler with regard to Ukraine were indicated by the way Nazi Germany parceled and conducted the administration of Ukraine. Galicia was attached to the "Gouvernement General" of Poland; the southwestern territories were given to Rumania, and Carpatho-Ukraine had been ceded to Hungary previously. The bulk of the Ukrainian national territory was given the name of *Reichskommissariat Ukraine*, which was, along with other lands in Eastern Europe, destined for colonization by Germans. Appointed as chief administrator of Ukraine was Erich Koch, who immediately instituted a policy of persecution and oppression, using the well-proven methods of the NKVD. Pillage, shooting and executions in villages and cities became commonplace. At times it seemed that both Russian and German imperialism were conspiring to eradicate the Ukrainian

people. In fact, there were instances of close collaboration between the Gestapo and the NKVD against the Ukrainians, especially at the time the Soviet partisans appeared in Ukraine.

The Germans deported from Ukraine some two million young men and women for slave labor in Germany. Many of them made their way back to Ukraine and told how they were treated by the Nazis as an "inferior race"; all had been compelled to wear the symbol "O," for *Osten*, or East.

The Ukrainians now had been furnished with ample proof that both the USSR and Nazi Germany were the enemies of the Ukrainian people, bent on destroying them and exploiting the riches of their land.

Ukrainian social and cultural organizations, although allowed to function, had but a limited scope of activity: the petitioning of petty German officials. The Ukrainian political parties of Western Ukraine, which had been part of Poland until 1939, were dissolved. In the circumstances the OUN was the sole political force on the horizon that could express political will and decision.

Thus the OUN under the leadership of Bandera decided to declare an unequal war against the two greatest empires of the world: Communist Russia and Nazi Germany. Thus was born the great Ukrainian resistance movement, led by the UPA.

In 1943, after the German debacle at Stalingrad, the political leaders of Eastern Europe were under the impression that the Western Allies, once Nazi Germany was defeated, would of necessity oppose the expansion of Russian Communism into the heart of Europe. It is difficult today to verify where such thinking originated, but it was then widely current. The Allies were known to have planned an invasion of Italy and a subsequent attack of the Balkans and Hungary in order to prevent Soviet troops from reaching the German territories. Such a plan was originally advanced by Winston Churchill, but was vetoed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt of the United States.

In any event the Supreme Command of the UPA took these reports and assumptions under serious consideration. In November, 1943, a military delegation of the UPA went to Budapest and, in the name of the Supreme Ukrainian Liberation Council (UHVR), held extensive talks with General Szombateli, Chief of Staff of the Hungarian Army. Similar talks were held with Rumanian military leaders and representatives of the Polish underground.<sup>4</sup>

In the second half of 1944 the overwhelming majority of Ukrainian lands were again under the occupation of Moscow. The mission of the OUN was to apprise the populace of the situation on the war fronts and to elucidate why the Ukrainian nation ought to continue its struggle for liberation. The

<sup>4</sup> *Suchasnist* (Contemporary Time), Vol. V, 1962, p. 62, Munich.



moment called for the crystallization of ideological and political positions and the subordination of everything to the prime objective of the nation: final liberation and independence.

It was abundantly clear that the military strength of the UPA was woefully unequal to the forces of the two occupiers of Ukraine. But the war was still going on and the shape and content of the outcome were still unknown. The Ukrainian leaders, exerting a final effort, wrested from the German government consent for the organization of a combat Ukrainian division. In allowing the unit to be organized the Germans were thinking of a unit which would bolster their thinning combat ranks, while the Ukrainians believed that it would serve as a nucleus of their own armed forces.<sup>5</sup>

As we can see, the Ukrainians tried to exploit all the existing possibilities toward the creation of their own armed forces; the forces that had engulfed the Ukrainian lands had to be guided and channeled to a proper objective, the ideal of Ukrainian statehood. The movement for Ukrainian independence had to be, and was, uncompromising and dynamic.

The West's alliance with Russian Communism left the Ukrainians bitterly disillusioned. The concept of a free Ukraine and of freedom for the other non-Russian nations meant the dismemberment of an empire which the United States, Great Britain and other Western powers had committed themselves to preserve and sustain. Plainly, application to the USSR of the ideal of national emancipation and self-determination, as enunciated by President Woodrow Wilson in World War I was dangerous; the Russian Empire was essential to the West intact, captive nations and all, for the destruction of Germany and Japan.

Undaunted, the Ukrainians plunged on nevertheless, and the record of heroism, patriotism and self-sacrifice it compiled in World War II is unrivaled in the annals of history.

The Ukrainians waged a war against the two greatest armies the world has ever seen, if only to demonstrate their will to freedom and independence, which their neighbors had denied them.

Today, a quarter of a century since this unequal struggle of the UPA took place, it is not difficult to analyze what happened in Ukraine. But the lessons are by no means negligible or to be forgotten.

The Ukrainians demonstrated that Nazi Germany and Communist Russia were enemies with which it is impossible to live in peace and harmony.

The postwar period, which embraces an unending succession of Kremlin-inspired subversions and aggressions, including Korea, North Vietnam and Cuba, has totally vindicated the Ukrainian nationalist underground and its supreme efforts to convince the Western World of the duplicity, aggressive-

<sup>5</sup> Reitlinger, G., *The House Built on Sand*, New York, 1960.

ness and permanent menace which the USSR poses to our society and our way of life.

The Ukrainians failed to overcome Nazi Germany and Communist Russia, but they succeeded in providing us with a great saga of supreme sacrifice. The great lesson is that Ukrainian men were willing to pay with their lives for freedom, independence and human dignity.

# Chapter Four

## THE ORGANIZATION OF THE UPA

The Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) underwent various phases of organization. Whenever it became evident that the organizational structure lagged behind the demands of the moment, changes and improvements were promptly made. The organization of the UPA was especially sensitive to the conditions of combat and to the methods used by the enemy. Because the structure of every underground organization, especially a military one, must be flexible, it cannot tolerate the time-consuming characteristic of a bureaucratic system. Effectiveness alone demanded that the staffs of the UPA act quickly and decisively. The variety and extreme changeability of conditions put a premium on the ability to adjust quickly and on soundness of judgment.

An insurgent army differs markedly from a regular one. For example, it soon became evident under the Soviet occupation that operations by large units in some areas would be wasteful and ineffective. Immediately after a major encounter at Hurby the General Staff of the UPA ordered a reorganization of UPA units in this area into groups no larger than platoons. Henceforth only in exceptional cases could 2 or 3 platoons be used jointly, such as sudden ambushes and similar operations. On the other hand, west of the Curzon Line the UPA operated in company and battalion strength; here the conditions of terrain as well as the tactics of the enemy dictated the use of larger-sized units.

The same flexibility applied to heavy armament. During the UPA fighting

under the German occupation, heavy armament was seen as necessary for inflicting defeats on an enemy possessing and using such arms. Fortunately for the UPA, the German army had little experience in anti-partisan fighting. Employing the tactics of a regular army operating on a regular front, it frequently found itself at the losing end of a battle. It soon became apparent to the UPA Command that heavy arms could be a distinct liability in the basic tactics of partisan warfare. Because of local conditions, terrain, and a shortage of oil, trucks and the like, the UPA Command was compelled to store away, for instance, artillery and armored cars.

But from 1944 onwards the organizational structure of the UPA was stabilized; territorial changes exerted no influence upon the basic scheme itself. For instance, when battalions are mentioned in the organization, we must understand that in some areas they existed, and in some they did not. Moreover, the UPA was closely connected with, indeed, subordinated to, the underground network of the OUN. This was a normal procedure in this type of warfare, whereas only in exceptional cases did regular armies allow close political control, as for instance, the *Corpsabteilung* in the *Wehrmacht* at the end of World War II.

On the basis of existing materials, archives and documents the organizational structure of the UPA may be reconstructed fairly accurately.

The highest organ of the UPA was the *General Staff* under the leadership of the UPA *Supreme Commander*. Under its supervision and command were the *UPA group commanders* and their staffs, who in turn supervised the *commanders of military districts*, below whom were the *commanders of sectors* with their staffs.

The largest military unit of the UPA was a battalion. It comprised a battalion commander, a staff, three line companies, a company of heavy machine guns and a detachment of field gendarmerie. Sometimes a company of heavy mortars was found in place of the company of heavy machine guns. This pattern of organization was not a rigid one; changes were admissible anywhere, depending on the number of men, arms, tactical conditions, and the like.

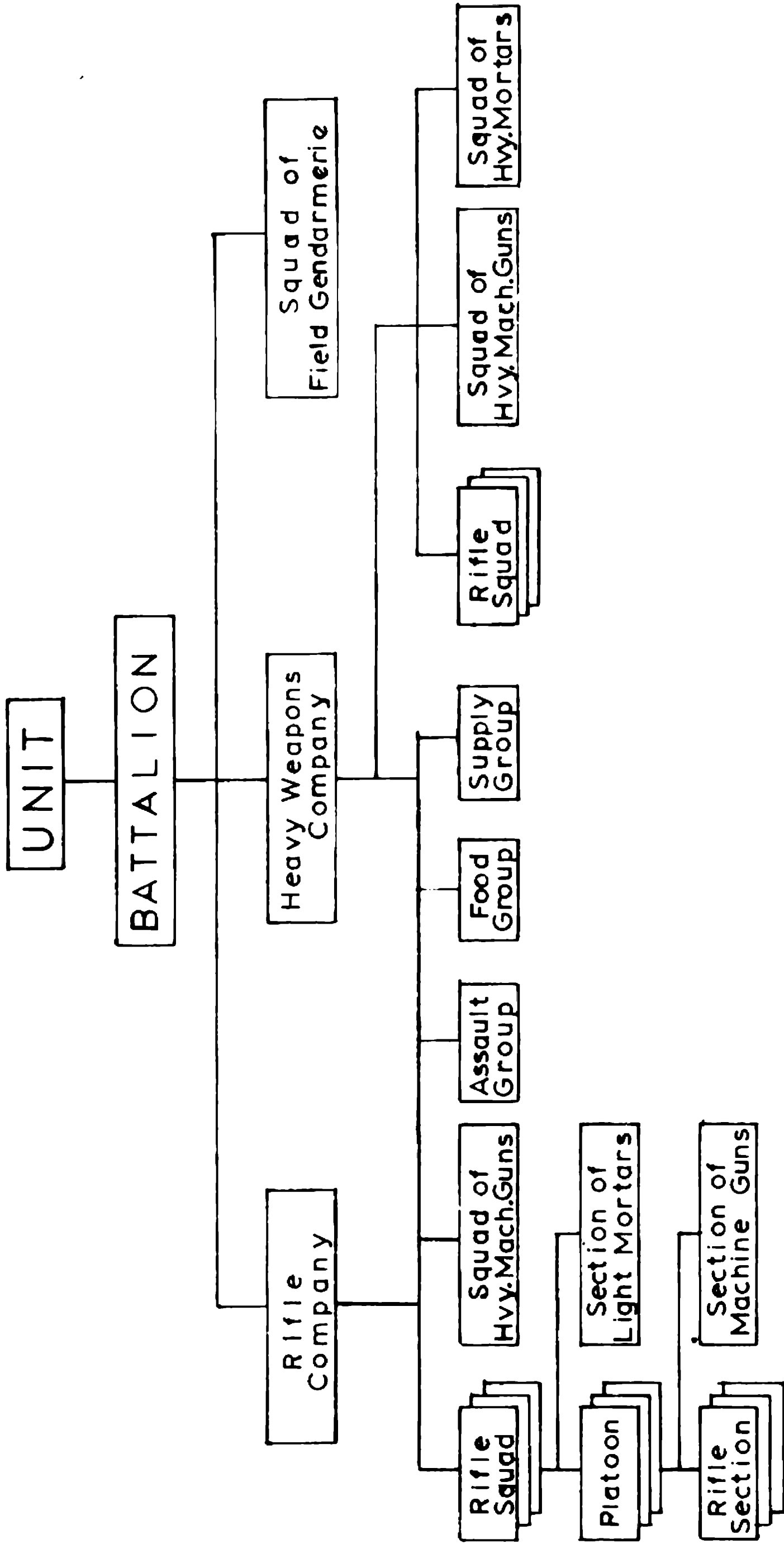
The battalion commander, who had extensive prerogatives, was appointed by the OUN and subordinated organizationally to the territorial leader of the OUN. This double dependency on the OUN at the top and on the leader of the OUN in the field created no difficulties, for in the highest echelons the positions of the OUN and the UPA were, as a rule, in the same hands.

The company commander was subordinate only to his immediate superior, that is, the battalion commander. The company was made of a company staff, three line platoons, a heavy machine gun squad and a supply section.

The insurgent platoon, led by a platoon leader, had three line squads and either a light mortar or a machine gun.

The squad was commanded by the squad leader and his deputy commander

ORGANIZATION OF AN UPA UNIT



and contained two sections: a) machine gun (5 men) and 5 riflemen.

(The Ukrainian nomenclature was as follows: battalion—*kurin*; company—*sotnia*; platoon—*chota*; squad—*riy*; section—*lanka*; battalion commander—*kurinny*; company commander—*sotenny*; platoon leader—*chotovy*; squad leader—*royovy*, and section leader—*lankovy*.)

Commanders of UPA units very frequently did not hold a rank commensurate with their command. But little attention was paid to military rank; the paramount distinction of a commander emanated from his combat and leadership qualities. Many company commanders had had no rank in the army they previously served in (Polish, Soviet, Czech, Rumanian, German, Austrian, or the Ukrainian from 1918-20). When an officer proved unequal to hold his command he was demoted and replaced by a man from the ranks. In the UPA where insurgents fought for a cause—the establishment of a free and independent Ukraine—men and officers alike disdained personal ambitions; in any event, as an insurgent army the UPA could not offer the prospect of military careers to its men.

### Partisan Training

Theoretically and according to the UPA military bylaws, the UPA soldier-insurgents were subdivided into two principal groups: a) *training* and b) *combat*.

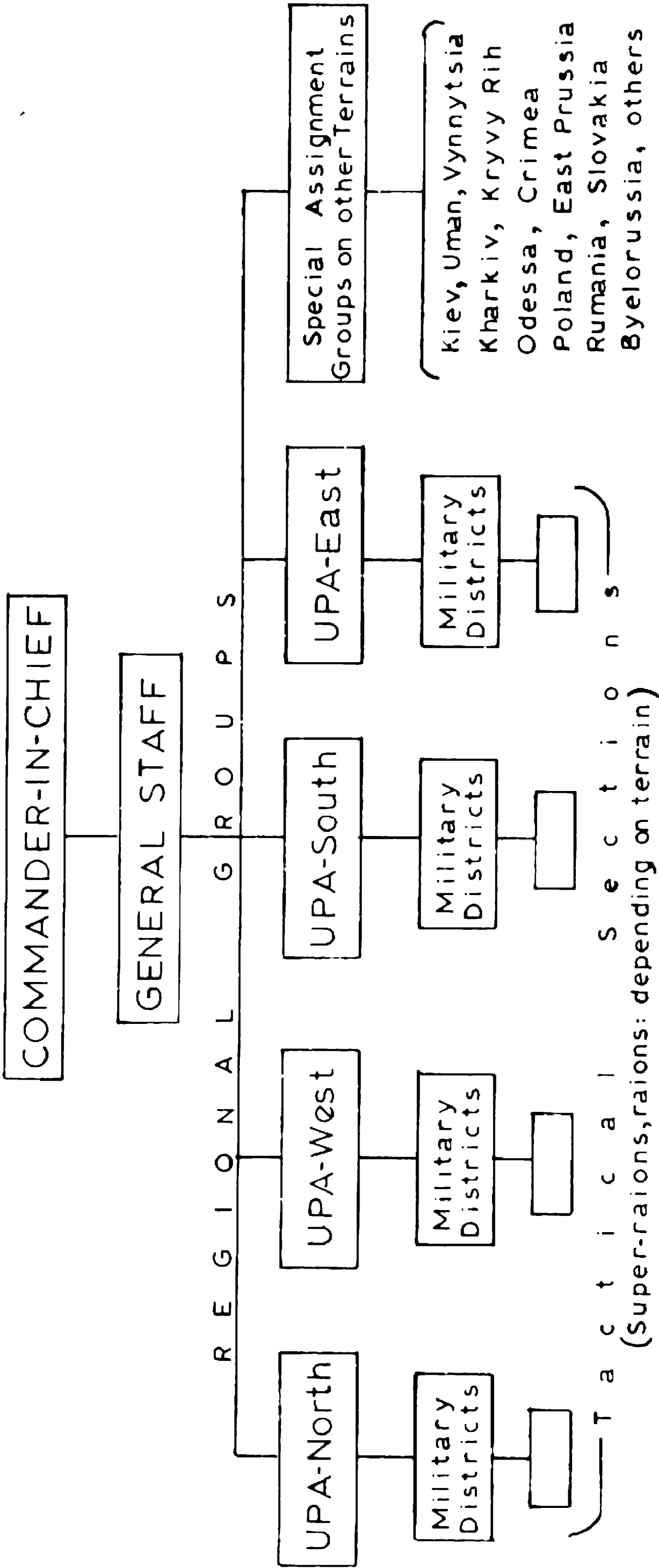
The first category of soldiers was exactly what the designation conveyed: for several months intensive training was held in military schools, training both commissioned and noncommissioned officers as well. These training schools were held in the insurgents' bases located in impenetrable forests and marshes. The bases were skillfully camouflaged and concealed; access to them was known only to the insurgents and their intelligence. These bases also served as rest and convalescent camps for wounded and battle-fatigued UPA insurgents. Also kept there were military stores and supplies of arms and food. As a rule they were well guarded by strong rings of sentinels, which at times extended a few miles in depth.

The insurgent camp could be a transient one or a more permanent affair. The first kind contained a few tents, usually pitched deep in a forest. A permanent camp had regular army barracks, usually accommodating a platoon, along with all the necessary quarters and services: staff headquarters, supply rooms, kitchen, hospital, guard posts, and the like. Each camp was also camouflaged against detection by aerial reconnaissance.

In later times, the training schools assumed a mobile character; the timing of moves depended on the number of courses given and on the times and the tactical condition of the front. This surreptitious technique proved to be extremely effective and productive as far as the training of combat officers and noncommissioned officers of the UPA was concerned.

UPA trainees, upon graduation from the training schools, were assigned

# TERRITORIAL ORGANIZATION OF THE UPA





to combat units as instructors, noncommissioned officers or commanders. Often the new recruits proved capable of being integrated immediately into the combat units.

In addition to military training as such, all UPA trainees received a political education, an indoctrination course which was usually given by political educators assigned to the UPA units.

Political education in the regular army was almost unknown before World War I. The necessity of such instruction was evoked by the appearance of Communism and its insidious propaganda. Through propagation of lies and half-truths the Russians were able to create havoc and disintegration in the ranks of the enemy armies, especially since there was no counterpropaganda.

This "psychological warfare," it soon became evident, had to be combatted. But negative argumentation "against" the enemy was not sufficient; the rank and file of the UPA as well as the Ukrainian people as a whole had to be given something positive for which it was worthwhile to fight and die. In their psychological war both the UPA and the OUN, as the fighting representatives of the Ukrainian people, first of all peoples to sustain the onerous blow of Russian imperialism and colonialism, soon took the initiative. Schools of "political educators" were set up to infuse the psychological warfare with a "fighting" and aggressive character, over and above combatting Russian mendacity, thus compelling Soviet propaganda to go on the defensive. Evoked was a veritable deluge of Russian abuse, indicating that the Ukrainians were scoring heavily. Soon one of the principal assignments of Soviet counterinsurgency units was to capture UPA and OUN "political educators."

In the indoctrination courses "political educators" conducted group discussions with UPA insurgents, dealing with all themes pertinent to the problem of Ukrainian liberation: ideology of Ukrainian nationalism, political and social problems, as well as matters of culture, religion and international relations. The purpose of the indoctrination courses was to imbue youthful and patriotic members of the UPA with revolutionary zeal, dedication and perseverance, as well as to inculcate knowledge of the enemy and his objectives.

In many cases the "political educators" were deputy commanders of UPA units and exemplary fighting men. Many of them perished on the field of combat as unit commanders.

The schools for officers and noncommissioned officers of the UPA were prime targets of enemy raids, so that these schools often had to wage large-scale combat against the enemy, regular troops or partisans or both.

In addition to conducting regular combat training, the UPA schools gave instruction in such specialized combat arts as demolition, combat intelligence and counterintelligence, interrogation of enemy personnel, military liaison, terrain reconnaissance, map reading, and the like.

# Chapter Five

## **STRATEGIC AND OPERATIONAL THINKING AND MOTIVATIONS OF THE UPA COMMAND**

The whole concept of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army and the organization of its General Staff was conceived and implemented by the leadership of the revolutionary OUN that was under the direction of Stepan Bandera. After the first combat actions of the UPA in the field its supreme command was entrusted to Roman Shukhevych.<sup>6</sup>

It was Roman Shukhevych who drafted and conceived the strategical and tactical operations of the UPA which can be favorably compared with the strategical planning and operations of any nation's general staff. This military thinking was formulated against the background of the great military events of World War II embracing the rapidly changing military situations in Ukraine and the expanding network of the revolutionary activities of the OUN.

But, as in other nations caught between the two giants in Eastern Europe—Nazi Germany and Communist Russia—among the Ukrainian leaders there prevailed a good deal of “wishful thinking” regarding the course of military

<sup>6</sup> Roman Shukhevych was a son of a well-known Ukrainian lawyer in Lviv; he was a member of higher Ukrainian society, a good pianist, tennis player and an engineer by profession; he was a member as a youth in the Ukrainian Military Organization (UVO) and the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN). He also had officer training in the Polish and German officers' schools. Under the war pseudonym of General *Taras Chuprynka* he commanded the UPA until his death in an MVD ambush in Ukraine in the fall of 1950.

events. This objective observation will help explain certain moves and strategies of the UPA.

In leading circles of the OUN, UPA and the UHVR (Supreme Ukrainian Liberation Council) the notion predominated that the war in the East would be a long and protracted one, depleting both adversaries to the point that neither would be able to score a decisive victory. The Ukrainians then might well find themselves in a situation similar to that of the Poles in 1918. But this theory was quickly shattered by the logic of war. The Germans, contrary to all expectations, could not sustain the demands of the war, breaking down psychologically after the debacle at Stalingrad. In Byelorussia, for instance, German generals heeded the appeals of General von Seidlitz, who had been captured with Marshal von Paulus at Stalingrad; they went over to the Soviet lines with their armies in 1944. As a result, the Soviet offensive, meeting little opposition on the part of the weakened German forces, reached the operational zones of the UPA much earlier than was anticipated. The military sector of the Ukrainian underground resistance movement thereupon lost much time in organizing the UPA because of the opposition of the political sector, headed by the provisional leadership of the OUN.

Above all, there was a general and blind faith that in the worst case the West would not allow the spread of Communism beyond the borders of 1939. The possibility was also entertained that the allies might quarrel among themselves and even turn on each other before the end of World War II. History shows this was a serious miscalculation. The West supported the USSR to the very last; Bolshevism stopped only on the Elbe River, having overrun Poland, Czechoslovakia, Rumania, Hungary, Bulgaria and half of Germany. As a result of such "wishful thinking" the UPA (its KVS 11) planned for an eventual war with Poland.

Finding themselves in front of the Soviet armies after World War II, the UPA and the OUN managed to achieve some enduring results by continuing their hard and uncompromising fight against the Soviet occupier. They prevented a mass deportation of Ukrainians by the Soviet Union, an objective to which Khrushchev openly confessed in his "secret" speech to the XXth congress of the Communist Party in February, 1956. By their long and heroic resistance against the Soviet troops and police in Ukraine and later in concentration camps throughout the USSR, the Ukrainians initiated the process of "de-Stalinization," demonstrating to the world that the Soviet Communist system was far from being monolithic and immune to revolutionary pressures. Finally, the Ukrainians won world renown for Ukraine because of their systematic and unwavering opposition to the Soviet dictatorship, despite an immense cost in lives and suffering.

Lost were the lives of Shukhevych-Chuprynka, his closest aides and other high-ranking officers of the General Staff. Also lost were the UPA archives, which are known to have been very complete; the UPA General Staff required

full and detailed accounts, including detailed maps and sketches, of all encounters from skirmishes and ambushes to pitched battles. It is on the basis of these reports that the UPA General Staff elaborated the tactical problems which were taught insurgents in the training schools.

Because the UPA was able to extend its activities over a wide area of Ukraine, it must be inferred that such a scope of operations could not have been possible without the unstinting and effective support of the non-military sector—the OUN network. Thus the preparation for the military actions of the UPA entailed a long and tedious effort of instilling the civilian population with the spirit of patriotic nationalism and of implanting moral discipline. Here the epic Ukrainian struggle for liberation in 1918-20 served as a powerful impetus to a new liberation effort.

When at the beginning of World War II the Western Ukrainian lands, on the basis of the Hitler-Stalin pact, found themselves under Russian occupation, the OUN of necessity had to conform not alone to new conditions. They also had to learn about the new occupier and to fashion a new form of conspiratorial organization. Losses in men at this time were considerable, but new cadres were brought up to replenish the leadership. The old underground contacts and liaison were destroyed, and many OUN members, uncovered by the Soviet secret police, were arrested and sent into exile with other groups of the Ukrainian population.

But the Ukrainian nationalists had come to believe that the German-Soviet alliance was an ephemeral phenomenon. Most Ukrainians realized that the USSR, in an uneasy alliance with Nazi Germany, was merely biding its time and preparing for eventual war with Germany. This was also known by the Germans. Yet time seemed to be on the side of the Russians, since the Germans were absorbed in a war in the west. The USSR played both sides against the middle, maneuvering for ever better diplomatic and strategic positions. But Hitler the Impatient broke this alliance suddenly by ordering a massive aggression unleashed against the USSR on June 22, 1941.

With the invasion of Ukraine by German troops the Ukrainian people found themselves in a new situation. The initial enthusiasm and the hope of Ukrainians that the Germans would treat them more humanely and that the day of their liberation was at hand were soon dashed when the Nazi administration introduced a new system of terror and persecution in Ukraine. The underground network which had been established in 1939 was again destroyed, and many hundreds of OUN members were rounded up by the Gestapo and sent to Nazi slave labor camps in Germany. This state lasted from June of 1941 to the fall of 1944, at which time Soviet troops reoccupied Ukraine and the NKVD returned with its infamous methods of police oppression and persecution.

Yet the OUN underground system managed to operate and support the UPA in its armed struggle against the invaders of the Ukrainian lands. This

was possible only because of the great stamina, resourcefulness and patriotism of General Roman Shukhevych-Chuprynka, a man and commander of extraordinary fortitude and wisdom. He succeeded in organizing a powerful Ukrainian underground force which was able to combat effectively the two greatest modern armies in the world.

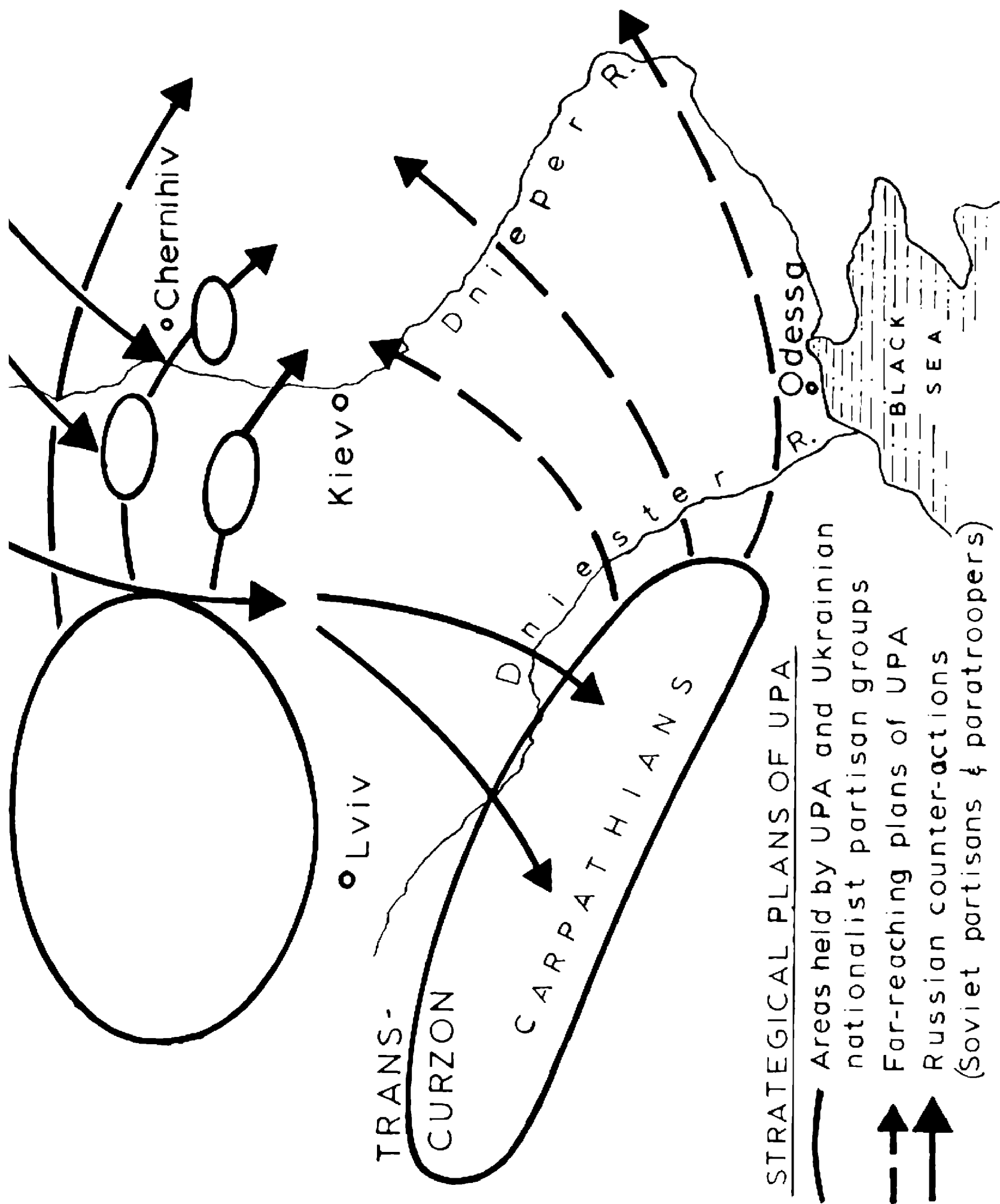
One of the first tasks in the years 1941-42 was to provide for the defense of the Ukrainian populace against the exploitation and terror of the Nazi occupying power. But the units and detachments which were established for the *ad hoc* purpose of self-defense in the villages were not able to resist the German police apparatus effectively. Consequently, some of the units escaped to the forests and marshes where they felt safe and where they could organize for new attacks. Thus there appeared several partisan groups with a clearly Ukrainian national character.

When the OUN reorganized its ranks and leadership, it took upon itself an important task: to unite all the partisan units into one underground force under one military and political leadership. From the bitter experience of Ukrainian partisans of 1918-1920 the OUN leadership learned that unless these units were united they could not become a decisive factor in the struggle for Ukrainian statehood, all the more so in World War II because both Nazi Germany and Communist Russia had become the avowed enemies of Ukrainian independence. Inasmuch as the armed underground resistance was based on the ideology of the OUN, it was highly undesirable to have other and separate partisan groups. Under war conditions coordinated action is more effective and practical, especially if it be directed by a single agency. This is even more important in the matter of strategy, which became almost an exclusive domain of the UPA.

Therefore, in time the unification of all these units and detachments was effectuated, in some cases after the political accord of their leaders had been achieved as well. This was especially the case in Western Ukraine.

There were Ukrainian nationalist partisans also in Eastern Ukraine, according to reports brought back by raiding groups of the UPA. These partisan units expressed need of contact with and directives from the supreme headquarters of the UPA. Here in the Eastern Ukrainian lands a different situation existed. The proximity of Russia proper made Soviet provocations easy; for example, Soviet-controlled Red partisans could pose as Ukrainian nationalist insurgents, thus trapping the Ukrainian populace into self-betrayal. Worse, Ukrainians could be misled by a constant drumming in of the allegation that the Red and UPA undergrounds were united in fighting the Nazi oppressors. The differentiation between the two diametrically-opposed underground systems had to be clearly underlined everywhere all the time.

The supreme command of the UPA had first to select the most convenient area of Ukraine for establishment of its underground headquarters. Chosen was the northwestern part of Ukraine, the areas of Volhynia and Polisia.



Here the impenetrable marshes and dense forests could securely and conveniently accommodate army bases, camps, schools, hospitals and military supplies and depots. The occupation of this terrain by the UPA was one of the prerequisites of its success.

When the German troops blitzkrieged the USSR in June, 1941, Soviet troops escaped in great numbers to Volhynia and Polisia. Because of the difficult terrain—marshes, swamps, rivers and dense forests—the German troops bypassed these areas, although they knew that the troops ran into the hundreds of thousands. This created a grave problem for the German *hinterland*, for soon these Soviet troops, coordinated and supplied with arms by air, began making combat sorties to harass the German supply and communication lines.

For its own security the UPA command undertook a series of combat engagements with these remnants and succeeded in evicting them from Volhynia and Polisia into the Byelorussian and Russian territories. Both Volhynia and Polisia thereupon remained under the jurisdiction of the UPA, which was one of the primary objectives of the UPA supreme command.

This success of the UPA demonstrated that the partisan units may not only pursue tactical but also strategical tasks. It was due primarily to the fact that the UPA consisted of dedicated and zealous Ukrainian patriots.

The supreme command of the Soviet partisans, under the direction of Nikita S. Khrushchev at that time, was greatly perturbed by the appearance of the UPA. It was obvious that General Shukhevych-Chuprynka would not miss the opportunity to expand the activities of the UPA in the direction of Chernihiv, an area of great forests which ran along the Russian-Ukrainian border. If the Ukrainian partisan underground could extend its influence to this area, Ukraine would be cut off from Russia, resulting in incalculable and disastrous consequences for Russia. Therefore, Khrushchev threw great masses of Soviet partisans into the area in order to forestall the UPA. Also, the Soviet partisans sought to uproot the UPA bases from Volhynia and Polisia.

The Russian command was successful only to a degree. Soviet partisans had occupied the province of Chernihiv, but failed to occupy Volhynia and Polisia. The Sluch River divided the UPA territory from that of the Soviet partisans, although both adversaries occasionally crossed the river to harass each other. Yet the Soviet partisans failed to hold even a square yard of UPA territory. On the other hand, the UPA made successful raids in the Chernihiv area, thrust almost to Kiev itself, and on many occasions went farther east where they met with other Ukrainian partisans of non-Soviet formation.

With the moving of the German-Soviet front westward the supreme command of the UPA did not underestimate the danger that was looming on the horizon. Gradually the UPA was completely encircled by Russians. This



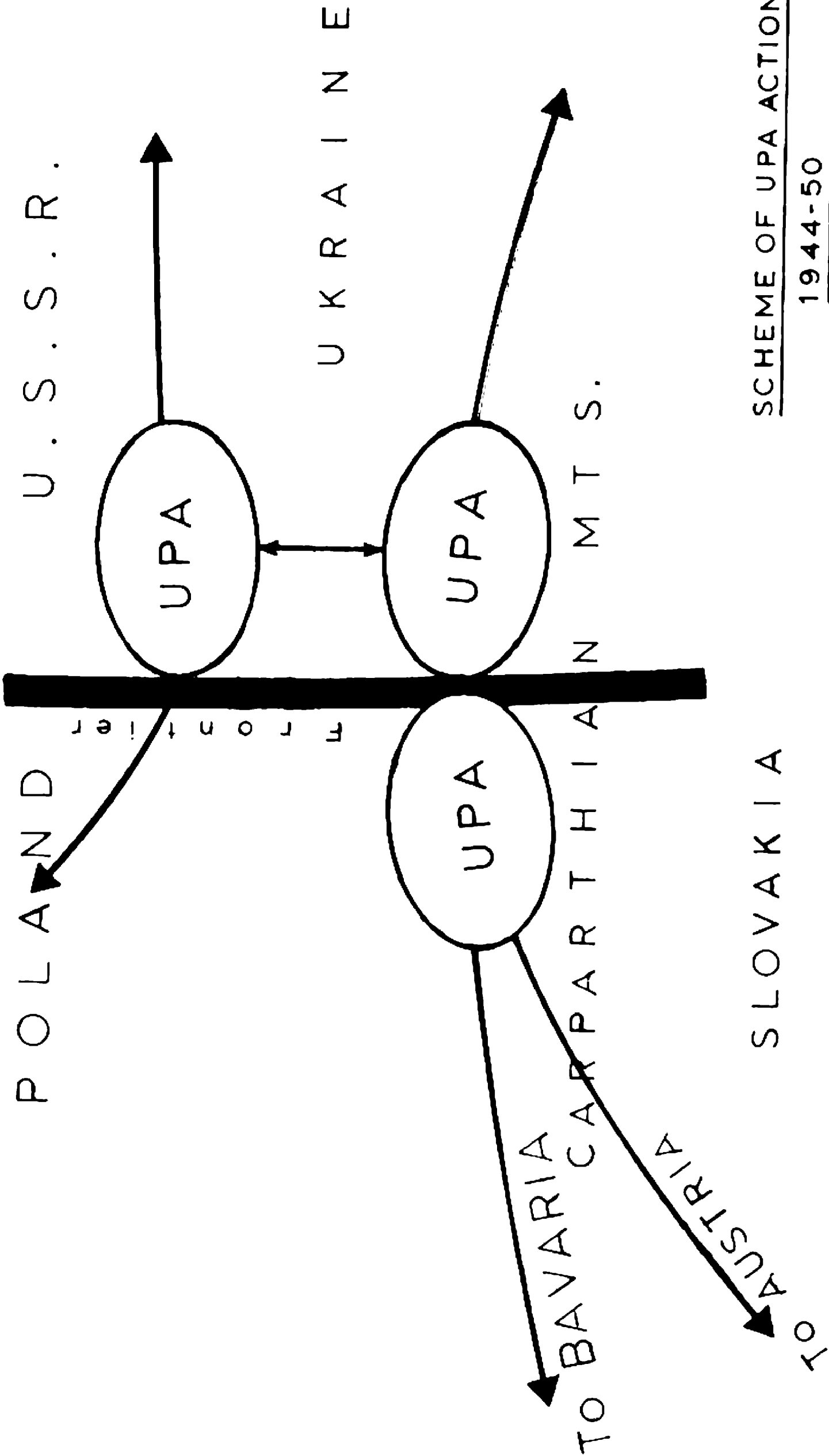
was dangerous not only from the military viewpoint, but from the political one as well. The UPA wished to maintain contact with the anti-Communist West so that it could be kept informed of the struggle waged by the Ukrainian people. For this purpose the Carpathian Mountains lent themselves admirably. They provide an excellent terrain for partisan warfare, and also they run in a long range abutting several countries. Therefore, in 1943, when it already had become apparent that the Germans had lost the war, a great drive toward the Carpathians began.

In Galicia, the Germans were considerably "softer" than elsewhere in Ukraine. The UPA had maintained only small units geared only to defend themselves. Moreover, the UPA had deliberately avoided drastic anti-German operations in Galicia, mindful of the great advantage in having this territory, connecting Volhynia with the Carpathians, as secure as possible from German reprisals. UPA losses were nonetheless significant in Galicia as well.

In order to assure a unity of action the Supreme Command of the UPA transferred its operations to mountainous terrain. Begun there were the organization of training camps, reorganization of UPA units and preparations for the underground warfare of the OUN in accordance with the changed situation.

These operational designs of the UPA were combatted by both the Germans and the Russians. The Germans initiated large-scale "pacification" and "clearing" operations on a par with those conducted in Volhynia. Khrushchev, for his own part, decided to forestall any effective activities of the UPA in the Carpathians as well. For this purpose he dispatched from Polisia large units of Red partisans under the command of General S. Kovpak, who was charged with the task of penetrating the Carpathian Mountains and establishing a Soviet partisan base there. General Kovpak crossed Galicia with comparative ease: the Germans, deprived of adequate reserves, did not bother to engage the Soviet partisans, while German officials in the provinces escaped *en masse* to Lviv, seeking the protection of the German army. However, when the Red partisans reached the foothills of the Carpathians, the Germans decided to oppose them, using several police regiments and motorized troops and aviation. General Kovpak's units succeeded in entering the Carpathians, but they met strong opposition from the UPA and in a brief period of time were expelled from the Carpathians by the UPA. General Kovpak barely escaped with his staff to the Soviet front. Later on Soviet paratroopers were dropped into the area, only to be disarmed by the Ukrainian insurgents.

Another task of the UPA was to reach some understanding with the Polish underground and with the Hungarian military command, which had committed several Hungarian divisions against the Soviet front. The Hungarians, who were the allies of the Germans, were quick to come to terms with the



SCHEME OF UPA ACTIONS  
1944-50

UPA: in 1944 a "treaty of nonaggression and mutual assistance" was concluded between the Hungarian army command and the UPA. A similar treaty was concluded in 1945 between the UPA and the Polish underground (AK—Home Army).

Because many in Eastern Europe believed that the war between the USSR and Nazi Germany would continue for several years, the UPA and OUN leadership deemed it imperative to strengthen the insurgent movements among other non-Russian captive and enslaved nations.

On November 21-22, 1943, the first conference of the enslaved nations was held in Ukraine, on territory under UPA jurisdiction, in which representatives of 13 nations took part.

One of the resolutions of the conference was:

Both aggressive imperialisms deny the peoples the right to their freedom and cultural development and independent national states . . . and bring enslavement in the form of Hitler's "new Europe" or the Bolshevik USSR. . . . Only the national revolutions of the enslaved peoples will bring a durable peace to the world. . . .

The conference was interrupted by sudden attacks by German police units. Although they repelled the units of the UPA, the conference was continued in another hideaway.

In analyzing the military events of that time, the Supreme Command of the UPA accepted the thesis that there existed the possibility of war between the western powers and the Soviet Union even after the defeat of Nazi Germany. Such a development, they reasoned, was not only in the interest of Ukraine, but in that of humanity at large as well.

Therefore, the Supreme Command of the UPA decided to oppose the USSR on all possible fronts, categorically: a) the military (UPA); b) the ideological (OUN), under the assumption that any revolution without an ideological foundation would be only a form of rebellion; c) the cultural; and d) social-economic.

In various circumstances and times the priorities of these elements shifted with regard to one another, but the revolutionary struggle continued unrelentingly. This revolutionary effort was guided by one ironclad precept: to hit the enemy and dislodge him from within; to break up his nerve center and to separate the center from the people.

For the attainment of some of these objectives, the Supreme Ukrainian Liberation Council (SULC—or UHVR, initials after the Ukrainian) was established through the initiative of General Taras Chuprynka-Shukhevych. The Ukrainian Provisional Government was supposed to be the executive arm of the UHVR-SULC, but it was soon dispersed by the Nazis.<sup>7</sup>

With the approach of the Soviet troops the Supreme Command of the

<sup>7</sup> The Ukrainian Provisional Government was established on June 30, 1941, in Lviv, Western Ukraine, but its members, including Stepan Bandera and Yaroslav Stetzko,

UPA made the following important decisions:

1. To prepare for military operations against the Russians;
2. To reject all attempts at negotiation and compromise, whether with the retreating Germans or the oncoming Russians;
3. To initiate an extensive propaganda campaign in the Red Army for the purpose of subverting members of the non-Russian nations and prevailing upon them to join the ranks of the UPA and to fight for the freedom of their respective countries.

These decisions were favored with considerable success. Huge quantities of war materiel were amassed and stored away. UPA officers, who, in defiance of the orders of their command conducted negotiations with either the Germans or the Russians, were tried by the military tribunals of the UPA and executed. Actions in demoralizing the Red Army were equally successful. Alarmed by the large-scale defections of Soviet troops to the side of the UPA, the Soviet command decided to throw into the fray large contingents of NKVD security troops (*istribitelnoye otriady*—liquidation detachments), similar to the Nazi SS formations and the Red partisans. But in contacting the UPA the Soviet troops were exposed to the forces of nationalism; they could not be trusted in police action against the Ukrainian insurgents, a situation that caused the Soviet command considerable concern.

Under the new conditions of struggle (under Bolshevik occupation) it soon became apparent that the UPA would sustain great losses should it operate in large armed units against the numerically superior Soviet troops. Thus the UPA was decentralized and broken down into small units, with tactical initiative being left to individual commanders.

Furthermore, the underground network of the OUN, which had suffered heavy casualties as a result of the movement of the Soviet-German front through the Western Ukrainian lands, was strengthened and reorganized. The political leadership of the UPA took into consideration the fact that the OUN and the UPA now had to face powerful military and police forces of the USSR. But the unbridled terror the Russians unleashed against the Ukrainian populace solidified the strategic thesis that the moment had arrived for the masses to arise in resistance and in support of the UPA underground actions.

The indefatigable Soviet propaganda hammered away at two very dangerous precepts:

- 1) The Leninist thesis that no revolution is possible in the USSR (i.e. anti-Communist revolution);
- 2) The police and security forces of the USSR are invincible.

But the very existence of the UPA in the USSR denied both precepts. First, for a number of years an anti-Communist revolution of the Ukrainian

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were arrested and sent to concentration camps in Germany when they refused to revoke the act of proclamation of Ukraine's independence.

underground resistance had been a hard fact. Second, the UPA had inflicted several devastating defeats upon the troops of the NKVD and SMERSH, and had spread large-scale demoralization in the ranks of the Red Army, to the effect that hundreds upon thousands of Red soldiers had been swayed in their convictions and gone over to the side of the UPA. These developments had perturbed the Kremlin no little.

The general counteroffensive against the UPA was placed under the command of Nikita S. Khrushchev and a number of Soviet generals noted for their leadership in the war against the Germans.

In his much-disputed book, the late Soviet dictator, Nikita S. Khrushchev, devoted much space to the troubles he had with Ukrainian resistance. More often than not he could not decide whether to minimize or to stress the strength of Ukrainian nationalism. He wrote:

Ukrainian nationalists gave us more trouble than anyone else between the signing of the treaty in 1939 and the outbreak of war in 1941. . . . Hitler was ready to invade us. He was using Ukrainian nationalists as his agents. . . . Before the invasion the Ukrainian nationalists looked forward eagerly to the impending war because Goebbels had duped them into believing that Hitler would drive the "Muscovites" out of the Ukraine and give the Ukrainians their independence on a silver platter. . . . When we moved into Lvov we made the mistake of releasing the Ukrainian nationalist leader Stepan Bandera from prison (not true, because Bandera never was in Soviet hands—*Editor*). . . . He was imprisoned in Lvov because he had been convicted in connection with the assassination of the Polish Minister of Internal Affairs. . . . We were impressed with Bandera's record as an opponent of the Polish government, but we should have taken into account the fact that men like him were also enemies of the Soviet Union. They were Ukrainian nationalists and therefore had a pathological hatred of the Soviet regime. Bandera himself was an outright agent of German fascism, and later he gave us a lot of trouble. It's true that when Bandera realized that the Hitlerites didn't intend to keep their promise to sponsor an independent Ukraine he turned his units against them. *But even then he didn't stop hating the Soviet Union. During the second half of the war he fought against both us and the Germans. Later, after the war, we lost thousands of men in a bitter struggle between the Ukrainian nationalists and the forces of Soviet Power. . . .* (Italics ours—*Editor*).<sup>7a</sup>

Yet the superior tactics of the UPA and its ideological ties with the people (through the underground OUN) enabled the UPA to exist and effectively operate for a number of years after the end of World War II.

The Supreme Command of the UPA understandably had a very clear

<sup>7a</sup> *Khrushchev Remembers*. With an Introduction, Commentary and Notes by Edward Crankshaw. Translated and Edited by Strobe Talbott. Little, Brown and Co., Boston, 1970, pp. 140-141.

appraisal of the situation, and its operative stand was determined by a number of important factors.

First of all there was the numerical superiority of the enemy over the UPA. Under the direction of Khrushchev the Soviet command operated against the UPA with a superiority of men in a ratio of 100:1, not taking into consideration the superiority of heavy armaments. In this situation experience demonstrated that the principle of success was to be strong in one decisive spot. To be everywhere and everywhere to be weak would bring ruin to regular armies no less than to insurgents (the experience of World War II: the Poles in 1939 and the Germans in 1943-45).

One of the important matters before the UPA Command was that of making the struggle of the Ukrainian underground resistance known outside the war zone. In this respect progress was far from satisfactory. The Russians outside the USSR (the anti-Communist Russian emigration) for the most part contended that the struggle in Ukraine waged by the UPA was the struggle of the "Russian people." For instance, General A. Vlasov, who defected to the Germans, granted an interview to the *Völkischer Beobachter* in which he stated that the UPA was an army of the "Russian liberation movement."

(Even today the Russian emigration plays on Western ignorance regarding Ukraine and Eastern Europe in general. For instance, the ranks of the UPA numbered the outstanding Ukrainian wood-carver, Nil Khasevych. His wood carvings had appeared in 1945-46 in underground publications of the OUN and UPA, and subsequently were reproduced abroad. In the absence of their own underground resistance movement some Russian emigres reproduced these woodcarvings of Khasevych, representing them as those of a "Russian underground artist." Instead of the emblems of Ukrainian statehood they substituted Czarist Russian emblems and provided inscriptions and captions in the Russian language.)<sup>8</sup>

With this in view, the Supreme Command of the UPA decided on two important moves:

- 1) To establish strong bases in the Western Carpathians, inhabited overwhelmingly by Ukrainians and which had been given to the new Communist regime of Poland (the so-called Curzon Line area);

- 2) To undertake a series of armed raids through Central Europe (west of the Polish borders) and to reach the areas of the Western Allies, thereby giving the Ukrainian problem political significance in the world. This was accomplished very successfully, the whole West finally becoming acquainted with the long and unequal struggle of the Ukrainian people for freedom and independence.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. "Exposure of Faked Photographs," *The Scotsman*, October 17, 1952, Edinburgh, and John F. Stewart, *Fraudulent Russian Propaganda Exposed*, Edinburgh, 1952.

It is to the great credit of the UPA that it was able to wage constant military operations against large contingents of Polish and Soviet troops for a number of years. In 1947 the Communist governments of the USSR, Poland and Czechoslovakia concluded a special treaty for the purpose of combatting the Ukrainian insurgency. When this failed, then large-scale "deportations" of Ukrainians from the Curzon Line area took place. Most of them were transferred to the "recovered territories" of Poland (formerly German lands). The UPA Command then moved a number of its units into the USSR (Ukraine), where they were integrated into the underground network of the OUN, while some UPA combat units succeeded in reaching the American zone of Germany, where they were disarmed and given political asylum.

When the superiority of Soviet troops and police forces reached overwhelming proportions, the UPA Command in 1947 decided to suspend large-scale armed attacks, and ordered its members to continue the revolutionary and ideological struggle in the ranks of the OUN.

Thus, the Soviet troops, despite their technical and numerical superiority, never did achieve a significant military victory over the UPA.

This fact itself is very significant, as it proves that guerrilla warfare could sustain long military engagements with regular armies with telling and effective results.





# Chapter Six

## **MILITARY TASKS OF ORGANIZATION OF UKRAINIAN NATIONALISTS**

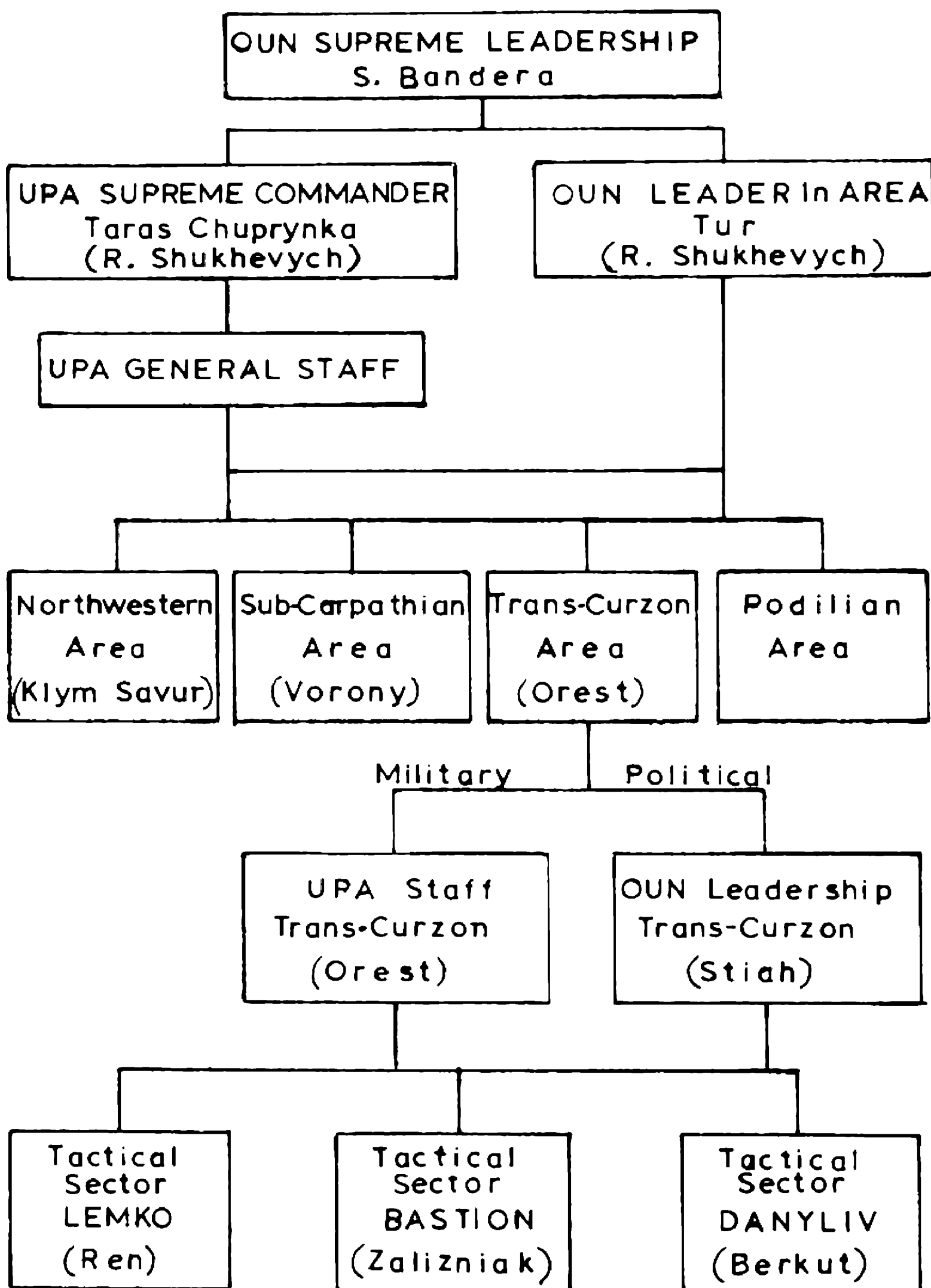
An insurgent army cannot come into being without a long underground ideological preparation, as the experience with the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists amply demonstrated.

Members of such an underground organization, it was shown, had to be imbued with a patriotism of an intensity great enough to enable them to discharge the tasks designated by the organization regardless of personal or general danger or inconvenience. Members of such a group should have characters of iron and be quite capable of performing all and any services which might be required from them for the good of the country.

These characteristics were cultivated by the OUN in a series of sabotage and diversionary activities directed against the Polish occupant in the time of peace before World War II. In the ranks of the Ukrainian Military Organizations (UVO) and the OUN were trained thousands of men; highly disciplined and dedicated to the ideal of the Ukrainian state, they were ready to be called to arms at a moment's notice. They also learned the rules of conspiratorial behavior and tactics.

The marked conspiratorial character of the OUN training contributed greatly to the psychological and ideological preparation of the Ukrainians for underground warfare. Here were brought together all strata of Ukrainian society: farmers, workers, public servants, students, teachers, and Ukrainians who were compelled to serve in the armies of their enemies. All of them

D I A G R A M  
NATIONAL PROVID<sup>(UPA)</sup><sub>(OUN)</sub>  
TRANS-CURZON LINE, 1947  
 (Deposition of Dalynich, 27/ )



were not only trained to be revolutionary soldiers, but they were taught also how to combat opportunism and defeatism among their own people.

The OUN was erected on a network of organizational districts, headed by leaders known for their severe discipline and their knowledge of revolutionary and military tactics.

The Ukrainian lands were divided into provinces or *terrains*, which were administered or commanded by terrain or district leaders, (*providnyk*), who in turn were subordinated to the Supreme Council of the OUN (see the organization scheme of the OUN).

A district leader, or *providnyk*, had a staff of *specialists* known as the *referenty*, who roughly can be defined in English as the directors of particular spheres of activities.

The military *referent*, or director, as a rule was a trained officer in one of the armies in which Ukrainians were compelled to serve. He was also a man who had to lead two lives: on the surface he usually occupied a prominent position in society, but at the same time he was an underground leader of the district. (He would select a group of trusted men who would constitute his staff, consisting of such sections as training, intelligence, liaison, mobilization, armament, supply and medical service.)

The district *providnyk* or *commandant* directed the work of the staff and controlled and supervised the work of his subordinate leaders. He was also responsible for the execution of tasks imposed upon the district by the Supreme Council of the OUN.

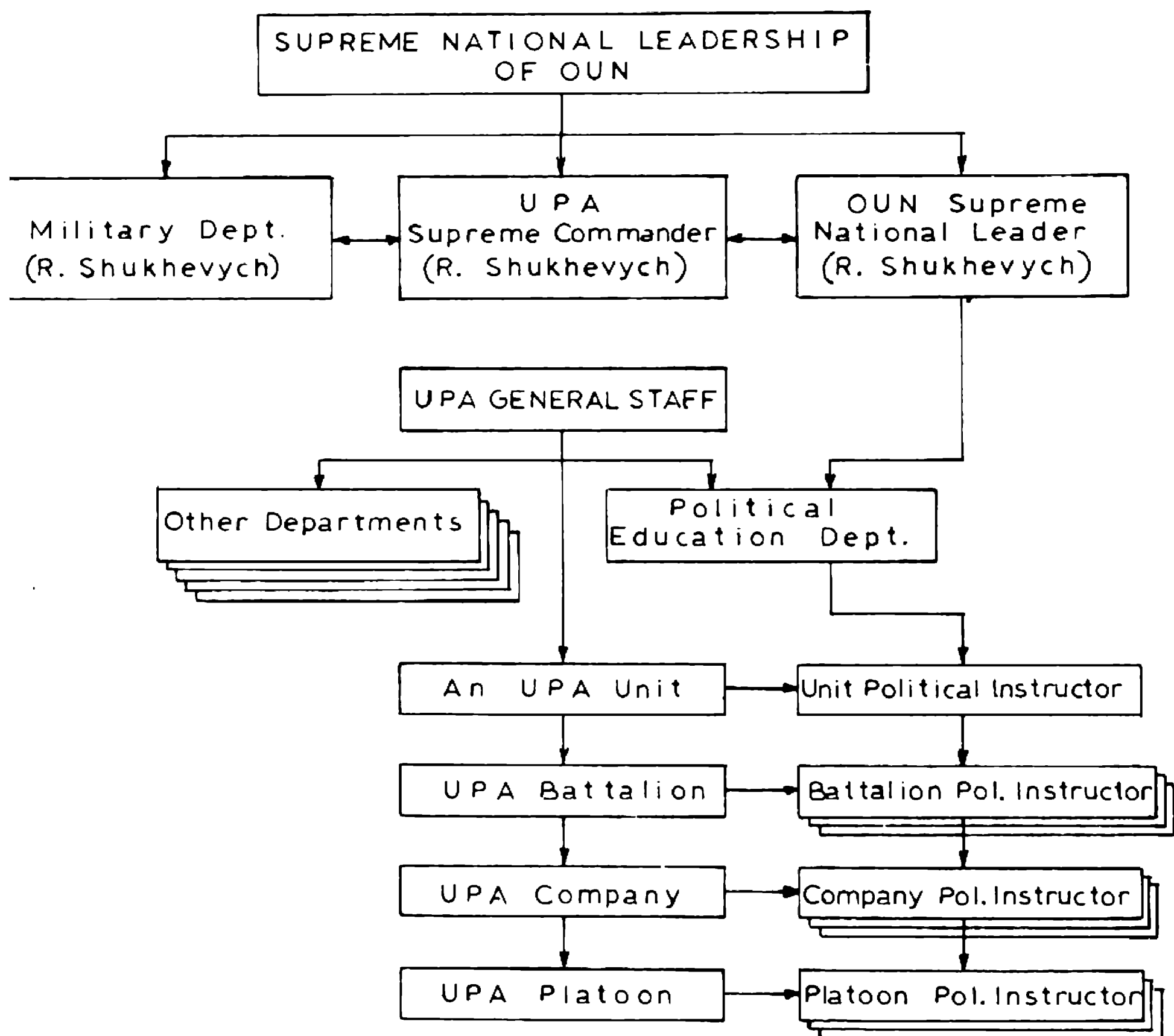
The educational director or *referent*, who as a rule was the deputy commandant, prepared a plan of training, implemented it and saw to the organization of the so-called "self-defending shrubs" (SKV) and controlled them.

The "self-defending shrubs" were armed units that were organized by villages for the purposes of defense. Frequently these units embraced several villages in order to muster a more effective defense against attacks by enemy raiding units and bands. During the day members of these units were normally engaged in their daily routine work; only at night did they attend secret training and military exercises. In emergencies, however, they could quickly pick up their arms in well-hidden caches and go into action almost immediately.

Training was conducted by local instructors, while plans were prepared by the territorial staff. The program of training encompassed basic military exercises, including field training, guard service, topography, moral duty of soldiers, and the like.

From time to time the SKV conducted large-scale maneuvers, usually far from their own villages, during holidays and on Sundays. These units constituted the reserves for the mobilization of the UPA. When necessary, the SKV were attached to insurgent units on a permanent basis. Most often,

# ORGANIZATION OF POLITICAL EDUCATION OF UPA-OUN (AS REPORTED BY LEV FUTALA)



however, they were assigned to the UPA as a strengthening arm in special actions, upon the conclusion of which they were sent back to their localities.

The director (*referent*) of intelligence had an especially difficult task on the performance of which directly depended the success of the underground organization. The training of intelligence agents was therefore one of the most important tasks. Under the Soviet regime this task was acutely challenging and dangerous; intelligence agents had to possess unusual skill, an inborn sense of orientation and a sixth sense of security. They had to learn in minute detail the enemy whom they were called upon to fight: his organization, methods of liaison and intelligence, as well as the whole system of state functioning, including organization of prisons and concentration camps. Despite these harshly unfavorable conditions under the Soviet regime, the daring OUN intelligence service was uniformly successful in obtaining adequate information about the enemy at relatively small expense in lives and materiel.

The methods of liaison, implemented by the *referent* of liaison, were quite primitive under the conditions of an underground resistance system. Understandably, the underground organization could not avail itself of complex technical apparatuses which could easily be uncovered, and which would be difficult to conceal in the densely populated centers. But the methods employed proved to be excellent, for they were invariably able to provide exact and true information. This was accomplished mainly because the OUN used human beings and not machines.

During and after World War II the OUN developed an excellent network of intelligence not only on the terrain occupied by it, but also on the territory of the enemy and in neighboring foreign countries. On orders from the Supreme Command the OUN intelligence network, notably in the case of an emergency, shepherded non-military personnel, especially when they had to be dispatched from Soviet-occupied Western Ukraine to other parts of Ukraine, or to foreign countries. Many important Ukrainian leaders were thus saved via the underground route from Ukraine through Poland, Czechoslovakia, and East Germany into the Allied-occupied zones of Germany and Austria. Again, during the German occupation in World War II, a number of Ukrainian leaders were shifted by underground channels through Nazi Germany and the countries occupied by it.

It was due to the excellent underground communication network that the Supreme Ukrainian Liberation Council (UHVR) was able to convene its general congress, attended by delegates from various areas who could arrive only because of the assistance of the underground. Also, various UPA missions were thus enabled to travel to Slovakia, Poland and Hungary for the purpose of negotiation with the various underground groups.

The liaison system of the OUN was established in two directions: a) *vertical*—from the top, the principal *Provid* (Supreme Council), to the lowest

organizational cells, and b) *horizontal*, communication and liaison in particular areas of activity. The underground communication routes were well secreted and known only to the OUN. As a precautionary measure, they were constantly changed, even if they were not uncovered by the enemy. These routes contained liaison points; here couriers changed, received new instructions and new passwords, food, false documents, and the like. All lines of communication and the points were systematically controlled either by special controllers or by the liaison *referents* themselves.

Later on, the liaison organization, during the course of prolonged Soviet Russian occupation, became even more effective as its techniques improved. For obvious reasons, however, the specific techniques and structure of the OUN liaison remain unknown.

The mobilization *referent*, whose office is equivalent to the personnel section of the U.S. armed forces, kept under his control the number of mobilizable people on the territory of his jurisdiction.

The task of the armament *referent* was to procure weapons and ammunition for the insurgents. To receive, or rather, procure arms and ammunition under a severe occupation by the enemy was by no means an easy assignment. But arms were of course essential. They were needed for members of the underground organization for their own defense, special assassination purposes, sabotage actions, and the like. But arms also were needed for future actions by large contingents of UPA members. Before World War II the OUN had cached away a certain amount of arms. During the war, acquisition of arms was comparatively easier: OUN members gathered them up on battlefields or simply wrested them away from the enemy, and stored the excess away. Very often the OUN had more arms than ammunition, especially when the front was fluctuating and the weapons of one occupier became useless because of lack of ammunition. For instance, in 1944, after a few months all German arms were put away, the OUN insurgents using only Soviet arms. All these matters were under the jurisdiction of the arms director. His responsibility was not only to amass enough arms for units on his own territory, but also to supply other UPA units, if such were required.

The logistics *referent* had to insure organization and supply of all materials, including finances, for the effective and continuous conduct of underground activities in the field. They included: alimentation and storage of food supplies, clothing, military equipment and printing and stationery. He had to be in constant contact not only with military units, but also with the OUN network, which was obligated to supply him with the requisite materials.

The medical service *referent* had full jurisdiction over health. He had to provide medicaments needed for tending wounded UPA soldiers, field hospitals and dispensaries, and cadres for training of medical service personnel; he had to combat the constant menace of epidemics among the population. He also supervised the activities of the Ukrainian Red Cross.

This is a general picture of the OUN objectives which related to the creation of an insurgent army. The only SKV units which in case of emergency acted militarily were the reserve cadres for supplementing the UPA army.

The mobilization of the UPA followed this course:

- 1) In case of an emergency members of the SKV were ordered to join the ranks of the UPA. In certain cases, they remained part of the UPA;
- 2) Organized mobilization proceeded normally only in the territory which was completely dominated by the UPA, or when the enemy was far removed from mobilization centers.

Upon receiving mobilization orders through the liaison network and through the underground routes, local stations dispatched recruits to the mobilization centers. The recruits were accompanied by a designated leader who kept discipline and who provided the mobilization commission with exhaustive information regarding each recruit. These precautionary measures were necessary against possible infiltration by enemy agents, especially under the Soviet Russian occupation. At the centers the medical service conducted health examinations, while mobilization commissions and representatives of the Security Service conducted thoroughgoing interviews with the recruits.

Before reaching the insurgent bases where the mobilization commission operated, the recruits rested at night in various liaison points in the villages. In this process all the rules of conspiracy were meticulously kept. Generally, the recruits, not soldiers as yet, had to be guarded against any possible contact with people who might have been regarded as "unfriendly." The leader (*providnyk*) had to brief them about conduct and behavior under various circumstances, including a possible raid by the enemy. Discouraged was any appearance in public places, such as markets, churches and restaurants; the sight of strange young men could alert any enemy agents about. Consequently, recruits were kept as much as possible in their designated quarters, and at night special guards were posted. During the march the groups of recruits were secured by front and rear security guards. Recruits were forbidden to talk with the inhabitants, above all not to reveal who they were and which way they were heading.

Once processed by the mobilization centers of the UPA, the recruits had to swear loyalty to the UPA and its supreme leadership, whereupon they became and were treated as regular soldiers of the UPA.

All recruits knew that the UPA was a movement of the enslaved Ukrainian people with the purpose of throwing off the yoke of the foreign oppressor and establishing a free and independent state of Ukraine. In order to attain these objectives, they were enjoined to do the following:

1. Prepare themselves fully for the successful accomplishment of this task;
2. Obey implicitly those directing the liberation movement;
3. Renounce (for the time of their service) all personal benefits;
4. Accept wholeheartedly this great ideal and become fanatical fighters for

it, regardless of any sacrifices demanded of them or danger to their own lives incurred in the course of their service to the cause.

In the central and eastern Ukrainian lands the units of the UPA were organized in two ways:

1. By recruitment of local young men and OUN members;
2. By mobilization and recruitment assisted by the raiding units of the UPA-North.

In both cases UPA units were confronted by two enemies: the Germans and the Russians.

The Germans were compelled to maintain large police forces, for the rule of terror introduced by Erich Koch, *gauleiter* of Ukraine, evoked hatred on the part of the Ukrainian people for the Germans and their advisers and "specialists on the East"—the White Russians. The mass deportations of Ukrainians to slave labor in Germany, the pillage of foodstuffs and the wholesale destruction of Ukrainian national life—all generated a compulsion for revenge by an armed hand. The Ukrainians were confronted with a difficult choice: to remain passive or to fight against both enemies of Ukraine by joining the ranks of the UPA, sooner or later. One of the enemies, the Russian, had been known to Eastern Ukrainians for the past two decades. The other enemy, the German, on whom the Ukrainians had pinned high hopes of liberation, had not only deceived them, but in his behavior with respect to the Ukrainians had emulated the Russian in terror and persecution. Mass killings and everyday uncertainties of conditions made normal life impossible.

At this very time there came into being the activities of the Ukrainian nationalists, on the one hand, and the activities of the Soviet Russian partisans, on the other.

In the central and eastern Ukrainian lands extreme caution was required to bar and weed out possible *agent-provocateurs* in the ranks of the UPA. All UPA units operating in these areas had to be screened thoroughly for security reasons, since to send units which were questionable would expose the entire organization in the area to possible Bolshevik infiltration. Nevertheless, the Ukrainian revolutionary movement managed to spread itself extensively in Eastern Ukraine under the German occupation.

The raiding UPA units combatted both the Germans and the Bolshevik partisan parachutists. They succeeded in clearing the areas of Kamianets Podilsky and Zhytomyr of the Bolshevik bands, and at the same time in conducting effective actions against the ruthless German administration.

Such combat actions required thoroughgoing partisan experience; therefore, as a rule the UPA Staff sent only its most experienced and seasoned units, highly disciplined and well trained. For maximal propaganda impact, these units wore Ukrainian military uniforms.

These raids began in the spring of 1943 and lasted until the transition of the UPA from a military body into a civilian underground was completed.



Thus strong military formations of the UPA were active on the entire terrain of Ukraine until 1950.

At the beginning these raids were conducted in comparative security, but soon both the Germans and the Russians came to understand the danger which the Ukrainian liberation struggle represented to their occupation of Ukraine. Consequently, they began to take countermeasures to block and, if possible, destroy the effectiveness of the Ukrainian underground movement.

Thus, the German command, especially in the area of Zhytomyr, endeavored to draw the UPA units into open warfare in which German planes and heavy armaments would be brought to bear. Significantly, the German command badly needed war planes at the front, but it did not hesitate to use them against the Ukrainian freedom fighters, whom it considered no less dangerous than the enemies against whom it waged its greatest and bloodiest war.

The Bolsheviks, on the other hand, tried to check the UPA units with their own partisan detachments. Without exaggeration, hundreds of encounters, large-scale and small, took place between them and the UPA units. But in the winter of 1943 the Russians mounted a substantial offensive against the Germans, with the result that a great part of Ukraine found itself under their occupation. Some of the raiding units of the UPA were ordered to return to Western Ukraine, others remained under the Russian occupation as the UPA-South.

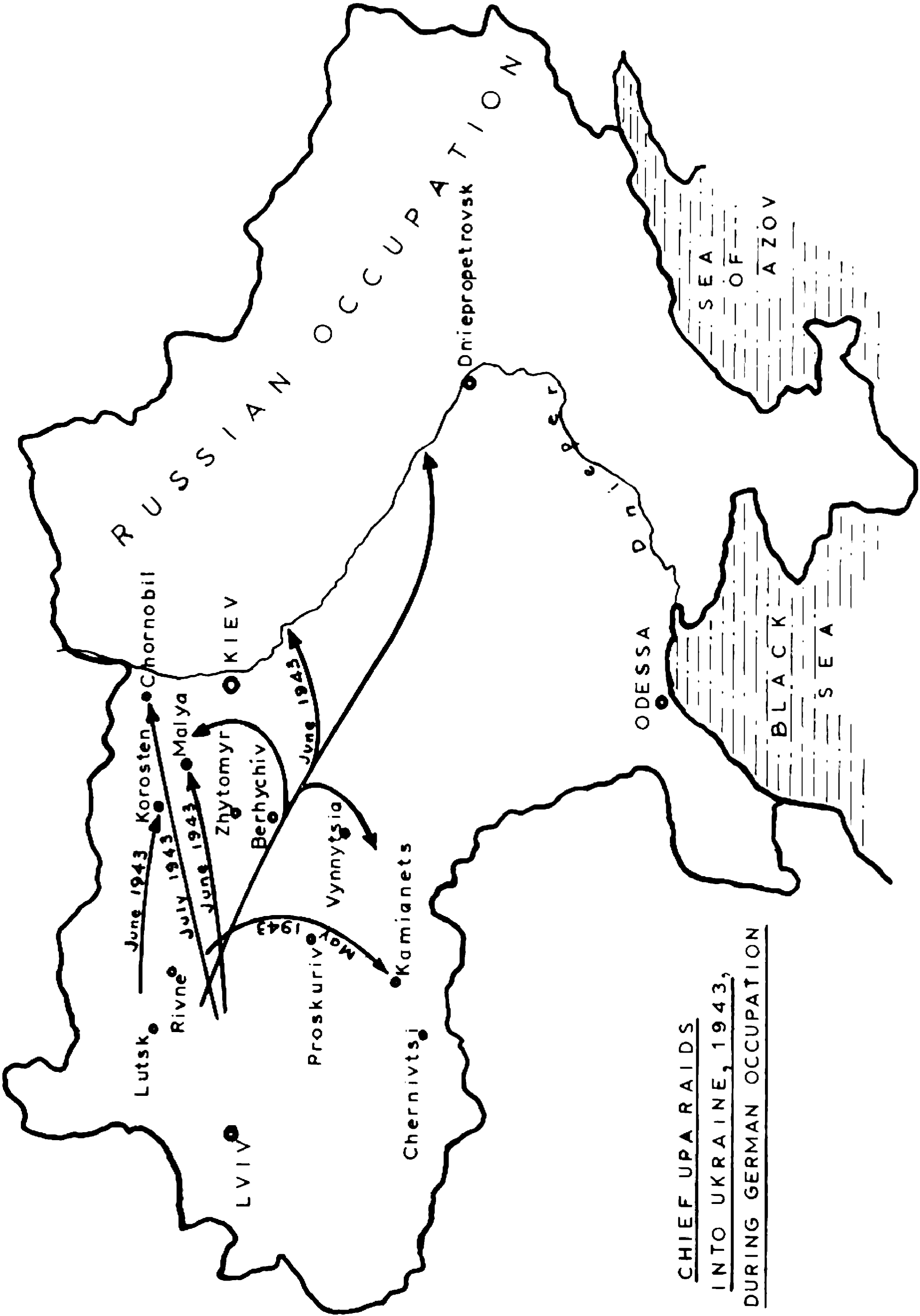
Concomitantly with the military operations of the Ukrainian partisans, effective and extensive activities were developed by the civilian network of the OUN. The onset of these activities dates back to the so-called "field groups" (*pokhidni hrupy*), which, following hard on the German-Soviet front line, tried to organize the national life and to set up a new administration in Ukraine. The OUN network was extremely strong in central and eastern Ukraine. It published underground newspapers in clandestine printing shops, among which the most outstanding and best known were *Visti* (News) in Dniepropetrovsk and *Chornomorsky Visnyk* (The Black Sea Herald) in Odessa.

(The most important raids in Ukraine are given on a map of Ukraine featuring the UPA raids.—Author).

### **Battle Near Town of Kolky**

In May, 1943, the Germans instituted strong military operations against the centers of the UPA in Volhynia. The entire areas of Brest, Lutsk, Korostopol and Rivne became the terrain of heavy fighting, ambushes and encounters, in which the Germans, overall, were not victorious.

On May 12, 1943, the Germans attacked the town of Kolky using a few SS Divisions. At that time in Kolky there were 5 UPA insurgent hospitals



CHIEF UPA RAIDS  
INTO UKRAINE, 1943,  
DURING GERMAN OCCUPATION

which had been set up in various hide-outs and private homes. The wounded insurgents were evacuated into the woods under the expert plan of a woman member of the Ukrainian Red Cross, known by her alias as "Gypsy" (Tsyhanka). The Germans, not expecting ambushes and a stubborn defense of the town by the insurgents, suffered heavy losses in their approach on the town. Subsequently, in all the surrounding villages and wooded areas, heavy fighting took place in which the UPA fighters suffered considerable losses. Three outstanding UPA commanders perished: Vasyl Iwachiw ("Sonar"), Julian Kovalsky and Semen Sniatetsky (commander of the battalion "Druzhynnyky"). In attacking the village of Lubasha the Germans were ambushed, losing several dozen men and a quantity of military equipment.

Mykola Hordienko, in his memoirs, reports the following on the battle near Kolky:

After a great battle near the town of Kolky, the insurgents captured the town and established their headquarters there. The Germans dared not approach; the entire neighborhood was cleared of enemy troops. In fact, the so-called Kolky Republic was established. A great quantity of foodstuffs, prepared for shipment to Germany, was seized by the UPA insurgents and distributed to the peasants. All town mills and workshops were now producing for the insurgents and the local population. The area of Kovel-Rivne and Sarny also was cleared, except for the city of Rivne, which remained a German fortress with bunkers, fortifications and great masses of army and police forces for the security of the entire German administration of Ukraine and its head, Erich Koch. But a few kilometers outside the city not a single German dared to appear, as the area was under the direct jurisdiction of the UPA, manned by detachments of the "Tury," commanded by Commander Rudyi.

On the other hand, the Communist partisans began operations in the area with the intent of capturing the town of Kolky. The first onslaughts of the Bolsheviks were repulsed by the UPA, with the Bolsheviks being chased across the frontiers of Ukraine. Later on battles became fiercer and bloodier. Nevertheless, the Communists failed to occupy these areas for the next two years, even though the regular front moved far into Europe.

Among the captured Bolshevik equipment the Ukrainian insurgents found meat cans labeled, "Made in U.S.A." <sup>9</sup>

### **Battles in the Area of Yapolut-Lubasha**

With the purpose of clearing the area of Ukrainian insurgents, the German command sent out a police battalion, supported by heavy rocket launchers, numbering 400 men from the city of Kostopol at dawn on May 9, 1943. According to the order, the battalion was ordered to capture the village of

<sup>9</sup> Hordienko, Mykola, *Z volynskykh i podilskykh reidiv* (The Vohlynian and Podilian Raids), Toronto, 1959.

Yapolot, terrorize the population and confiscate all foodstuffs it could put a hand to.

The OUN counterintelligence service reported the action to a UPA company which was bivouacked in the woods west of the village. The German battalion entered the village and began its terroristic action: manhunts, brutal beatings and search for foodstuffs, the latter conducted by a company of the battalion.

While the Germans were engaged in their punitive action, a strong UPA force, divided into three assault groups, approached the village and attacked the Germans after liquidating the German security outposts. A fierce battle raged for hours involving each house and barn of the village. The Germans, defending themselves for over six hours, suffered heavy losses mainly because they were not trained to fight the guerrilla type of enemy. The UPA insurgents, because of lack of ammunition, withdrew, leaving only three dead and four wounded. The German punitive unit retired to Kostopol.

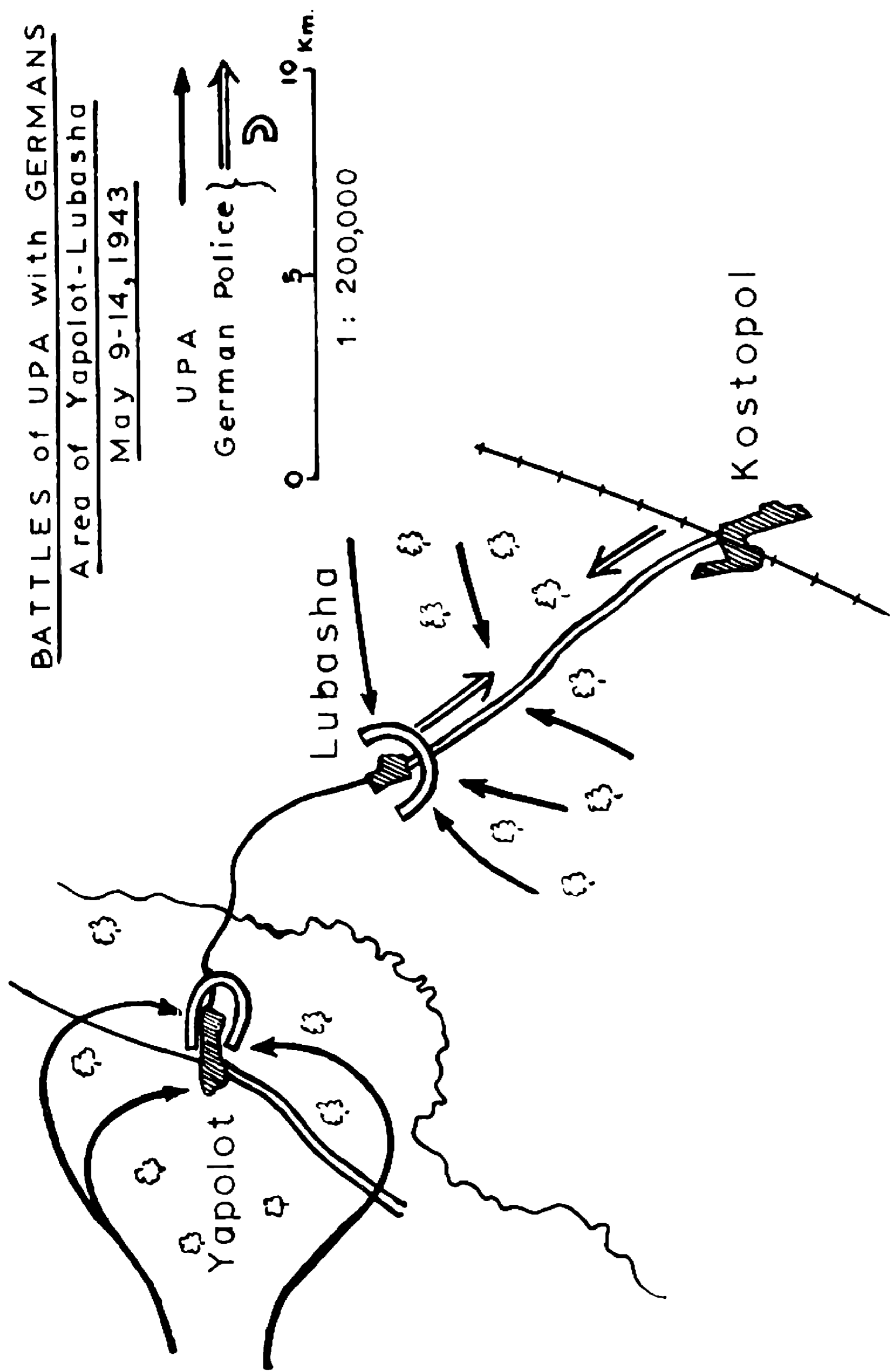
On May 14, 1943, another German battalion descended upon the village of Lubasha for the purpose of executing summarily all the inhabitants and to burn down the village in reprisal for the villagers' collaboration with the UPA insurgents. But before the genocidal plan could be put into effect, two UPA platoons, seemingly arriving from nowhere, burned 11 parked army vehicles, killed 35 German soldiers, and retreated without losing a single man. The raid was so unexpected and so sudden that the crippled and demoralized German unit began to beat a hasty retreat to Kostopol without fulfilling its mission. Now, however, they were ambushed in the woods. Only a rescue unit sent by the German command from the city saved it from annihilation.

### **Battle at Radovychi September 8-9, 1943**

Active in the neighborhood of the city of Kovel, in addition to the UPA insurgents, were Polish and Soviet partisans, and the German army as well. All these forces, inimical to the goals of the Ukrainians, raided Ukrainian villages, confiscated foodstuffs and terrorized the populace. The UPA local command, deciding to clear the area of all enemy elements, made an appropriate report to the Supreme Command of the UPA.

The Polish partisan headquarters was located in the village of Zasmyky, at that time a Polish colony. On a number of occasions the Commander of UPA District "Tury" appealed to the Poles for the purpose of reaching an understanding regarding food supplies and attitude toward the Ukrainian population, but to no avail. Eventually, the Supreme Command of the UPA ordered the clearing of the area of the Polish partisans and the destruction of their base in the village of Zasmyky.

The terrain of action was devoid of woods, marshy, covered with under-



brush, and inaccessible. The Polish partisans in the village numbered about two battalions; ready to come to their aid in the neighboring city of Kovel was the Polish auxiliary police, organized by the German administration.<sup>10</sup>

The strength of the UPA consisted of the following:

1) Three battalions, one commanded by Holubenko (its companies commanded by Baida, Kubik and Zalizniak); the battalion of Shchuk, and that of Yarema;

2) A training school company of noncommissioned officers with field artillery under the command of Rozvazhny;

3) A company of heavy mine layers.

Overall command was placed in the hands of Commander Vovchak, deputy commander of the "Tury" Military District of the UPA.

On September 7, 1943, the UPA units began deploying around the village of Zasmyky for the purpose of blocking it from all sides. Special attention was given by Commander Vovchak to the highway of Kovel-Radovychi in order to forestall any action from the direction of Kovel. In the event they encountered the German armed forces the UPA had a standing order not to engage them, but to resort to defensive action only in order to be able to execute the prime assignment—the destruction of the Polish base in Zasmyky.

About 4:00 A.M. on the second day, September 8, the company of Baida espied a great German column consisting of heavy trucks moving from Kovel in the direction of Radovychi. Alone having been ordered to attack and compel the Germans to turn back, Commander Baida positioned his company along the highway and at the appropriate moment attacked the Germans with machine gun and mortar fire. The Germans, who had not expected any adversary in this area, behaved in disjointed fashion, a factor which contributed to their undoing. The German column was long and contained 420 soldiers. After the first shock the Germans took to the ditches and began a defensive action, and subsequently attempted to counterattack. After an hour's exchange of fire both wings of Baida's company remained in place, whereas the middle platoon gave way somewhat from its original position in the face of the German counterattack. The Germans, believing that the insurgents were now on the run, attacked in full strength. But at this moment they were hit by cross fire, receiving in addition fire from the platoon that had given ground. After pinning the Germans to the ground, the Ukrainian partisans held their fire. Believing that the UPA men were short of ammunition, the Germans renewed their attack. They were greeted by concentrated fire from all sides, which compelled the Germans to retreat to the highway after sustaining heavy losses.

At this time a German battalion began moving in the direction of Kovel. Commander Baida threw two platoons against it in pursuit. Since he was left

<sup>10</sup> Mirchuk, *op. cit.*

with only a platoon, he dispatched a messenger to obtain relief from Kubik's company. The company arrived in short order and in order to relieve Baida's platoons, which were tired and exhausted, began pursuit of the Germans, who were fleeing toward Kovel. But before the company could join up with Baida, they were attacked by the Germans from the rear. Nevertheless, the UPA contingents managed to join and surround the Germans from three sides. Baida then called on the Germans to surrender. The Germans refused, apparently believing that the coming evening would enable them to escape the iron ring and reach Kovel.

But under strong fire they could not hold. Commander Baida took the prisoners to the village of Svnaryna, where the UPA had its field headquarters. They confessed that they belonged to the *Wehrmacht*, and that they had been fighting on the Eastern front, but now were on a few weeks rest period. They also disclosed that the supplies in Kovel were inadequate, and that in answer to their complaints the German Command replied that it had had considerable difficulties because of the partisans. If they wanted better food, they were told, they were to take it from the peasants. Some 420 soldiers had volunteered for such a hunt, and they had come with trucks to the villages for that purpose. A few days later all the prisoners were released.

At night a meeting of officers was held. It was assumed that the Germans would retaliate the next day, and the UPA units faced two possibilities of action: to accept the challenge or to retreat. There was no doubt in anyone's mind that a retreat would strengthen morally the Polish and Soviet partisans and would confer no immediate benefit on the Ukrainian insurgents. It was decided, therefore, to give battle.

A battle arena was selected behind the village of Klusk near Radovychi. It extended for about 9 kilometers. The right flank was occupied by the battalion of Holubenko, the left by that of Shchuk, and the center by Vovchak's battalion. The second line, between left flank and center, was manned by the training school company of noncommissioned officers and, between center and right flank, by the heavy weapons company.

The units dug in during the night; they were ordered to be battle-ready by 6:30 A.M.

Early the next morning the security sentries reported that the Germans were moving on the village of Klusk. They fired on a deserted brush area near the village, indicating that the enemy was not acquainted with the insurgent positions. The enemy had a truck column which was headed by an armored car and brought up by two more armored cars, with motorcyclists on either side of the column. When the Germans approached the line, the insurgent companies opened fire from all sides with all weapons at their disposal. The Germans hit the ditches and began firing blindly, not knowing where the enemy was. Their fire was directed at the right flank of the insurgents, but

was not effective. All firing subsided at noon, at which time both sides took the opportunity to secure fresh supplies of food and ammunition.

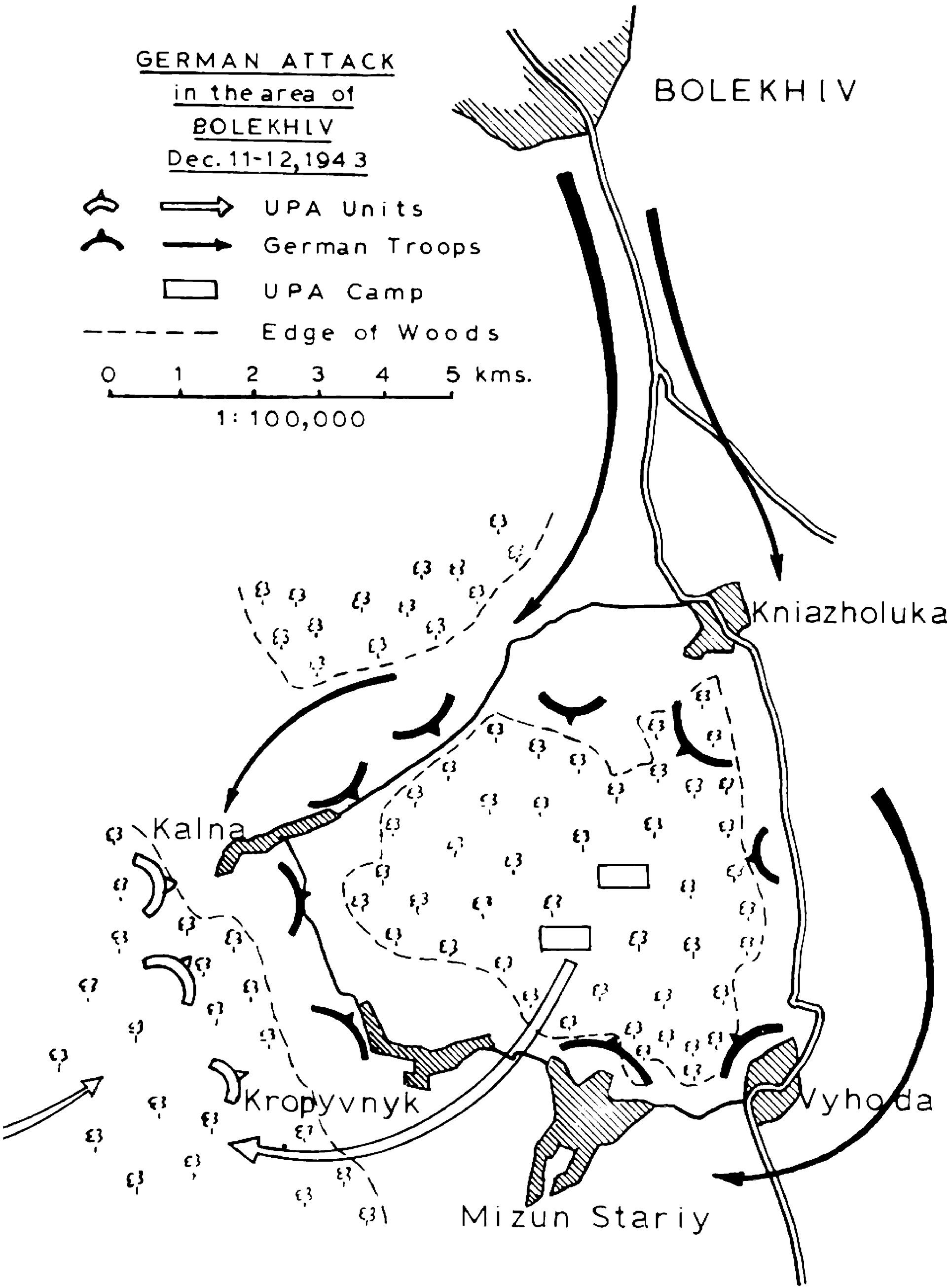
At 4:00 P.M. the battle was resumed. The Germans stayed put, showing no inclination to attack. Since they were apparently awaiting relief troops from Kovel, Commander Vovchak decided to throw his battalion on the offensive, while the other two battalions continued their fire on the Germans. The general assault proceeded through the center, supported by both flanks. As one battalion advanced, the others provided covering fire. The Germans held on stubbornly and would not retreat. Suddenly the insurgent left flank began receiving artillery fire. A German armored train had approached and halted between the villages of Turyisk and Bobly from which location it had opened fire upon the insurgents' positions. Shchuk's battalion suffered heavy casualties. To bolster the flank Commander Vovchak sent in a company, while his two other companies remained in place to cover the battalion position. Then Vovchak abruptly withdrew the left flank to the rear. The Germans, believing that the insurgents were retreating, surged forward only to find themselves under the heavy fire not only of the insurgents but of their own armored car as well. The Germans broke and panicked, their frenzy in retreat spreading contagiously to the entire German force. The pursuit of the Germans lasted until 10:00 P.M. Much military equipment was left behind by the Germans; it was gathered by the UPA units and taken to the village of Svynaryna.

The next day field intelligence reported that the Polish partisans had hastily abandoned their base in the village of Zasmyky and withdrawn to the west. The victorious battle with the Germans thus enabled the insurgents to attain their principal objective without contact with the enemy, in this case the Polish partisans.

### **Battles in the Kropyvnyk-Mizun Area, December 11-12, 1943**

On December 11, 1943, two regiments of German police began an encirclement action against an UPA unit numbering over 300 men. The Germans took the villages of Kropyvnyk, Kalna, Štoda Bolekhivska, Lypa and Mizun in order to surround the insurgents, positioned on a woody hill situated between these villages. Because the terrain did not favor the insurgents they moved quietly toward the south before the Germans could close the ring, where they joined another UPA unit comprising two platoons. The new terrain was highly appropriate for defense—a hilly and woody area, with a massive mountainous background, from which the insurgents commanded an extensive field of fire. At the same time the area was a very poor one for the attacking enemy, for it did not lend itself at all to heavy armament and armored vehicles.





Owing to the stealth of the insurgents the Germans failed to detect their departure. They rushed into the encircled ring, only to find a deserted encampment. Seeing fresh tracks leading south, the Germans swung off in hot pursuit. They were abruptly met with concentrated machine gun fire. Thrown into confusion, the Germans were unable to take up battle positions or to return the fire, and retreated with heavy casualties. In their frustration they put to the torch all the villages through which they retreated.

We may state authoritatively that in the months of November and December of 1943 the young insurgent forces scored several victories against the powerful German army. Both woods and villages were now teeming with new people—recruits and volunteers of the UPA—forming a new “insurgent republic” in the district of Dolyna, Kalush, Stanyslaviv and Kolomeya.

At this time, the UPA was confronted with a new situation: the German-Soviet front was moving steadily westward, and it became clear that sooner or later the UPA would have to face a new and formidable enemy: the Soviet army. The German army, as such, had ceased to menace the UPA. Moreover, the Hungarian regiments, allied with the Germans, preserved their neutrality with respect to the UPA. The Hungarian Command even signed a secret agreement regarding a mutual neutrality, and also with respect to supply of arms by the Hungarian army to the Ukrainian insurgents. The German occupier was steadily retreating to the west, leaving the UPA with a new task—preparation for the struggle against Russian Communist imperialism.

### **German Operations Against the UPA in Carpathian Foothills November-December 1943**

At the end of 1943 the German armed forces decided to launch major military operations against the growing forces of the UPA that were scattered in the woods and villages of the Carpathian foothills.

The Germans began by terrorizing the populace. Thousands of young people were arrested and executed or sent by the Gestapo to concentration camps in Germany. The German tactic amounted to a summary destruction of the Ukrainian population of this area in order to intimidate it and break its connection with the Ukrainian insurgents. The Germans also began a concerted propaganda drive about a “New Europe” in which they “assigned” a place to those Ukrainians willing to collaborate with the German administration. For all others they designated jails and concentration camps.

The German military action in the area of Kolomeya where UPA recruits and training centers were concentrated, achieved some successes. The insurgents, unable to withstand the overwhelming forces of the enemy, escaped from the encirclement, breaking up into two groups. One of them remained in the mountains of the Kolomeya district, the other was ordered to the Black Forest near the city of Stanyslaviv. The training schools were ordered to report to their respective units in the districts of Lviv and Ternopil.

German intelligence detected the movement of the insurgents toward the Black Forest. On November 27, 1943, two German divisions took up positions in the villages of Maidan, Posich and Zaviy, and, supported by their air force, moved forward in the Black Forest early in the morning. The Germans applied regular army tactics in their attack against the Ukrainian insurgents.

The insurgents numbered about 600 men, including also members of the Ukrainian National Self-Defense, who at that time were not as yet part of the UPA. All insurgents realized fully that their situation was serious and that the defense of the Black Forest had a great significance for the UPA. This forest massif was also an assembly area where the insurgents gathered for their marches and for deployment into the foothills and the Carpathian Mountains. In addition, the Black Forest was an advanced position for the seizure of the mountainous terrain which, they knew, was an immediate objective of the Soviet troops.

The first encounters were sharp and intense. Despite the preponderance of the enemy, the insurgents, trained in partisan warfare and superbly acquainted with the terrain, proved to be superior and victorious. They were helped immensely by their quick seizure of a radio station, which they began using for their own communications. Being encircled on all sides, the insurgents adopted a tactic of rapid and continual attacks on the German forces, which moved slowly and cautiously through the woods. Unexpected ambushes and raids, incessant encirclements and the sudden appearances of Ukrainian insurgents in their rear—all these tactics disoriented the Germans, who were not as yet accustomed to partisan warfare.

After the preliminary skirmishes the UPA commander who led the defense of the Black Forest concentrated his fire against the two weakest spots of the enemy ring. After succeeding in breaking the ring, he ordered his units to attack the Germans from the rear.

At that moment, for no discernible reason, the German command ordered a general retreat, which in turn precipitated a veritable panic among the Germans. The insurgents pursued the enemy to the outskirts of the forest. Here they stopped. Having no reliable intelligence as to how many German troops were left in the neighboring villages, the UPA desisted from entering them.

As a result of this operation the Ukrainian insurgents captured a great quantity of arms and ammunition at the cost of only 4 dead and 11 wounded. Sixty Germans were killed in the fighting.

### **Raid on Slave Labor Camp in the Village of Sviatoslav**

In the village of Sviatoslav near the town of Skole, the German police established a slave labor or punitive camp, in which the Gestapo incarcerated all those Ukrainians who refused to serve in the German *Baudienst* (Building

Service), go to Germany to work in the war industries or to work for the Germans in general. The camp, erected in the wooded mountains, was known as the "death concentration camp." In the camp huts, encircled by barbed wire and Gestapo watch towers, over 200 young men were reported dead in a short time. The camp grew by leaps and bounds.

Hundreds of Ukrainian youth, especially members of the Ukrainian National Self-Defense, took refuge in the woods in order to escape arrest by the Gestapo. They soon formed an assault group and, led by military leaders of the OUN, began planning an attack on the slave camp for the purpose of liberating their compatriots.

The plan of the attack called for a sudden thrust on the camp from all sides, and above all, on the headquarters of the Gestapo and the police outpost in the camp. In order to forestall eventual German relief from Skole, the UPA dispatched two platoons to occupy strategic positions on the highway, one near the village of Sviatoslav, the other near the town of Skole itself.

The attack, which took place in the night, was so sudden that the Germans failed to muster any resistance. Only the guards on duty were able to use their arms; the entire Gestapo contingent was captured in bed. The Gestapo members were all executed on the spot for their torture and mutilation of prisoners.

All able-bodied prisoners joined the insurgents, while those in need of medical attention were sent to the field medical stations of the Ukrainian Red Cross.

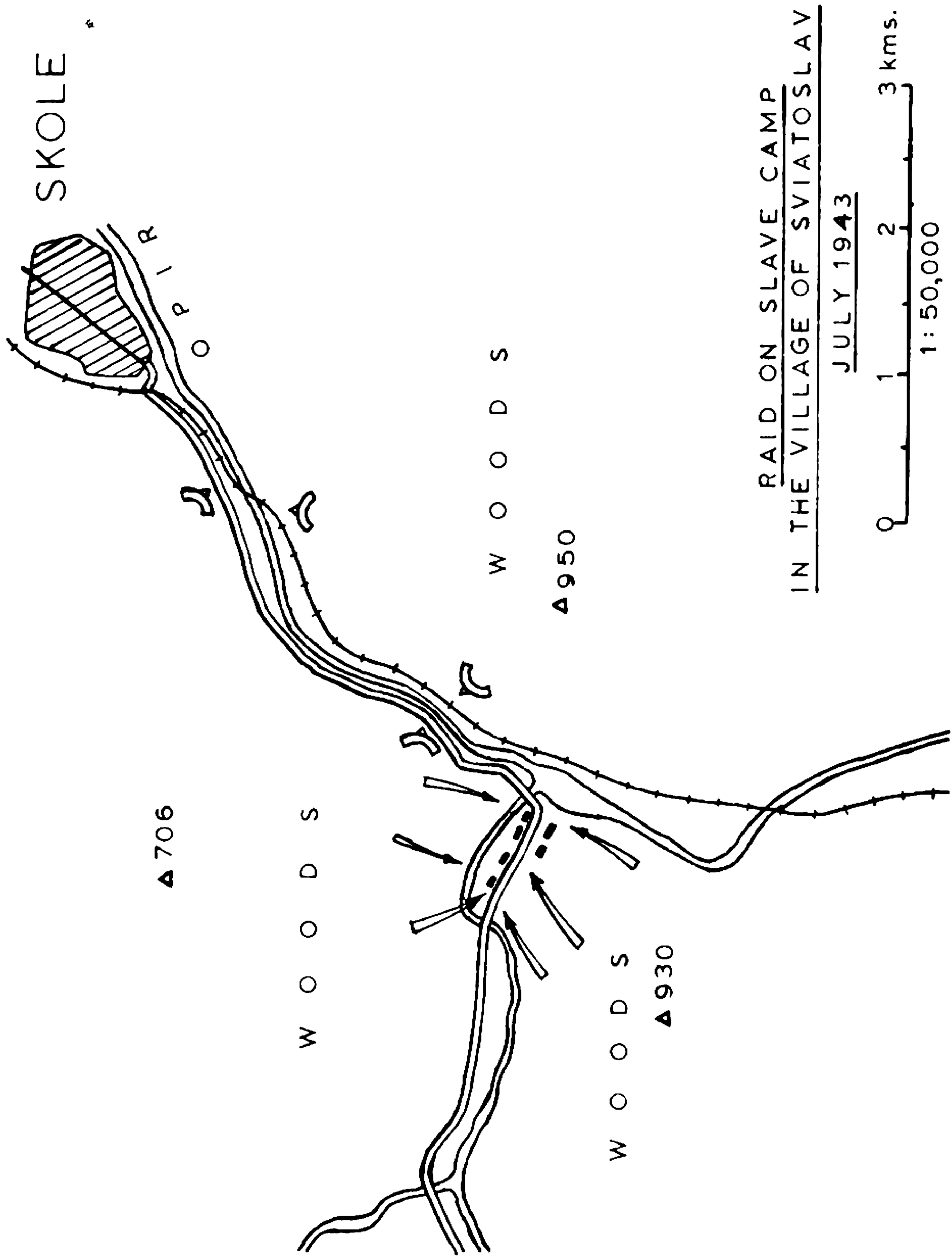
### **Battle Near the Villages of Kamianka and Lypa**

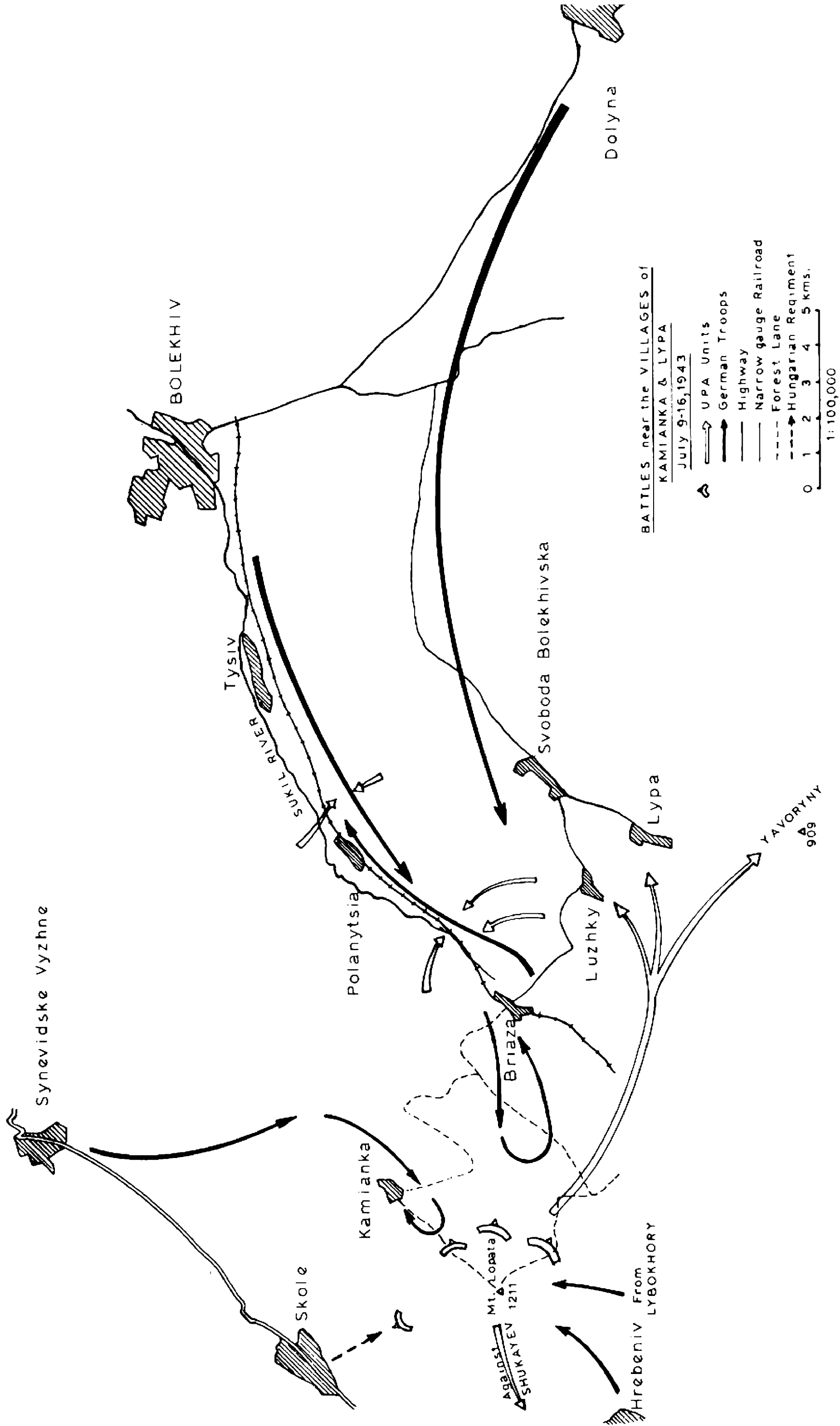
The Black Forest cleared of Soviet partisans, the UPA Supreme Command ordered three battalions of the UPA forces to move westward in the area of Skole for the purpose of liquidating the remnants of Soviet Russian parachutists who operated in the area under the partisan commander Shukayev. Some reserves were left behind in the Black Forest.

The three UPA battalions progressed in a secured march on the highway. This open march of the Ukrainian insurgents understandably evoked panic in the German administration and the police force stationed in this area.

The battalions moved through the villages of Hrabivka-Tsineva, Lopianka, Veldizh, Mizun, Kalna, Sloboda Bolekhivska, Priazna and Kamianka. When the insurgents reached Kamianka, the Germans began setting up road blocks between Synevidsko Vyzhne and Skole and sent strong motorized and reconnaissance security units into the mountains.

It was in Kamianka that one such unit fell into an ambush laid by the Ukrainian insurgents under the command of Rizun. The insurgents captured three cars, and found out from the German prisoners that the Germans had





no plan to attack the Soviet partisans commanded by Shukayev, but instead were preparing a major offensive against the UPA forces. Subsequently, two German regiments rushed from Bolekhiv during the night of July 7 and launched an attack against the village of Kamianka, headquarters of Commander Rizun. Apprised of the German attack, Commander Rizun surprised them with heavy machine gun and mortar fire, breaking the spine of the German attack. Suffering heavy casualties, the Germans retreated.

At the same time a Hungarian regiment moved out from Skole and opened fire on a small insurgent unit. Living up to the secret understanding between the UPA Supreme Command and the Hungarian army command in Ukraine, the Hungarian regiment did not attack, and after some sporadic shooting by its units, it returned to Skole.

In the night the UPA units took up positions on Mount Lopata (1211) and in the neighboring hills, through which ran the defense line erected earlier by the Hungarians. The Germans concentrated two SS Divisions numbering over 30,000 men in the area and began moving out of their bases in Bolekhiv, Synevidsko, Hrebeniv and Lybokhory.

All the UPA units were commanded by Major Hutsul. They comprised the following:

A battalion commanded by Commander Rizun; a battalion under Commander Blahy (in the early days of the battle the battalion was under the command of Commander Kozak, but subsequently remained in the field with other units; his battalion was then shifted westward together with the battalion of Rizun against the Bolshevik band of Shukayev); an UPA officer training school "Oleni" (Commander Pol), and a UPA noncommissioned officer training school "Berkuty." All told, the UPA forces constituted only three battalions, not an overwhelming force for the clash that followed.

It began on July 9 with firing from all sides which settled down to sniping, ambushes and sudden raids in a terrain in which the Germans found themselves strangers and limited in their scope of action. Unfamiliar with the terrain, the Germans soon became disoriented and increasingly unable to maintain liaison with other German units. Initially the German losses were not high in view of the objective that the German command had set. The insurgents avoided direct confrontation with the Germans, attacking them from the flanks and the rear instead. Soon it became apparent that the German losses were running high; the new type of warfare had begun to take its toll. Toward evening, the Germans, exposed without success to the full measure of partisan warfare and crippled by heavy losses, retreated to the villages.

The commander of the UPA units at an *ad hoc* field council decided that despite the first-rate military equipment possessed by the German army and their undoubted battle readiness, the Germans simply were not prepared to cope with the new situation. The consensus of opinion of the UPA com-

manders was that they could easily rely on the two training schools, while two UPA battalions should be sent after the Bolshevik bands of Shukayev. This plan was totally successful. As the commander hoped, they were freed from attack by German relief and reserve forces once they succeeded in piercing the German lines. This was also probably the thinking of the Bolshevik parachutists. The Bolsheviks thought that by taking advantage of the fact that the German military forces were preoccupied with operations against the UPA, they would be able to emerge from the mountains and move into the villages for the purpose of securing badly needed foodstuffs.

Both UPA battalions left Mount Lopata and moved westward against the Soviet parachutists of Shukayev.

That night the local UPA units laid a few successful ambushes against the Germans. Most spectacular was the ambush executed by the local unit "Zahrava" between the villages of Polanytsia and Tysiv. The unit took cover in an opportune spot about one kilometer northeast of Polianytsia and awaited an SS convoy of supplies destined for the SS Divisions that surrounded Mount Lopata. The ambush was wholly successful. The Germans moved along on the highway believing that they were immune to any attack. But the Ukrainian insurgents attacked them with lightning surprise at night, capturing all the arms and ammunition. Not a single German soldier survived. All trucks and cars were destroyed after the equipment and supplies were taken away.

The next day the German artillery began firing on Mount Lopata with a sustained barrage which lasted until noon. Subsequently, the German commanding general ordered an attack on the strategic hill. When the German reconnaissance troops failed to establish contact with the insurgents, the German army moved in on the fortified position. They did not find a single insurgent.

The night prior to the German bombardment, the insurgents, breaking up into small groups, had penetrated the *hinterland* of the enemy and set up ambush points on the road along which the German artillery had to pass. When the Germans began to withdraw, they were hit by several ambushes. All bridges and culverts were blown up. On the retreat the Germans suffered heavy losses, especially since their commander ordered the rebuilding of bridges, in the course of which work German engineers were exposed to the direct machine gun fire of the Ukrainian insurgents.

Finally, on July 12, another German division was brought up from the town of Dolyna as a support force. Its artillery bombarded the area, especially the locations of the UPA officer training school and the UPA hospitals. But, again, these bivouac areas were cleared before the German relief division entered the operation. The UPA officer training school moved to the hills near the village of Yavoryny, while the wounded were placed in field dis-



pensaries set up by the Ukrainian Red Cross in the villages of Lypa, Luzhky and Sloboda.

On July 14 both first German divisions retreated to their bivouacs, and on July 16 the Third Division also returned to Dolyna. During their withdrawal they were attacked by the Ukrainian insurgents near the village of Briaza, and again suffered heavy losses in men.

Although the Germans took all precautionary measures during the retreat, they could not avoid exposure to attack from all sides. On the whole the Germans lost over 600 dead, especially during their flight from Mount Lopata, while the insurgents suffered only about a dozen casualties—a fantastic ratio. We can only deduce that the German police force, although well trained for normal police activities, was helpless in coping with partisan warfare.

At the same time the Soviet armies began a gigantic offensive on the German-Soviet front. In the area of Lviv-Brody the Soviet troops broke through the German lines, and the German command hastily began gathering all reserves. The Soviet objective was to seize not only Lviv, but Cracow as well in order to open up a deep wedge in the German defenses. At the Battle of Brody the Germans threw in the 1st Ukrainian Division "Halychyna," which was not as yet fully trained, but at the same time they dispatched three SS Divisions against the Ukrainian insurgents in the *hinterland*, without every trying to wipe out a Soviet partisan group commanded by Shukayev.



# Chapter Seven

## THE UNDERGROUND NETWORK OF THE UPA

In addition to the units and detachments of the UPA there existed in Ukraine an underground network, the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists, popularly known as the "OUN civilian network." Its significance and importance was so great and basic that unquestionably the UPA could not have operated without it. Kruk-Melodia, one of the UPA leaders, put this forcefully: "Without the civilian network of the OUN, the UPA, which lasted over 10 years, could not have existed even ten weeks!"

It was in the OUN that the insurgent army was born and it was there that it received its ideology, its political slogans and its basic recruit training. History teaches us that an insurgent movement always grows out of a political underground. He who thinks in terms of classical war forms does not perceive all those subdivisions of tasks and objectives embracing the whole life of a nation: economic, political, ideological, military, cultural and religious. Military affairs alone involve a detailed ramification of tasks and functions: training, mobilization, supplies, medical services, intelligence, general military leadership, and the like.

For this reason neither the insurgents nor the underground could have been destroyed by military means alone. Here political approaches and psychological influences come into play. All this was completely misunderstood by the Germans in Ukraine, whose sole instrument of rule in Ukraine was brutal and naked force.

On the other hand, the Russians understand the principle well, but can

not desist from using force towards their objective of Russifying Ukraine and establishing a unified Russian empire.

The UPA relied exclusively on its own national strength. It was supported by the people, who, in the areas in which the UPA operated, collaborated closely with the OUN. The civilian sector furnished men, arms, foodstuffs, military equipment, clothing and, above all, intelligence. Those OUN members and sympathizers who were caught were tortured by the enemy and died at once or ultimately from long-term imprisonment and the inhuman physical demands in the slave labor camps in Siberia.

On the other hand, the Soviet partisans were in a different situation. Supported by the Soviet army command in Moscow, they were supposed to be supplied with military equipment, arms and ammunition from the air. When supplies did not reach them—thanks to typical Soviet inefficiency—the Soviet partisans raided the villages and robbed the inhabitants. Deprived of all contacts with and sympathy from the Ukrainian population, the Soviet Russian partisans would pillage Ukrainian villages on orders from Moscow. This negative side of each raid made by the Soviet partisans was well known in Moscow. In March, 1943, Khrushchev asserted at a meeting of party commissars that for the effective success of Soviet partisan warfare, collaboration with the local population is essential. But, he added, in “Ukraine this is impossible to attain.”

The constant collaboration of the OUN with the UPA made for a merging of posts; frequently the same person occupied both the OUN and the UPA posts. In this respect the enemy was unable to distinguish between the OUN and the UPA, especially as regards their organizational structures. In addition, only the most important functions belonged to OUN members. The others, that is, the majority of the OUN network members, did not even belong to the organization; before World War II they were members of other Ukrainian political parties. The Germans and Russians, and for that matter, Western statesmen, used to simplify the matter by viewing the whole Ukrainian resistance movement as the work of one organization. The Germans, for instance, called the Ukrainian underground movement the *Bandera Bewegung* (the Bandera movement), while the Russians referred to it as the *Banderovtsy* (the “Banderites”) or as the “Ukrainian bourgeois nationalists.” In the West many journalists and statesmen were prompt to disseminate the Russian propaganda canard by referring to the Ukrainian liberation movement as a “Fascist” intrigue.

One high German administrator, who could not be identified, had described the situation in Ukraine thus:

In 1943 Galicia had two faces. During the day there ruled the German administration, which protected every German. At night the country outside the city-islands was dominated by the UPA. In forests took place exercises in firing and building of bunkers; on the

highways—movements of convoys, marches and control of patrols, and, in villages, mustering of UPA troops. Turning politically unreliable, the Ukrainian police, railroadmen and forest rangers went over to the UPA. Officials of the administration, *soltyses* (bourgo-masters), village heads and members of commissions covertly and overtly were becoming members of the UPA and supporting it. They felt that a local UPA commander was closer to them than a German policeman.

In 1943, politically the UPA encompassed almost the entire population of Galicia. The Galician terrain had become too narrow for the existence of two antipodal forces: the dynamic and revolutionary UPA and the defensive German administration. The Carpathian areas were completely freed of German control. German police units, stationed mostly in major localities, could not maintain control.

Former great estates and collective farms (established by the Soviet regime—YTK) were liquidated by the Ukrainian insurgents. Any and all German administration, inimical to the interests of the Ukrainian people, evoked the fanatical opposition of the population, which made you feel that it was being directed by one central leadership. . . .<sup>11</sup>

This leadership referred to by the high German official was undoubtedly the supreme leadership (*provid*) of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists.

The civilian OUN network represented only part of the activities of the revolutionary OUN, which was organically connected with the armed warfare of the UPA. The OUN itself encompassed the totality of national life. In other words, the revolutionary OUN during the war took upon itself also the task of manifesting the will of Ukraine to its statehood through armed warfare. The matter was even more vital when we take into consideration the fact that both warring enemies were both enemies of Ukraine. This fact generated a conception of "our own strength" and "our own sovereignty." What it meant (and still means) is that the OUN could not adopt any temporary expediency or confine itself to objectives as defined by external factors. Events during and after World War II, including the surrender of Eastern Europe to the Russian empire, fully vindicated the correctness of this principle of "our own strength." The Ukrainians have at least this satisfaction—they cannot complain that the Allies betrayed Ukraine, as do the Poles, who incessantly accuse the West of betraying Poland to the Russians. Moreover, it was the sole correct approach to the situation, in which obtained neither moral factors nor any other human consideration; the law of physical force alone operated. The Germans, for instance, knew that Russia would remain their ally only so long as Germany remained strong. Had the Germans been losing the war in the west in 1940-1941, they would have been attacked by the USSR at that time. In those same years Hitler noted the indications of the growing strength of the Allies. This was one of the reasons why Hitler urged the invasion of Great Britain; he wished to come to some understanding with the

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2.

British government as soon as possible. Both approaches—the one via the USSR and that via Great Britain—failed, and the Nazis had no other way out than to attack the USSR before it could launch an attack on Germany. Hitler wanted at all costs to remove this permanent threat from the east.<sup>12</sup>

The underground organization required considerable time to accomplish its objectives most effectively; it was the most important prerequisite of underground warfare.

The organizational scheme was not limited to the connection between the *provid* (leadership) and the membership. It reached farther: leadership, membership and the population.

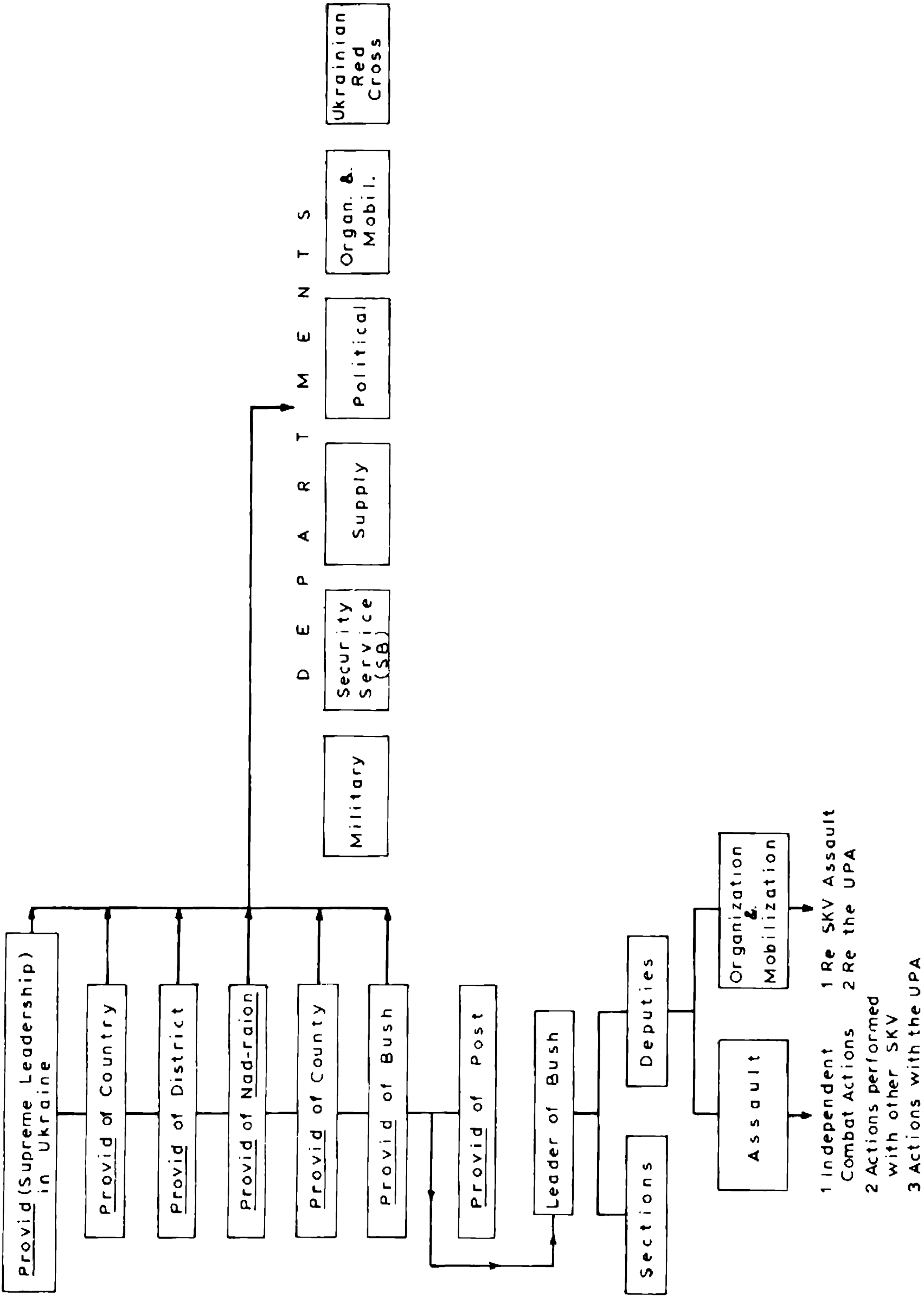
Binding the leadership and lower-ranking members together was an entire hierarchical structure of organization, as indicated in the chart reproduced here (p. 79). The members constituted a nucleus which, along with the leadership, enjoyed the full confidence of a population which had to be secretly educated and informed about the necessities and goals of the liberation struggle. This task was by no means an easy undertaking, which is readily seen if we take into consideration the fact that OUN members had to work during the war and under the occupation of enemies who proved to be completely ruthless and inhuman in dealing with their opponents. The population, on the other hand, had been apprised of and trained in the revolutionary way of thinking as regards its activities and mutual cooperation.

The OUN selected its members on the basis of a man's character, his dedication to the cause, his general knowledge and his connection with the local population. It was up to members who were outstanding in these respects to proselytize the vast strata of the population.

The organizational scheme changed in accordance with new requirements, practical life and the conditions of activity. At the close of World War II it had altered since the beginning of the war; these changes were exceptionally great after the war when the USSR took over all Ukrainian lands. It was necessary to adapt the organization to new circumstances, to work underground in an empire with great political power which was attuned to combat ruthlessly all liberation movements of the enslaved non-Russian nations. By that time OUN had acquired much experience in these matters.

The Germans and Russians never had—and the latter even now do not have—any detailed information about the OUN. They never succeeded in capturing any documents revealing the organizational scheme of the OUN. If they managed to extract some information by interrogating captured prisoners, or by dint of their spy network, such information was fragmentary. Their task was even more complicated by the fact that the UPA did not limit itself to military operations. Along with the OUN civilian network, it also con-

<sup>12</sup> Manstein, Erich von, *Verlorene Siege* (The Lost Victory), Bonn, 1955.



ducted informative and enlightening propaganda activities relative to the objectives of the UPA.

Whenever the Polish, German or Russian administration was liquidated on the spot, within a few hours a new Ukrainian administration was set up by the underground OUN with the active support of the population. Nor were the numbers of the OUN network ever ascertained by the enemy. At the beginning of 1944 German intelligence sources reported that the strength of the UPA consisted of 50 Ukrainian battalions and 15 battalions made up of other nationalities. In May, 1944, it reported that the UPA had 80,000 Ukrainian men, and an additional 20,000 men hailing from other nationalities, for a total of over 100,000 men under arms.

These figures are at best approximate; the OUN network strength was never ascertained for the simple reason that most of the OUN members were employed as officials, workers, businessmen, and the like. The same situation prevails today: the OUN is active not only in Ukraine but in the whole of the USSR—a silent army which does not enjoy international headlines. But its significance and strength is indicated by the frequent statements and speeches of Soviet chieftains attacking the influence of “bourgeois Ukrainian nationalism.”

When the underground network suffered losses as a result of arrests and killings, they were replaced by others, more often than not from the ranks of the UPA. The process also operated in reverse: the UPA was reinforced by OUN members. It should be underscored that a substantial percentage of OUN members were women.

The well-organized OUN network among the population kept the UPA informed about all enemy troop movements.

As one UPA leader pointed out:

This afforded us an opportunity to inflict upon the enemy painful and unpleasant surprises. This had a very depressing effect upon enemy soldiers. The Poles, for instance, used to say: “Every bush is firing upon us.”<sup>13</sup>

A former Spanish Communist leader wrote of the Ukrainian underground:

. . . they did not receive any armaments because the Germans mistrusted those who were creating this army and who had decided above all to fight for the independence of Ukraine. This national and independence movement was almost impossible to oppose. Its principal representative was Gen. Bandera, who organized many battalions consisting of Ukrainians, Poles and partisans from other elements who flocked to him. In reality they fought simultaneously against both totalitarianisms, Nazi and Stalinist. They demanded full independence. They enjoyed and enjoy today great popularity. Moscow was com-

<sup>13</sup> *V riadakh UPA* (In the Ranks of the UPA). A Collection of Memoirs. New York, 1957.



pelled to form special divisions against the "Banderovtsy." But despite all these persecutions, the latter continue the struggle. . . .<sup>14</sup>

From another source:

On August 21, 1947, the detachment of Ostroverkha crossed the border into Ukraine, occupied by the Bolsheviks. The inhabitants of the village of Nanchivka closely examined their arms and outposts, listened to the conversations and followed the movements of the soldiers in order to ascertain whether or not they were a provocation group sent by the Bolsheviks. The same thing happened again when another UPA unit approached the village; although the people knew that the unit was operating in the vicinity, they acted warily, fearful that the units had been sent by the Soviet command for provocation purposes. . . .<sup>15</sup>

The Polish newspaper, *Nowe Horyzonty* (New Horizons), appearing in Peremyshl, complained on August 4, 1946;

What can we do when the army meets great obstacles, regrettably put up by those from whom we could have expected something else. It is a lack of cooperation on the part of the local population with the army. . . .

(This is a reference to the difficulties encountered by the Polish army in conducting large-scale operations against the UPA in the Polish-Ukrainian border sector, where the Ukrainian population on the Polish side refused to cooperate with the Polish army—Author.)

Referring to a raid of the UPA on the village of Orikhivtsi where, according to the writer, over 500 Ukrainian insurgents operated, the complaint continued:

This is no needle! These people had armaments, their staff must have been working somewhere, and they had to use certain routes to reach the point of their attack. . . . Someone must have met, seen and known about them. . . . But did any one report? No one gave any help, no one knew or did not want to point out the traces. . . .

UPA Commander Khrin had to leave his unit for some time and report to an officers' council. In his absence his troops entered territory occupied by the Bolsheviks. In his memoirs he wrote:

All the time my thoughts are with those companies which were entrusted to me by the Supreme Command of the UPA. I am racked by uncertainty whether they will preserve strict conspiratorial measures, whether they will be able to make adequate provisions for

<sup>14</sup> "Life and Death in the USSR," by Gonzales, *El Campensio*, 1951.

<sup>15</sup> *Spomyny Chotovoho Ostroverkhy* (Memoirs of Platoon Leader Ostroverkha), Munich, 1953.

winter so as to survive until spring comes. The enemy again has directed its attention to UPA units. I had no time to visit the companies, give them instructions, advice. The companies were scattered far off, and winter is only one month away, and I was compelled to go to the officer council. Moreover, the soldiers are little known in the area. In the event of an enemy raid on their winter bunkers, they will freeze in the forests, as they will receive no contact. . . . In the village they will be virtually rejected.<sup>16</sup>

What the UPA Commander had in mind was that the UPA units had no appropriate liaison with the OUN civilian network in that area without which the insurgents could not hope to be helped or contacted for fear of Soviet retaliation. And without the assistance of the population, insurgents in the winter were left to certain death.

These officers and men of the UPA who were transferred to the OUN civilian network because of organizational reasons, as a rule resented their transfer, regarding it as a sort of demotion, although in reality it was not so. But the soldiers of the UPA usually were not fully aware of the strength and capabilities of the OUN civilian network.

The same author continues:

Lt. Karmeliuk left the armed units on orders from the provincial leader of the OUN. He took it as a personal offense, writing: "I am terribly chagrined to have been expelled from the army, in which I served five years, as an unnecessary person. I consider it a punishment, for our army does not have so many people that it can easily throw them away into civilian service. It seems that I was the only one not needed. It hurts me a great deal, because it fell upon me as lightning from a blue sky. Do not take this as a bad thing on my part, but I have to speak out, I feel so like an orphan. . . ."<sup>17</sup>

To be stressed is that Lt. Karmeliuk was transferred to the civilian network in accordance with the decision made on the gradual demobilization of the armed forces of the UPA and their transferral into the underground. The Supreme Command of the UPA thought it advisable not to reveal this information prematurely to younger officers. Lt. Karmeliuk, an excellent combat officer, received an important assignment in the OUN civilian network. He himself was an older person, and his wife and three children had been exiled to Siberia. Dispatched to Soviet-occupied territory, Karmeliuk took along with him a number of invalid insurgents. Also accompanying him were a number of girls, members of the OUN civilian network.

One of the girls, who was being transferred into a different *raion* of the network, wrote:

I write a few words, because I don't know whether we will meet

<sup>16</sup> Khrin, St., *Zymoyu v bunkri* (Winter in the Bunker), Augsburg, 1950.

<sup>17</sup> Khrin, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

again. We are going, but we do not know where and what is awaiting us. . . . It is hard, but apparently it must be so. We are feeling badly, but we have lived so closely together that it would be unbearable to be separated now. . . .

. . . We are in Kh. now where we met V. and will depart with him to go farther. We had to cross two rivers. . . . Maria took it very hard when she lost her pistol. . . .<sup>18</sup>

The interrelationship between the UPA and OUN network was so strong that old people, women and children often gave examples of matchless devotion and solidarity.

In 1946 the Soviet security troops surrounded the village of Kryve and in a few hours they deported all the inhabitants. During the roundup one woman got past the Soviet sentries to bring butter to an insurgent outpost. She also informed them about the deportation. She voluntarily returned to join her family and was deported along with them.<sup>19</sup>

The OUN was a political army embodying the ideology of Ukrainian statehood. The soldiers and the fighters for the freedom and independence of Ukraine made up the entire population of Ukraine.

The OUN network would send its own people across the frontiers into the countries of Eastern Europe. Others travelled on false German passports throughout Germany and German-occupied countries. A comparison with the work of the OUN now under the Soviet occupation is striking. The police organization is so effective that anyone travelling through underground ways without contacts would be arrested in a matter of hours.

To be recalled is that prior to the German attack on the USSR, the Germans dropped some parachutists in Ukraine. They carried small radio sets to send back detailed information about the situation in the USSR. They were equipped with typical Germanic thoroughness. All their false documents were of paper of Soviet manufacture, their clothing was of Soviet make. Nonetheless, all of them were arrested within a few hours. Today, in 1972, the Bolshevik system has been greatly advanced to the point of perfection. Yet the Soviet government cannot adequately cope with the Ukrainian underground. As proof we can cite that the uprisings in the slave camps, organized by Ukrainian political prisoners, were so well synchronized that, although separated by hundreds of kilometers, they were staged almost at the same hour.

It would be fantastic to think that, in the event of war with the Soviet Union, diversionary groups could operate without the cooperation of the local population, such as the Ukrainian or some other non-Russian nationality.

<sup>18</sup> Maria was a member of the OUN underground network, becoming county leader of the Ukrainian Red Cross a few years later. She eventually reached the West and is now living in Chicago.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. *Report of Kruk-Melodia*.

When the UPA entered a new area of operations, the OUN civilian network first had to be established. When the Eastern front approached, the UPA units moved to other areas, returned to the same areas, if so ordered, or penetrated the Soviet lines. But the OUN network remained on the spot so as to provide future contact between the population and the UPA units.

### Security Service of the OUN

For obvious reasons, the organization, tactics and methods of operation of the security service of the OUN were and still are a highly guarded secret. Even members of the OUN-SB (OUN Security Service) themselves knew only what was necessary and only of a small segment of the security organization pertaining to their immediate sphere of interest and activities. Some aspects of the security service have been revealed and today are a part of history. This is especially true as of up to 1946. After that year, in the course of the struggle against the Soviet NKVD forces, many important changes occurred in the OUN security system which understandably have never been made public, and perhaps never will, at least not in the immediate future.

The general organization of the OUN-SB is given here in an organizational chart as reported by one of its organizers.<sup>20</sup>

To be noted is that in the event a platoon and not a company operated in a given *raion*, then the Director of OUN-SB of that *raion* maintained direct contact not with the SB director of the platoon, but always with the director of SB of the company.

The Director of OUN-SB, that is, of the *nad-raion* (a higher category than the *raion*) had in his service a number of informers, whose number depended on the method of his work and on the requirements of a given area. In addition, the SB Director had at his disposal an SB assault group, consisting of 10-15 men, for any combat contingency.

From 1946 on the SB Director in the UPA maintained direct contact with SB network of the OUN on the lower echelons, inasmuch as the circumstances prevailing then prevented his maintaining contacts according to the organizational scheme of the time. The SB Director was a deputy to the OUN leader of the area, and frequently performed concurrently the functions of the Director of the UPA unit operating in his district.

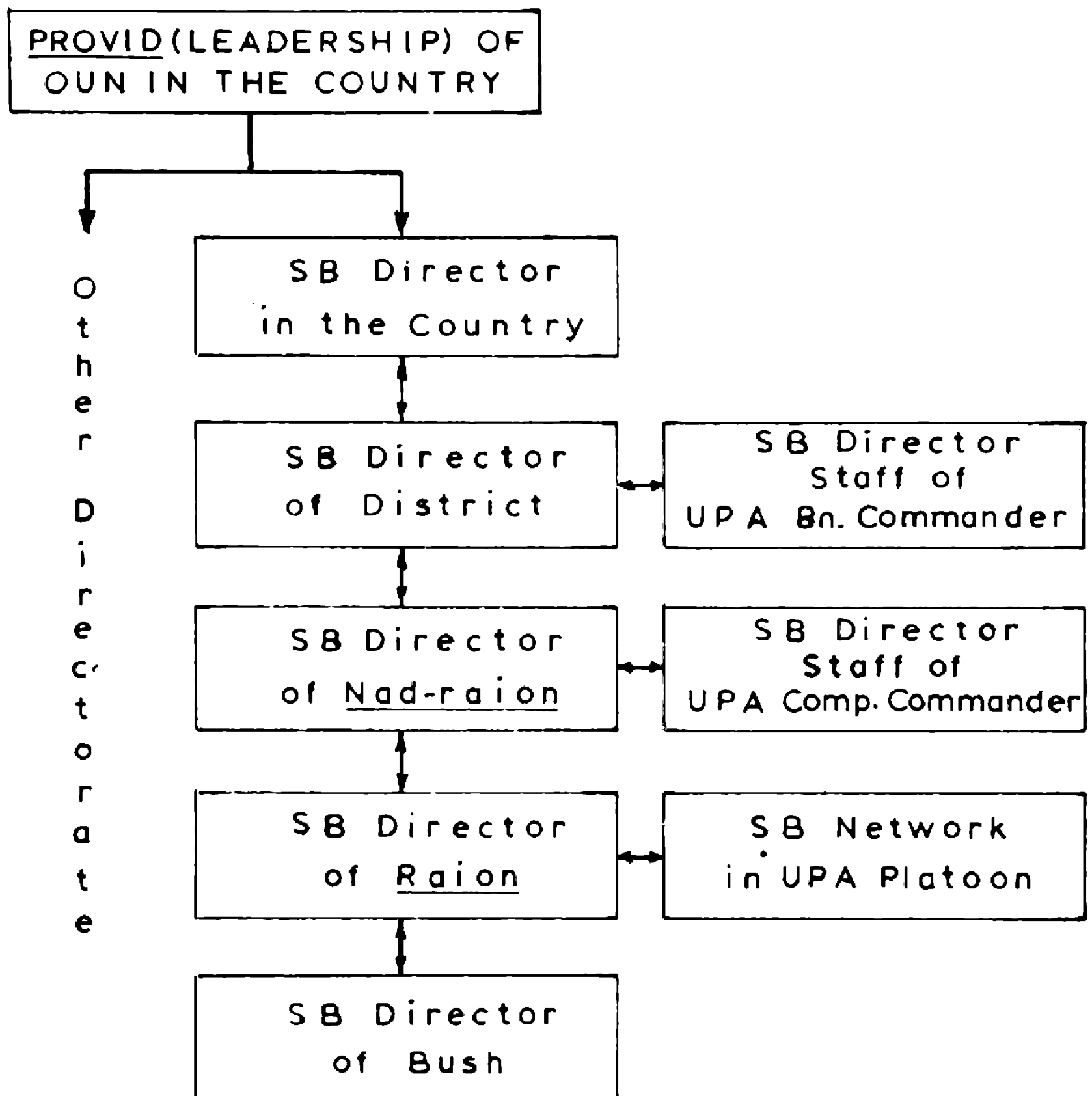
### Underground Printing Shops

In the organizational scheme of the Ukrainian underground the secret printing establishments played a vital and important role. This fact is fully appreciated by a Polish author.<sup>21</sup> Some may think that the significance of the printed

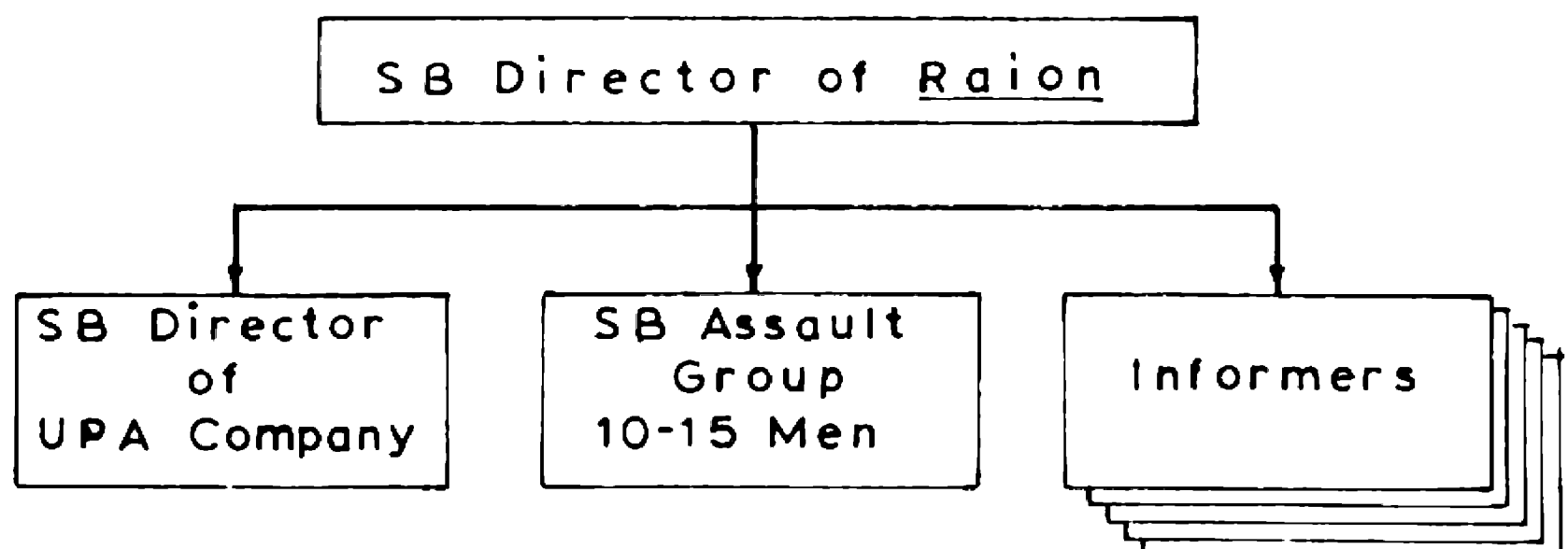
<sup>20</sup> See *Reports of Commander Lahidny*.

<sup>21</sup> Blum, Ignacy, *Z dziejów Wojska Polskiego w latach 1945-48* (On the Activities of the Polish Army in the Years 1945-48), Warsaw, 1960.

## ORGANIZATION OUN SECURITY SERVICE



## ORGANIZATION OF SB OF RAION



word is exaggerated, but the underground press and the underground literature in general were the most effective means of communication in the OUN and UPA networks. They constituted one of the most telling and strongest weapons against the Russian, German or Polish occupiers. Underground publications disseminated the ideology of the liberation struggle, informed the population of current events and provided an undistorted interpretation of events. They also served as a living link between members of and sympathizers with the Ukrainian liberation movement. In all this they demoralized and weakened the enemy administration. The Ukrainian underground press reached every Ukrainian family, living up to its slogan, "From House to House, From Hand to Hand." Many publications of the UPA, written for other enslaved nations, reached their destination through underground channels in the various national republics of the USSR and in the satellite countries. They were also delivered into the hands of Western diplomatic representations in Poland and Czechoslovakia; they also found their way to the desks of high Communist officials and party chiefs and into the hands of officers and men of the Red army.

There were several ways of printing the underground publications. One, that of normal commercial printing, was possible only when cities with commercial printing shops were located in areas under UPA control, or when the owner of a printing shop under German or Polish occupation was a member of the OUN. In such cases the organization undertook the distribution of the publications to every accessible area of the country. But it soon became apparent that it was more practical and effective to print underground literature in several printing shops set up in various sections of the country. If one printing establishment was uncovered, the others could continue the work; continuity of publication was preserved.

Posters, postcards, short announcements and communiques were printed with the help of type made of rubber or wood. Even illustrations and caricatures were printed, sometimes in several colors, in the same way.

In the absence of printing shops, underground publications were mimeographed, or simply typewritten.

The whole process was an extremely difficult affair under the Soviet occupation; for those in the West it is possibly beyond understanding. For the Russian Communist system concentrates all properties in its hands; all private property has been confiscated and all articles of prime necessity are strictly limited and controlled by the state. For instance, it is almost impossible to buy, for private use, printing paper, ink and other printing materials. In addition, after the war there was a scarcity of these materials, so severe that even the Soviet administration was sorely handicapped.

The underground was taxed in the extreme in their efforts to secure these needed materials, especially paper. Some supplies were acquired by the OUN network from German supply stores abandoned during the retreat of the

German army from Ukraine. Sometimes the precious stuff was spirited out of Soviet supply stores by UPA members and sympathizers employed by the Soviet administration. Most frequently, however, UPA units raided the Soviet printing and supply stores.

During the German occupation the UPA printing establishments were set up far from known highways, in remote farm houses or in specially constructed huts.

Under the conditions of the Soviet occupation these establishments proved to be inadequate. Large-scale raids and hunts conducted by the Soviet police and security forces invariably uncovered and destroyed them. Hence in the postwar struggle of the UPA these printing shops were placed in underground bunkers and hide-outs. It is significant to note that whereas the Germans paid little attention to the Ukrainian underground press, the Bolsheviks were extremely alert and aggressive in ferreting it out.

As a rule, the printing hide-outs were built by the people who worked in them, in order to achieve maximum security. The hide-out consisted of a few rooms: one for the printing press, one for bookbinding and storage of paper, and a bedroom and a living room for the printers.<sup>22</sup>

The personnel in the printing shops included a few liaison men who brought in mail and necessities from the outside and left with printed literature for distribution by the network in the area. All in the printing shop were armed, while both exit and entrance to the bunker were mined. In the event of an enemy raid, the printing shop personnel set off the mines, driving off the enemy if not destroying him. The printing shop was destroyed before the personnel fled to other hide-outs.

The UPA liaison men carried the printed literature to prearranged points where they were met by couriers of the distribution organization, the so-called Technical Center, who in turn forwarded the material onward to other radiating points. Soldiers of the UPA and members of the OUN often helped these couriers distribute the underground literature. Since copies were always scarce, they made their way from hand to hand and house to house. Often the underground literature would be read at underground meetings, while posters and proclamations would be put up at night on buildings and at railroad and bus stations; the underground literature was also sent by mail to Soviet officials, schools, military headquarters, and so forth.

Today the distribution of underground literature has become even more complex and secretive. It is a fact that underground literature is being regularly disseminated throughout the whole of the USSR, the inevitable result of a lack of freedom of the press.

The Technical Centers also collected reports and information from their couriers on the reaction of the population to the underground publications.

<sup>22</sup> *Do Zbroyi!* (To Arms!), Nos. 1-32, Munich.

They learned not only what the people thought but the reaction of the Soviet government as well. Thus the underground, in constant touch with the outside world, was able to wage an effective day-by-day campaign.

The underground propaganda endeavor demanded—and still demands—sacrifice and readiness as regards the armed struggle. Therefore, most underground publications carried the following slogans:

Read and pass on quickly to your friend! It is a crime to hold up and destroy underground literature!

From house to house, from hand to hand!

Pass this only to those whom you trust and who, like yourself, will pass it further.

Destroy this literature only when the enemy is attacking and there is no time to hide it! Honor our publications, for they awaken the people to a great deed—the building of the independent and Sovereign Ukrainian State!

The underground publications of the UPA have often been reprinted, in part and in full, by the Ukrainian emigre journals. Others are preserved in archives abroad.



# Chapter Eight

## UKRAINIAN RED CROSS

Since the very beginning of the existence of the Ukrainian armed underground movement, the Supreme Command of the UPA had organized medical service units for tending the wounded and the sick, usually under the guidance of doctors, medical students and professional medical personnel. Organizationally, these units were part of the Ukrainian Red Cross under the Supreme Command of the UPA.<sup>23</sup>

The Ukrainian Red Cross was divided roughly into three sections:

- 1) A military medical section which operated with UPA units during combat and rest;
- 2) A terrain section, active especially in towns and villages, as a supporting arm of the military medical services;
- 3) A pharmaceutical section.

The highest military medical officer of the UPA was the Director. His duties were to keep contact with the battalion doctors and to supervise the medical points of the *raions*. These points, or field stations, as well as the field hospitals in the bunkers of the UPA were supplied with medicaments by the *nad-raion* pharmacist, a medical doctor. Immediately under him was a battalion medical doctor, whose tasks, besides that of maintaining health in UPA companies, included transmitting medical directives, counseling company and platoon medics, organizing medical schools, and the like.

The company doctor's duty was to attend directly to the health needs of

<sup>23</sup> Blum, *op. cit.*

the soldiers. He held frequent medical inspections and hammered away at hygiene. He performed the surgical operations, and oversaw the provisions of medical supplies and their distribution to field dispensaries.

A platoon medic provided first aid to the wounded in the field and transported the wounded to collecting points, whence the wounded under his supervision were transferred to the medical center in the area.

The *nad-raion*, or district, medical officer distributed the precious medical supplies to the UPA units and medical centers. When small combat groups and raiding units operated in the area, he also supplied these with medicine and medical services. The medical points, which frequently were underground hospitals, were set up in inaccessible terrain or in underground hide-outs or in surface barracks, the type of installation depending on the security, area and situation at a given time. Medical centers as a rule were very well camouflaged.

The wounded were transported in every conceivable fashion, including being carried on the back of UPA fighters through the ravines and marshes. In some areas secrecy was deemed so important that the wounded were blindfolded on their way to the hide-out. This was a precaution against the capture and torture of a soldier by the enemy. It was, in fact, the motto of the UPA that a soldier know less than more. Thus when a wounded soldier had recuperated, he usually was sent back to his unit blindfolded.

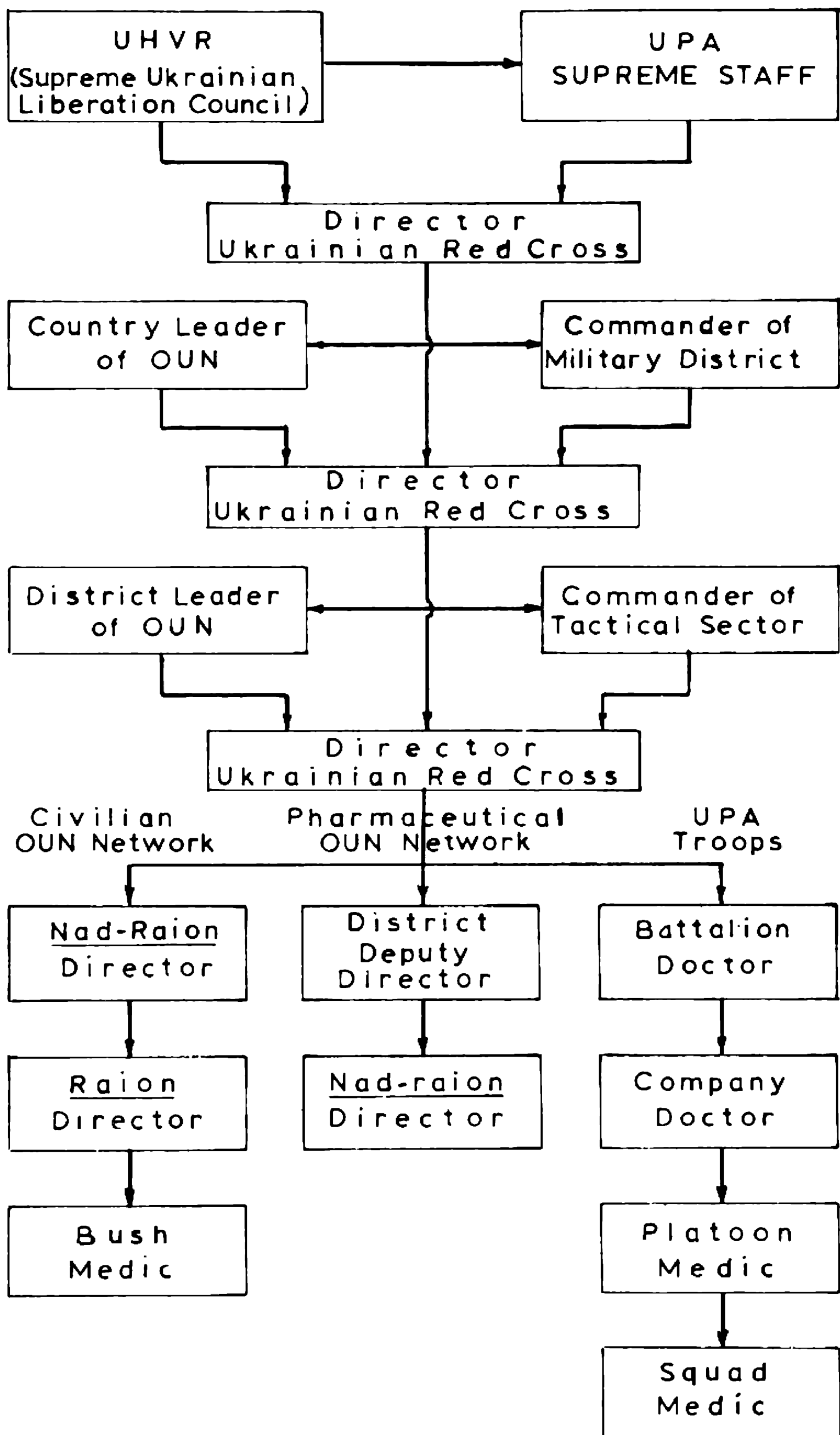
For conspiratorial reasons all traces leading to and from the medical center had to be removed, as for instance, snow tracks in winter. As a result, moving the wounded was a slow and tedious process that heightened the suffering of the wounded.

The underground hide-out serving as a hospital usually had a capacity of 6 to 15 beds, a kitchen, a room for the doctor and another for supplies. The hide-out camouflage was a speciality of such hospital builders. It was not often that the enemy managed to discover such a hospital in the course of a search. But the enemy did uncover such hospitals by dint of spying and observation or by torturing captured personnel of the UPA.

It must be stressed that the medical personnel of the Ukrainian Red Cross adhered strictly to the international rules and obligations of the International Red Cross in caring for wounded enemy soldiers, who subsequently were given their freedom. The POW's enjoyed the same medical treatment and service as the UPA soldiers. Adherence to these principles brought positive results not only in the form of saving human lives, but also in that of creating a good name for the UPA; which dispelled the epithet of "a ruthless band of cutthroats and bandits" propagated by the Soviet and Polish Communist governments.

On the other hand, not a single opponent of the UPA applied these principles of international treaties and covenants with regard to captured and wounded UPA soldiers. The Poles, Germans, and the Russians refused to

# ORGANIZATION UKRAINIAN RED CROSS



treat the UPA wounded soldiers, letting them die mercilessly. It was for this reason that an uncovered hospital put up a desperate resistance, often ending with both the wounded and the medical personnel shooting themselves or killing themselves with their own grenades to avoid capture.

One outstanding loss suffered by the UPA was the destruction of the medical center at Mount Khreshchata on January 23, 1947.

Having learned about the UPA hospital, a Polish battalion, commanded by a colonel, began an attack and siege of the hide-out. Trapped in the hospital, in addition to the wounded, were a Dr. Rath, pharmaceutical officer Orest, medic Arpad, OUN member Dora, and two UPA nurses who had taken shelter in the hide-out—a total of 17 persons. The besieged defended themselves for a day and a night, and then, seeing no way out, killed themselves with pistols and hand grenades. The last of the defenders set a kerosene can on fire in order to destroy the hospital equipment and files.

Data on such tragedies are preserved in the UPA archives, including the deposition of the above-mentioned Polish colonel, who was subsequently captured and interrogated by the UPA. Also kept are copies of the Polish and Czech Communist press of that time which extensively described the equipment and medical supplies of this hospital, which they ascribed to assistance from "the West." This, of course, was not true, inasmuch as the whole medical service and its supplies were provided by the OUN network.

As time went on the UPA suffered heavy losses among its doctors and medics, but was able to replace them from the cadres trained in medical courses and schools. Girls predominated in these courses. Admission requirements to these courses were quite high: high moral and patriotic standards, a sense of responsibility and at least 6 years of secondary education. The textbooks used in these courses were prepared by two UPA doctors, Dr. Yurko and Dr. Shuvar. As far as the nationality of UPA doctors and medical personnel is concerned, in addition to Ukrainians there were Jews, Georgians and Germans.

The activities of the underground network of the OUN also included the work of caring for and rehabilitating the wounded soldiers of the UPA. The lowest organization cell—the "bush"—contained a section of medics which was charged directly with treating the wounded soldiers of the UPA. The lightly wounded were placed among the Ukrainian population. Also aiding in the care of invalids and wounded was the civilian network of the Ukrainian Red Cross. But its most important task was the procurement of medical supplies for the UPA units. This procurement was accomplished through various and invariably difficult ways.

In the first place, the OUN underground kept in close touch with the Ukrainian medical world; with the assistance of Ukrainian doctors and medical personnel it purchased medicine and medical equipment. Another source

of medical supplies were the armed raids made by the OUN on the medical depots of the enemy, as well as the supplies seized by the UPA in battle.

As early as 1943 the medical director of the Supreme Command of the UPA initiated the collection of medical herbs by the population, especially by school children. Preserved and forwarded to the assembly points of the OUN, these herbs were used both in battles and hospitals in accordance with a medical field manual, carried by every UPA medic.<sup>21</sup>

Not to be overlooked is the medical assistance rendered the civilian population by the UPA medical personnel after attacks by enemy military units, which, as a rule, refused to provide any help either to wounded fighters or to the civilians. Under such conditions, it is no wonder that soon Ukrainian villages were plagued by typhus and dysentery, which inevitably spread to the ranks of the UPA. Here both the doctors and medics of the UPA and the branches of the Ukrainian Red Cross of the OUN were sorely extended in succoring the population.

But beginning in 1946 the Soviet agents unleashed bacteriological warfare. Disseminated were typhus-carrying lice in order to infect the Ukrainian insurgents and thus to contribute to the eruption of typhus. To combat the menace of epidemics, the Ukrainian Red Cross was compelled to secure a great quantity of anti-typhus vaccine. When this became increasingly difficult, vaccine was bought on the "black market." The NKVD apparatus now introduced large quantities of injection tubes into the "black market" which, on the surface, looked genuine but which contained poison. This inhumane tactic of the Russians caused several deaths before tests, made on animals by the medical experts of the Ukrainian Red Cross, disclosed that the Russians were resorting to murder.

This may well be unique in the history of mankind—the government of a supposedly civilized state using poison as an instrument of policy. Nikita S. Khrushchev was then in charge of combatting the Ukrainian independence movement, and it is he who was greatly responsible for these inhumane crimes committed against the Ukrainian nation.

Much credit for the work of the Ukrainian Red Cross belongs to Ukrainian women, whose outstanding role in that organization gained the praise and gratitude of the Ukrainian people.

In the previously cited book of I. Blum, we find a great deal of pertinent material on the activities of the UPA in the Curzon Line area:

The intelligence group of the 4th Infantry Regiment, commanded by Lt. Wojtczak, was ordered to search the village of Makovysko.

The village was duly surrounded, and soldiers began searching the houses. At one point Corp. Nowak espied a loose floorboard in the

<sup>21</sup> The use of field manual was highly justified, according to *nad-raion*, Director of the Ukrainian Red Cross, Melodia (Bohdan Kruk).

hall of a house. He began prying it with his bayonet. Together with his friend Szymanski he lifted the board, revealing the entry to a bunker. When Nowak called on the hidden Banderites to surrender, his reply was a salvo of bullets. Pvt. Szymanski threw a hand grenade down inside the bunker, which on exploding damaged the floor. The bunker was large, and evidently the grenade did not explode in such a place as to destroy it, for when we began to enter the bunker, the bandits opened fire with automatic weapons.

Then soldiers brought a batch of straw, ignited it and threw it down the bunker, and followed that with a second and a third batch, and then a hand grenade. From below came a scream and the reports of exploding hand grenades. The bandits were meting out justice to themselves. The struggle was ended. Our soldiers entered the bunker immediately. Two bandits were dead, and the third, a German doctor, was dying. Among those killed we recognized the "bush" leader Baida and the medic of the band.

From this report it is evident that the Poles had uncovered a hide-out of the medical center of the OUN civilian network.

A special place in the Ukrainian Red Cross belongs to the female personnel. Both young girls and adult women in the organization performed their tasks with admirable sacrifice and dedication. They performed hazardous errands in buying medicine in the pharmacies and from private doctors, risking their freedom and even their lives, for medical purposes. They took care of ailing and wounded insurgents, concealing them in villages and towns. Women served as nurses in bunkers up to 1945; subsequently they were too precious to be left to defend the bunkers in the event of enemy attack. Nurses were still frequently to be found in the bunkers and hide-outs, but their presence was a temporary one, being there in the capacity of couriers and intelligence agents of the civilian network of the OUN. If they stayed, it was for the purpose of resting or hiding from the enemy.

The work of medics in the UPA was done by men, insurgents who had received special training but who also were soldiers and could easily take up arms for the purpose of defense. The UPA, during its transition period into the civilian underground, had too many insurgents whom it had to compress into the ranks of the OUN.

Ukrainian women in their posts in the Ukrainian Red Cross performed valiant labors; their place is assured in the modern history of Ukraine. Those who escaped unhurt often married insurgents and continued to work with dedication for the cause of Ukraine's liberation, thus setting an example for the young generation.

In the Polish press, as well as in the press of some Western countries, there appeared a series of articles describing the underground hospitals of the UPA:

<sup>25</sup> *Głos Ludu* (Voice of the People), June, 1947; *The Times* of London, June 20, 1947, and *La Fare*, July 10-11, 1948, Brussels.

Recently an underground hospital was uncovered in the forest. On the surface nothing was to be seen except trees and grass. Ten meters underground there was a hospital with corridors, operating rooms, beds and medical equipment. When the hospital was uncovered, doctors and nurses heroically defended themselves, committing suicide when they ran out of ammunition. No one on the surface knew of this underground tragedy of men and women who revealed such a great deal of savage fanaticism and admirable heroism.

Still, in another description in the enemy report: <sup>26</sup>

The cavalry group of the WOP found a hospital on Mount Kruhlytsia, which was immediately surrounded. Polish soldiers called on the hospital personnel to surrender. In reply they received a volley of bullets through the open slit in the entrance. It was an exemplary hospital, a system of underground bunkers containing an operating room, two rest rooms, a room for the doctor, one for the nurses, a kitchen and a supply room. A small stream provided running water for medical purposes and carried away the refuse. Daylight penetrated the well-camouflaged openings, through which the enemy could be observed and fired upon by machine guns. During the fighting the Poles hurled hand grenades inside. The beleaguered, having no more ammunition, blew themselves up. In the hospital there had been a German doctor (Dr. Kamperer), 2 nurses, 3 insurgents and 14 wounded men. In the supply room cartons of explosives were found.

As mentioned previously, the medical personnel and doctors in the service of the UPA consisted of various nationalities that were enslaved in the USSR. There were many German doctors whom the UPA had spirited out of the Soviet slave labor camps, and Jews. The latter as well as Jewish medical personnel (pharmacutists and nurses), had been saved from massacre in the ghettos and abducted from concentration camps. Three outstanding Jewish doctors (Dr. Hawrysh, the doctor of the UPA-West, Dr. Kum, commander of a hospital in Trukhaniv and Dr. Maksymovych, the doctor of the First UPA Officers' School—all were *noms de guerre*) were awarded the highest military decorations for their dedicated work in the UPA. When the UPA went underground, the Jewish doctors and the Jewish medical personnel were released from service, if they wished to return to their civilian practices.

On April 11, 1947, another medical center was destroyed in the forest near the village of Berendovychi, near Peremyshl. The Polish troops besieged the bunker the whole day in the face of heavy fire from the bunker. Eventually the Poles brought in Ukrainian peasants, and at gun-point ordered them to dig out the bunker. Since the besieged garrison could not fire upon their brother Ukrainians, the district leader of the OUN and director of the Ukrainian Red Cross, whose *nom de guerre* was Nekhryst, called on the peasants to retreat before the mines exploded. Then, with the singing of the Ukrainian

<sup>26</sup> Gerhard, Jan, *Luny w Bieszczadach* (Fires in the Bieshchady), Warsaw, 1959.

national anthem, the entire bunker blew up. Among those killed was *nad-raion* pharmacist Zena, who had come with Nekhryst to direct the hospital, and a number of wounded insurgents.<sup>27</sup>

UPA doctors also performed administrative tasks and combatted contagious diseases in the villages which were deliberately spread by the NKVD. In 1946, captured NKVD "specialists and consultants" attached to Polish Communist troops revealed during inquiry the following:

NKVD agents infected with venereal disease had a right to free medical treatment if they imparted their disease to a number of women in the area in which the OUN and UPA operated. The victims were women suspected of collaboration with the Ukrainian underground. The NKVD agents could meet their "quotas" during the course of questioning of women at police stations, jails and concentration camps. These women were obtained in raids on Ukrainian villages by Polish assault groups. After being raped the women were allowed to return home.

But the discipline in the ranks of the UPA and the information techniques used by the insurgent doctors negated these tactics. Disease did not spread and the women were cured because they reported in detail what had happened to them. In the years 1944-47 in the district of Kholodny Yar only two insurgents contracted venereal diseases, but they were cured, tried by a military tribunal and punished.

The Ukrainian Red Cross, as a rule, informed the families of the enemy soldiers about their deaths, specifically as regards Polish soldiers. The form letter which was used read:

This is to inform you that on . . . in . . . Mr. . . . died in battle with units of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army, his identity established by (documents, witnesses, notations). We express our sympathy and our regret that Mr. . . . was forced to give his life not for the cause of the Ukrainian and Polish peoples.

Ukrainian Red Cross

The work of the civilian network of the OUN and the Ukrainian Red Cross was vividly described by one of the UPA leaders, Stepan Khrin. Wounded in battle, he convalesced in the village of Limna, near Bircha, which was known to the insurgents under the code name of *pisnia* (song). He wrote: <sup>28</sup>

Girls, women and boys visited me constantly. . . .

This heartfelt care was very pleasant, despite the fact that in my heart I considered myself to be an invalid for life. The village insisted that I could not leave until I recovered completely. They decided to act as my defenders. The women working in the field were on the lookout for the enemy, and as soon as they saw the Poles or Russians stealthily creeping toward the village, they ran to inform the people in

<sup>27</sup> Skala (Dr. Bohdan Huk), *A Report*.

<sup>28</sup> Khrin, Stepan, *Kriz smikh zaliza* (Through the Laughter of Steel), Munich, 1952.



the nearest house of the village. The news of the approaching enemy was forwarded with lightning speed from house to house. Very often children or boys on horseback were the carriers of the news. Also farmers working in the forest, who, as soon as they sensed danger, left horse and wagon and rushed to the village to warn the others. Herdsmen who looked after cattle in the field were constantly on the lookout for the enemy in forest and field, and as soon as they saw the enemy, they, too, ran to the village or signaled by whistling. They also made reconnaissance in neighboring villages to find out whether the enemy was there.

The same UPA leader reported:

Girls also scouted the neighboring villages. It was dangerous for them to go to the town of Bircha, where all young boys who were caught were shot on the spot. Only older men and women, less likely to be suspected of spying, could visit it in comparative safety.

The village was well organized, protecting itself and conducting intelligence under the direction of the underground so effectively that enemy units could not approach or raid the village without being espied. For the purpose of disorienting us, the Russians planted various rumors among the Polish dregs of the town. These eventually reached us, but our people were so well trained that every rumor or report was weighed and analyzed critically as to its validity.

Soviet spies also came to the villages. The Soviet administration had appointed a number of forest rangers, burgomasters, secretaries and mailmen who, in addition to carrying on their occupations, were compelled to spy. Also, under the pretext of fighting contagious diseases, Soviet medical personnel would swoop down on the villages and issue injections and disinfectants, but at the same time they were serving the NKVD, maintaining contact with local spies and informers (*sek-sots*).

Sometimes men from the police stations arrested our women going to market in town, conducting "conversations" with them, interrogating and terrorizing them, and forcing them to "collaborate" with the police. Therefore, we prohibited unreliable women to go to town. We allowed them to go only in a group, in which we had our own trusted people. Anyone who detached himself or herself from the group was suspected of contact with the enemy. We must underscore proudly that at the beginning the enemy had no success in enlisting spies among our people. But later on the enemy perfected the methods of his struggle in this sector as well.



# Chapter Nine

## GENERAL TACTICS OF THE UPA

The tight interrelationship between the UPA and the underground network of the OUN which involved the same people and the same area, as well as the same activities and the same tasks, gave the insurgents a multisided image. The great combat units could easily break into small groups or disappear completely. Outwardly one saw only peaceful inhabitants of cities and villages, peasants and workers, officials in high and low positions, merchants and students—all had their particular tasks which could be detected by the enemy only here and there.

This great diversity of people and activities was beyond the comprehension of the enemy, especially the Russians; it generated the conviction in them that the UPA and the OUN were being supported by the Americans and the British—which was not at all the case.

This confusion in the mind of the enemy was increased by the partisan tactics, which were wholly different from regular and classical military tactics. The tactics evolved from the experience, personal courage and imagination of each insurgent. The experience of each insurgent was passed on to all by way of reports, narrations and lectures in the military schools. If any method became known to the enemy it was changed or abandoned.

Some of these methods, which will be described in this chapter, can be applied equally defensively and offensively, to retreat as well as to attack. These are universal principles, which are given here in a sporadic, not systematic, order. Nevertheless, the reader will find in separate chapters the tactical ruses devoted to the various forms of combat. They do not constitute

the entirety of the partisan science, but are examples gathered from various reports, sources, and the like. They are also related to some of the tactical methods of the enemy, who frequently borrowed UPA methods and adapted them to his own requirements.

The average reader will undoubtedly be surprised by this statement. He has heard that in Eastern Europe Soviet partisans fought against fascist Germans; he also heard of the *chetniks* of Gen. Draja Mihailovich in Yugoslavia. All others could be only small bands, who probably did not know for what they were fighting, or common robber bands.

But in the last few years the silence surrounding the UPA has been broken by the Poles, who in a number of military reviews published a series of reports on the UPA. Subsequently, the Russians also began publicizing the UPA, not in military publications, however, but in their propaganda directed against the liberation struggle of the Ukrainian people.

The UPA emerged during the war and acquired partisan experience only through its own efforts and in the heat of battle. The Russians, on the other hand, for years had had partisan schools and training centers in which they trained partisan specialists to be used in the struggle against all the enslaved nations which would try to establish their own independent states. From the very beginning of World War II the Russians paid special attention to partisan warfare, with a view to applying it during the course of conventional warfare. Taking part in this effort were special NKVD troops, Soviet partisans and a gigantic apparatus of secret agents backed by a system of well-tested methods, harsh and ruthless dealing with the enemy and the police tradition of the Czarist empire, which defied any civilized international concept of military ethics and conventions. The use of these methods of the Russian Communist empire compelled the UPA fighters to break their units down into small and less vulnerable units in the combat against the Russians, who were experts in the art of provocation and subversion.

One such method used by the Russians were raids by special NKVD shock troops, who spent weeks at a time in the forests hunting UPA couriers and individual UPA fighters. At the same time they perpetrated terroristic acts upon the Ukrainian population, acts which they blamed on the UPA so as to alienate the Ukrainian people from the UPA. But the pronouncements of the Russians were viewed as pure nonsense. The UPA, which operated on terrain populated by Ukrainians, could never afford to terrorize the very people who sustained its existence. To the contrary, the UPA tried in turn to help the Ukrainian population as much as it could. Frequently the UPA ordered the removal of entire villages in order to save the Ukrainian population from destruction.

The only elements against which the UPA was vehemently implacable were agents of the NKVD and its provocateurs and informers. Russian NKVD agents and members of other partisan units frequently posed as Ukrainian

insurgents, wearing Ukrainian uniforms and national emblems and speaking Ukrainian. Very often, too, they helped combat the Soviet troops in order to win the confidence of the Ukrainian population. The OUN networks were victimized by the Soviet ruse, but with time the people grew more discerning in this respect.

One of the best and most effective methods of defense of the UPA against these provocations was splinterization of its units; small groups were far better able to guard against enemy infiltration. As compared with the struggle against the Germans and the Poles, that against the Russians was far more complicated and required a great mental and spiritual effort.

It may be appropriate at this point to analyze the differences between the tactics of the regular army and those of the insurgents. Experience showed that for a long time regular army units could not throw off the conventional training and methods of thinking imbued in them by their military training. It made it difficult for them not only to combat the partisans, but to become good partisans themselves as well.

The comparison given below does not necessarily exhaust the theme; it does provide basic material which each officer can apply as he sees fit in learning to distinguish between the two types of armed forces in the area of their tactics:

<i>Regular Army</i>	<i>Partisan Army</i>
Mobilization.	Carries on agitation of ideological character among the population.
Has an established and secured <i>hinterland</i> .	Operates behind the enemy's lines.
Underground organizations constitute an implacable enemy.	The underground organization provides a basis for the partisan army.
Objective is to destroy the enemy in battle.	Objective is to destroy the enemy from within, by propaganda and armed force.
Has a well-established supply system.	Relies on supplies by its own resources.
Characterized by cooperation with other front line units and the various types of arms.	Usually small units with light arms.
Attack is a part of front line operations.	Characterized by raids, attrition of the enemy, ambushes.
Defends the sector.	Defends the place of stay.
Engages in mobile defense.	Mobile defense seldom applies.
Maneuvers are rare.	Maneuvers—the basis of tactics.
Combat intelligence only.	Intelligence: combat, psychological intelligence on the morale and combat effectiveness of the enemy, his supply stores, liaison, post services, administration, and the like.

*Regular Army*

Uses heavy and light arms of same type.

Enemy: a regular army, seldom partisans.

Neighbors: regular army units, with which cooperation and coordination are possible.

Population: basically not important.

Terrain: Combat utilization according to orders.

Military qualities: responsibility of the officer cadres, combat spirit, good training, major numerical strength, superior combat means.

*Partisan Army*

Uses light arms of various types.

Enemy: police units trained in partisan warfare.

Neighbors: partisan units, mutual assistance in strategy and tactics; close exchange of intelligence and information.

Population: factor of primary importance.

Terrain: highly important factor; knowledge of paths, routes, bridges, underbrush, rivers, and streams, fords, wells, approaches to villages, passages among houses. For combat requirements: possibility of ambush, maneuver, sanctuary for wounded, and the like.

Military qualities: responsibility and initiative of officer cadres and each soldier; dedication to the cause for which they fight; weaker in numbers and with scanty technical means, but boldness and imaginative knowledge of partisan warfare, swiftness in orientation, knowledge of area.

Here are some principles of partisan tactics of a general character:

A hilly area impels partisans, officers and men alike, to immediate decision and analysis of unexpected situations;

Intelligence: in a secured area scouts may be sent out by horse, cart, auto and sled, fanwise over a semicircle of 180 degrees.

Large insurgent contingents may operate only against a poorly trained army and a weak administration. The greater the experience and the greater the effectiveness of administration of the enemy, the smaller the partisan units (by virtue of the experience of the UPA in the areas occupied by the Poles and Russians).

The long chain of command in the regular army is not conducive to emergency actions. Therefore, taking advantage of every passing minute is the order of the day for the partisans.

In winter UPA combat activities were effectively and successfully conducted against the Germans and the Poles. The enemy was not able to maneuver his units speedily nor to avail himself of the mechanized units at his disposal. He attacked with small arms in conformance with his accepted pattern. At the same time the UPA units would obliterate their traces and swiftly change their positions.

The Russians, however, frequently reduced the UPA to inactivity in winter. The combination of a strong network of Soviet spies in villages, great army

concentrations and effective intelligence work necessitated a careful conspiracy and, in event of exposure, defense and retreat.

The various commanders followed different tactics:

1. Raids and attack (Commander Khrin);
2. Defense (Commander Bir);
3. Active defense (Commanders Didyk, Brodych).

Raids were conducted both in winter and summer. Their objectives were to gain a knowledge of the area, uncover new partisan routes, and prepare ambushes, raids and diversionary activities.

Usually only small units were used in raids for they had proved most effective in breaking through encirclement and in maneuvering. Only in places with great mountains and forest massifs were larger units (battalion size) used.

In order to facilitate movement in such raids only light arms and equipment were used. In encounters with the enemy, fire was concentrated on one spot, and the duration of the engagement was determined by elements selected by the partisans themselves: exhaustion of the enemy by long marches, his inability to replenish his losses, and by the prospects of a successful operation.

A commander of a larger unit which had to break up into smaller groups in combat would be hard put to maintain control of the situation. Because of the constant movement and maneuvering, every report could become meaningless by the time it reached the commander. Offsetting this would be the occupation by the commander of a key post, not in the rear but often in front of the combat activities. The combat of a unit broken into smaller parts required precision of liaison effected by responsible and noncommissioned officers.

Maneuvering of the partisans often required sudden penetration of the terrain occupied by the enemy and fighting his units by taking full advantage of breaking of morale and confusion in general. The underlying principle of such a maneuver is to decide quickly when to attack, but the attacking party should be stronger than the defender, and the attack should take place at an optimal time and place.

The basic law of a surprise attack: to destroy quickly a selected part of the enemy force, and then proceed with the destruction of the rest.

The enemy should not be allowed to uncover the tactical planning of the partisans. In order to prevent it from being uncovered, all sorts of tactical maneuverings were used to divert the attention of the enemy. Often the enemy position was infiltrated by UPA partisans wearing the enemy uniform. Also, of great importance was the infiltration by the UPA of enemy institutions, cadres and party apparatus. This vital task was performed by the OUN network for the UPA. On the staff of Nazi *gauleiter* Erich Koch in Ukraine were Soviet agents who posed as White Russian political emigres, "dedicated

enemies" of Communism. They often and successfully instigated the Germans into undertaking physical liquidation of the Ukrainian intelligentsia.

In combat, each UPA soldier was so trained that he could take the place of an officer and the command of the unit.

In mobility lies the security of a partisan detachment.

The defeated enemy frequently moves more quickly than the victorious enemy. The defeated expects to be pursued from the rear, spurring him to move faster, while the victor, imbued with a sense of victory and security, gives way to his fatigue. Hence we know of no case in the history of classical warfare where pursuit of the defeated enemy would have brought about his annihilation. Yet in partisan war this happens quite frequently. Partisans are, as a rule, far faster than the regular army.

At night the enemy is reluctant to comb the woods. This gives the partisans an opportunity to rest and also to detach themselves from the enemy. In the morning the partisans would avoid any engagements with the enemy, using only delaying fire as they proceeded to their new hide-outs. Partisans never make frontal attacks, only from the rear or the flank. When the enemy advances in a compact column, he is allowed to proceed and then is subjected to cross fire from the front and the rear. Very often hand grenades and machine gun fire destroy such a column. There is never any certainty that an operation plan will succeed one hundred percent. The UPA command always tried to attain its operational objective, but in many instances had to be satisfied with partial success. This is, of course, equally true of the regular army. "Only a lay person believes that in war everything proceeds according to plan" (Moltke).

Every partisan operation was protected from the flanks, or at least one of the flanks, in order to assure its success. The uncertainty of the first hour of victory lies in the fact that precipitous pursuit of the enemy could always run into heavy defense establishments in the rear of the enemy terrain. When the pursuit is too slow, it may eventually encounter stubborn organized resistance. The commander of the pursuit cannot wait for certified reports, he has to act on his own hunches and responsibility. This is a principle of the regular army, but it is especially applicable to partisan warfare. Some military writers see in successful pursuit so-called "war luck." In reality this luck attaches to commanders who possess experience and tactical intuition.

The enemy preparing for a siege of the partians performs the following tasks:

1. Blocks off the villages;
2. Conducts searches and arrests among inhabitants;
3. Sends patrols into the forests;
4. Sets up ambushes on the roads and bridges;
5. Sends into the woods intelligence personnel, dressed as "forest workers," to track down the partisans;



6. Sends children into the woods ostensibly to gather berries and mushrooms, as well as herdsmen, who on their return are questioned by the enemy police regarding sighting of partisan units in the woods;

7. Systematically blocks off the forest in order to trap the partisans, and then penetrates it with its forces. The forest is ultimately set afire to flush out the insurgents.

Here are a few tactical examples selected from reports of the UPA fighters:

The enemy may play a trick on us: let our combat forces pass by, then attack from every side our supplies, dispensary and headquarters. Every bullet from ambush has its objective. A few seconds of sustained fire can decimate the ranks. The Volhynian fields, cut by deep ravines, encircle the village; here the enemy could easily avail himself of several possibilities. This is why we occupied the village at dusk. Ahead of the road of march I dispatched a strong scouting patrol, and the flanks were guarded by powerful protecting curtains. . . ."

In this way the UPA unit could enter a village in which it had no contact with the underground OUN network:

We could not enter the village because it housed a battalion of enemy troops. We all had the wish to destroy it, but the commander refused to attack.<sup>29</sup>

At the designated time we retreated. We marched the whole day. It was a cold day and the falling snow made breathing difficult. We waded through deep snow for almost 30 kilometers. Many soldiers had their ears and faces frostbitten. Toward evening with our remaining strength—many soldiers had to be carried—we reached Horishny Vyslok. . . .<sup>30</sup>

In order not to provoke unnecessary attacks our troops sit quietly, do not make fires and thus avoid being uncovered. . . .<sup>31</sup>

The camp in the forest was guarded by sentries, separated 250 meters apart and armed with machine guns. In front the listening posts were placed 300 meters apart. The listening post personnel reported every movement that could be detected. One such case: the listening post man reported that an enemy column had appeared at a distance of half a kilometer. The commander ordered an immediate alert, but ordered the posts not to offer any challenge, unless the enemy was poised for attack. Had they turned toward our camp, we would have had to open fire. We did not want to provoke battle in order to avoid losses and wounded whom it would be difficult to treat. . . .<sup>32</sup>

Burkun states that in winter in the woods the partisans have much difficulty with snow, which slows up any movement. During the day the unit sends out patrols in all directions, and at night it moves to

<sup>29</sup> Ostroverkha, *op. cit.*

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>31</sup> *V riadakh UPA.*

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

one of the villages. The entire wood is covered with a network of paths and lanes which mutually interlace and intersect.

Very often the unit, returning at dawn from the village, purposely would circle the woods in order to make the tracks confusing. . . .

Our life in guarding the commander is not the same as in the company. We must sit in one place. We sit so quietly that we escape detection not only by the villagers, but by the partisans as well. We must maintain strict security and silence, we cannot talk or sing. This is not to my liking. Units around us are on the move, and I have to sit tight. . . . I feel drawn to combat to avenge the death of my friends. . . .

Lev Futala-Lahidny reports in his memoirs:

Our successful counteraction compelled the Poles to give up their attacks against the Ukrainian villages, or, as they put it among themselves, to postpone them until spring. As a result the situation of peasants was bettered. Consequently, we, too, had more freedom of movement. We freely quartered in villages, conducted the training of the fighters and new members of SKV (Self-Defensive Bush Detachments), and readied ourselves for new battles.

In the winter of 1945-46 the Poles suspended larger actions against us, believing that winter was more favorable to us than to them. Ukrainian partisans—they would say—are accustomed to frost and snow, while the Polish soldier, ill-clad and ill-shod, cannot sustain heavy marches through the snowy roads, or to lie down in a snow-filled dugout. The situation would change in their favor—so the Poles thought—with the advent of spring.

But when spring arrived the Poles became convinced that it was even more favorable to us than to them. Now we could freely stay in the woods and successfully erase our tracks, with the result that the enemy could not find out where we were or the location of our supplies. The Poles countered by organizing a network of spies. But the Ukrainian population stubbornly resisted it, and those who were broken and collaborated with the enemy were soon discovered and destroyed.

Partisan tactics, in which we all became artists, gave us a tremendous upper-hand over the enemy. When we met a superior number of the enemy, we disappeared suddenly from sight only to attack him from the other side, something he never expected.<sup>33</sup>

Whenever troops, regardless of whether they are regular or partisan troops, have become used to retreat, it is extremely difficult to lift their combat morale. Consequently, the UPA, as a matter of principle, did not retreat; instead, its retreat became a mobile defense. When the enemy succeeded in defeating and disorganizing a partisan unit, the duty of the commander was to move to another place and mount a counterattack against the pursuing enemy. Attacking the rear guard of the enemy was a common practice.

The UPA principle was always to act counter to the expectations and the plans of the enemy. Even a partial success after a retreat invariably

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

raised the mood and morale of the soldiers and, in the case of the UPA, the morale of the civilian population as well.

In planning partisan warfare, commanders were economical as far as use of men and units was concerned. When a company was sufficient, it was useless and wasteful to use two or three companies in the operation. Any surplus of forces could always be used in other actions. Thus, for instance, Commander Khrin, from the fall of 1945 to May, 1947, with only one company, initiated over 100 battles, ambushes and raids. In that time his losses totalled 41 killed and 33 wounded, while the losses of the enemy were 800 killed.<sup>34</sup>

Such success in the struggle against the Polish Communist troops was commonplace.

In battle Commander Khrin as well as other commanders always established his post near the weakest company; by his example he kept the company in line. Displaying neither fear nor anxiety, he ordered rapid and appropriate maneuvers, properly evaluated the situation and decisively proceeded to launch new and imaginative operations, which were invariably successful and which strengthened the confidence of the fighting men in him. A commander who does not enjoy the confidence of his troops can never command a partisan unit.

A well-camouflaged machine gun nest can stop substantial enemy forces by flank and cross fire. A machine gun that is protected by stones and wood logs will not be destroyed by the enemy unless he uses artillery and mortar fire. But such action on the part of the enemy entails many sacrifices and much time which can be capitalized upon by the partisans. A machine gun in the hands of partisans is far more telling than the one in the hands of the regular army.

In getting ready for battle and for retreat, every partisan should orient himself well in the terrain and learn its characteristics. If the partisan has no map and no compass, he should be guided by knowledge of the terrain in which his unit operates, that is, be guided by the "natural compasses." The partisan must be able to orient himself by the movement of the sun and the stars, and to read other phenomena of nature.

Here are a few examples (true for the UPA terrain):

Stones are covered with moss on their northern side. But wet stone is covered from every side, except from the west. Individual trees in areas where there are no systematic prevailing winds have larger and stronger branches facing the south. The gallipot of pine trees is transparent on the southern side, darker and harder, but gray and soft on the northern side. The bark of trees is thicker and darker towards the north than it is towards the south. Woodpeckers build their nests on the eastern sides of trees. Red ants construct their ant hills on the southwestern side of trees. These examples can

<sup>34</sup> Khrin, *op. cit.*

be multiplied; a few are given here to demonstrate that partisans can tap nature in many ways in their operations.

To foresee what the enemy will do is one of the best attributes of a partisan. Here is a pertinent report about an ambush:

Today Commander Khrin called the unit and stated: I will set up an ambush at the ford on the Sian near the village of Hlumchi. Platoon Leader Ostroverkha will attack the village of Dobrianka in order to draw the Poles out of the village, while Platoon Leader Sirko will lead an attack from Zamahura and drive the Poles into the river. . . !

All took place as we wished. The Poles, on hearing the rifle fire from both sides, began to flee with the loot (food taken from the villagers) in the direction of the ford, where they were met by machine gun fire from Commander Khrin's unit. From that time on the Poles did not molest the village of Dobra. The population was elated with our success and treated us as hospitably as it could.<sup>35</sup>

As far as quartering of UPA units in villages was concerned, the UPA Command forbade the keeping of dogs in the same village. The appearance of strange people in the village, in this case of army units, was greeted by the dogs with fierce barking. The enemy would quickly learn of the presence of strangers.

In time the Soviet Communist instructors and supervisors in the Polish army introduced new methods in their struggle with the UPA:

1. Soviet agents operated only at night; in the daytime they laid low in the villages;
2. The direction of intelligence and combat units was constantly changed;
3. Experienced spies were brought in for spying in the villages;
4. Armed police posts were established in villages as their centers of support;
5. The area was saturated with military forces.

They began to conduct large-scale hunts for UPA insurgents in the woods and fields. To cope with the new situation, the UPA Supreme Command ordered the following:

1. Evacuation of all hide-outs, huts and houses in the forests and relocation in underground bunkers, which were well camouflaged and were composed of two sections, one partitioned from the other;
2. Building of hide-outs in villages under the floors, stoves and cellars of houses; construction of bunkers with exits leading to village wells;
3. Construction of underground hospitals and laying away at least a three-months food supply, as well as collecting and storing of arms and ammunition.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>35</sup> Ostroverkha, *op. cit.*

<sup>36</sup> Gerhard, *op. cit.* (Today it is impossible to ascertain whether this order, as reported

Departure from the village after a night bivouac was masked: then partisans struck out in a direction other than the true one, changing course for their destination only after they were out of sight of the villagers. This protective maneuver was designed to mislead any informer among the villagers.

Approach movements also were conducted in such a way as not to indicate to the enemy the true objective of the insurgents. Units would change direction and helped spread false rumors as to their destination. Very often the enemy believed the rumors, only to wait for partisans who never appeared. In addition, the insurgents as a rule ambushed the prowling enemy, causing considerable casualties in his ranks. The enemy always had to guess at the plans of the partisans, thereby delaying any and all actions he would take.

For instance, Commander Khrin marched by a village openly with his unit. The enemy who had tried to capture him for several years was galvanized into pursuit. Khrin, however, disappeared, and then his principal forces struck the enemy where he least expected an attack.

Polish sources gave another example of ruses used by the UPA:

A marching column of the Polish Communist army noted dust rising above treetop level around the bend of the road they were following. It was obvious to all that a group of partisans was approaching. In a matter of minutes the Polish troops had taken up defensive positions against the oncoming enemy. Then the column was attacked on its exposed flanks, the Poles suffering heavy losses. The dust had been raised by UPA scouts in order to mislead the Poles.

Very often, when bivouacking in a village where the presence of Soviet agents was suspected, an UPA unit openly prepared for the night. Partisans acted in very natural ways, collecting food, singing songs and bedding down. But at a given signal all left the village and set up an ambush for the expected enemy. The enemy's attack during the night would find no insurgents.

Often Ukrainian insurgents attacked villages in which Polish troops were quartered, and, after killing a number of them, withdrew, frequently disguised in Polish army uniforms, thus protecting themselves from other Polish units.

When partisans entered a village, they acted extremely cautiously. They never entered a house without posting a guard outside. At any suspicious movement, they took cover in hallways or under orchard trees.

UPA troops never marched through cities, wherein they would be easy targets for enemy fire. All approaches to cities, such as bridges, culverts and the like were, as a rule, defended by the enemy.

Also, in forests the partisans would never march along a stream, because of the likelihood of an ambush where the stream emerged from the forest.

In meeting the enemy, the UPA threw against him their best forces as a

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by the Polish Communist author, is authentic. It is known that periodically the UPA would change its tactics, thereby lending substance to this Polish report.)

matter of principle, for they knew that victory was theirs if the enemy was hit hard and suffered initial heavy casualties:

After prolonged fighting, Commander Peremoha assembled his units in one spot. With a sudden thrust against the enemy we succeeded in breaking the encirclement. The enemy was tired and licking his wounds, and, surprised by our attack, failed to pursue us. . . .<sup>37</sup>

From other documents:

On April 28, 1945, at its hottest toward evening, Commander Peremoha shot off a few rockets in order to confuse the enemy, who was then using rockets to transmit information regarding the situation of his own and the enemy's forces, and to direct fire. The principal enemy fire emplacements began shelling their own attacking units. The unexpected fire caused heavy losses and chaos in the ranks of the Soviet troops. . . .

During the shifting of the front in the summer of 1944, stores of German rockets known as *Panzerfaust* and the Soviet *katiusha* type rocket were left behind. These were quickly gathered up by the civilian network of the OUN and by UPA units, which later used these rockets in attacks on cities and fortified Soviet positions and posts in villages. They became popularly known as "UPA torpedoes." The Soviet rockets had neither the necessary bases for firing nor batteries; the insurgents used straw to fire them. These weapons proved to be formidable against Soviet troops.

In 1945 the Russians began punishing Ukrainian villages for any support given the UPA. In retaliation for a single NKVD man killed in a village they destroyed the village ruthlessly and mercilessly. As a result, the Supreme Command of the UPA prohibited its units from staging battles in villages, thus forestalling massacres of the civilian population. The battle actions were transferred to the fields and woods. Here partisan tactics at their best were used by the UPA. UPA units maneuvered at night, harassing the Soviet troops and security forces, especially when the latter marched along regular routes. In the mountains the insurgents were especially successful: they had an extensive liaison network and knew the terrain far better than did the Russians.

Ukrainian partisans abstained from major actions in cities in order to prevent the destruction of the civilian population. Exceptions to this policy were the Soviet centers and headquarters. The Russians, as a rule, quartered themselves in certain closed sections of cities from which the inhabitants had been evacuated. These sections were favorite targets of the insurgents.

Planning plays an important part in insurgent activities. The staffs of the regular armies prepare their plans over a long period; insurgents are com-

<sup>37</sup> *U borotbi za voliu: Pid boyovymy praporamy UPA* (In the Struggle for Freedom: Under the Battle Flags of the UPA), Augsburg, 1949.

pelled to do the same planning in a short period of time in order to profit by the element of time and in order to maintain the element of surprise against the enemy. Moreover, since the enemy is in permanent movement, any passage of time could have detrimental effects on the planned action. Swift planning also minimizes the possibility of loss of secrecy via enemy intelligence. Reconnaissance in the terrain to determine the strength and disposition of enemy troops and their combat equipment has to be conducted at a rapid pace.

Inasmuch as both numerical and fire superiority, as a rule, were always on the side of the enemy, the insurgents had to concentrate their fire power at a place and at a time that were most favorable for the partisans. They knew in advance, or at least anticipated, the possible routes of retreat by the enemy, along which they laid ambushes.

In the event of their own retreat the insurgents had prearranged points of assembly, whence they continued their counterattacks and ambushes. Therefore, the UPA partisans were masters in the tactics of dispersion, disappearance and sudden appearance, so that the enemy could know neither the strength nor the intentions of the UPA unit in the particular area. An example depicting the tactics of the UPA is cited here from Red Polish sources. The commander of a Polish regiment stated at the regimental officers' meeting: <sup>38</sup>

As you gentlemen see, my map is not marked. Where is the enemy? How to search for him? What is his strength? How to cope with his forces? At the front everything was abundantly clear. Here were our positions and there were those of the enemy. The front had some form and consisted of elements toward which we could apply our actions. Here we have nothing. . . .

As we can see, the tasks and duties of the insurgents, both officers and non-commissioned officers, were far more complicated than those in the regular army. Not every man, perhaps not even a single soldier of the regular army could fit into the insurgent army. Partisans were exceptional people, possessing special traits of character, people aware of the laws of nature, born with the instinct of struggle, possessing lightning orientation and a total dedication to the cause. They were hard to overcome, confuse or trick; they were people with a high sense of patriotism, regardless of their education or social origin. Well-trained paratroopers could attain their objectives in battle, but even they could not compare with the insurgents. This was the reason why the Ukrainian insurgents on the whole were always victorious over the Soviet partisans, many of whom were trained paratroopers. It is also clear why the Soviet troops were ruthless in dealing with the Ukrainian insurgents, who were shot on the spot if captured, this holding true for wounded insurgents as well.

<sup>38</sup> Gerhard, *op. cit.*



After taking most of the Ukrainian territories the Russians established a system of the so-called *istrebitels*, supposedly an organization for self-defense but in reality an apparatus of terror used by the Soviet government against the UPA and the Ukrainian population at large. Consequently, the posts of the *istrebitels* were primary targets of the UPA underground. Here is a report concerning such an action:

An UPA unit received orders to destroy a post of NKVD and *istrebitels* in the village of Ziliv near Lviv. In civilian garb, we entered the village, carrying hand grenades and automatics under our overcoats. In the village we quickly established contact with OUN members, who provided the necessary information and direction. There were 8 NKVD and 12 *istrebitels* in the village. Four NKVD men had gone to the churchyard to see the Ukrainian girls play Easter games (*hayivky*). These were taken by surprise. With guns at their necks, they let themselves be taken away outside the village without protest. The other four NKVD members were inside a house talking to two girls. We entered the room and ordered them to raise their hands. The Russians went for their arms, one of them managing to pull the pin out of a hand grenade. Luckily, the grenade went through the door and exploded in the yard. In return we sprayed the room with volleys from our automatics, killing all four NKVD and, unfortunately, the girls as well. We then soon captured the *istrebitels*. Every one of them, scared to death, surrendered his arms and ammunition and swore that he would no longer belong to the *istrebitels*. Since most of them had been pressed into service we had orders not to kill them, but only to give them 25 lashes and release them, which we did.

As a rule, UPA insurgents fired only on those objectives which were deemed worthy and necessary. This tactic was connected with the saving of ammunition. Thus enemy fire nests and enemy troops on the move were fired upon whenever possible. The movement of enemy units constitutes the most menacing phenomenon in battle.

The development of modern technical arms is displacing the regular army from its former tactics, placing it closer to partisan tactics. With the possibility of use of nuclear weapons the regular army in combat is being broken up into small tactical units, trained for the highest mobility in both attack and retreat.

As we can see, World War II, on the territory of Ukraine and other countries, posed the regular army with a series of problems whose solution will have great significance in the future.

As a consequence, today most of the regular armies of the world have introduced into their training the principles of modern tactics which were known to the Ukrainian insurgents twenty-odd years ago. Although the principles of predominance of the human element, as espoused by Clausewitz, still play a vital role, the experience of partisan warfare of Ukraine and



other countries provided some possibilities which are in favor of the weaker. These are as follows:

Permanent activity; assault at an appropriate time and place, during which the weaker is stronger; night is an ally of the weak (the Soviet army training devotes about 40 percent of the time to night training);

An advantage at some times, a risk at others: because of the breaking up into small groups, the initiative and responsibility of all noncommissioned officers and of every soldier;

Strong combat officers' cadres; emphasis on training, bravery and experience of fighters;

Surprise attacks, ambushes, unexpected actions; refusal to be exhausted in small skirmishes and battles, letting the enemy make the frontal approach, then encircling him from the flanks (battle near Radovychi);

Depending on combat efficiency, splinterization of the insurgent unit reaches down as low as the platoon and even the section, and strong assault by the entire unit;

Small reserves: there is no scheme, but only the criterion: success in achieving the objective.

Fire and movement are the basis; outside that, all other forms and aspects of battle are admissible, depending on the decision of the commander.

Some of these principles were fully applied in World War II, even by armored units.<sup>39</sup>

It must be added that these are the partisan laws of battle; applications can be found elsewhere in this book. Most of them come from the reports of UPA fighters who underwent hundreds of combats and raids and who fought against the Germans, Poles and the Russians; some of them were commanders with superior initiative in ambushes, raids and breakthroughs, who today are peace-loving citizens in many countries of the free world. It is regrettable that not many of them escaped from behind the Iron Curtain to tell the full story of the struggle for freedom and independence of the Ukrainian people.

<sup>39</sup> *Bericht der Offiziersgesellschaft Basel: Die Schweiz im Subversive Kriege*, Bern, 1961.



# Chapter Ten

## **PRINCIPLES OF PARTISAN TACTICS IN CLASSICAL MILITARY LITERATURE**

The bases of partisan tactics do not differ in principle from those which have underlain the tactics of regular armies throughout the centuries. Movement and maneuver, unexpected assault and exact intelligence, bravery and initiative—these are common to partisan and classical warfare. The difference lies in that the tactics of partisan warfare places some laws in front, laws which the other keeps behind. The stationary tactics of World War I belong to this category of laws whereby movement and maneuver were relegated to secondary consideration, while the security of flanks was given priority. This resulted in the stagnation of the front line for hundreds of kilometers.

To be realized is that in the history of warfare throughout the centuries of our civilization, partisan warfare and tactics, regardless of the development of weapons in a given era, have always played a primary role, inflicting defeats on and compelling retreats of the mightiest armies.

In this chapter we shall analyze a few examples from the works of outstanding military leaders of the various eras. We shall find that the laws of military art are unchanging; it is only a matter of a greater or lesser application of the various laws in military tactics. He who is interested in the history of military art will have no difficulty in finding confirmation of this truth in the writings of great military leaders of the past.

Already in the writings of Homer, the old Greek poet who lived in the IXth century B.C., we may find many examples in his *Iliad* and *Odyssey* referring to the tactics of the ancient Greeks:

But when in the battle around their leader  
Went together the Trojans with noise and clamor  
Quietly and noiselessly the warriors of Greece moved on. . . .

In a few poetic words Homer grasped the essence of tactical surprise, which was employed by the Greeks against the Trojans.

Leo VI, Byzantine Emperor (866-912), in his military works stresses the importance of the religious attitude of military leaders and underscores its great significance. This is also confirmed by the experience with the UPA fighter. The best soldiers have always been those who possessed a faith.

Leo VI wrote:

The commander should be a believer, because we know that for every active man religion is the surest foundation of all things which gives him firmness and stability. Death touches every man, but only the brave die with glory. . . .

Caius Julius Caesar (100-44 B.C.) always professed that the quality of troops weighs more than their quantity. In the Gallic wars, he writes in his commentaries, the Gauls lost much of their bravery upon living a length of time near the Romans. They remained bolder, however, in the areas where they lived and struggled against the Germanic tribes. Caesar's thesis was: the military spirit can be maintained only when the people are threatened by a powerful, dangerous enemy.

The inhabitants of present-day Belgium inflicted great losses upon the Roman legions. They constantly attacked the marching Roman columns and disappeared in the woods. The main method of defense of the Romans was to cut down trees along the routes and use the tree stumps as shields. Although they destroyed and burned settlements of the inhabitants, this proved no deterrent. In winter they were compelled to bivouac in areas free of partisans.

This defensive tactic of the Romans was very similar to that which the Germans used against the UPA attackers in Ukraine. The Germans also cut down forests alongside the highways and railroads and quartered in the larger cities, defended by well-fortified bunkers.

Caesar admits that the constant uprisings of the Gauls and their bravery in the face of the better-armed enemy derived from their aspiration to "regain freedom inherited from their ancestors."

He also stated that swiftness of movement and a fast appraisal of the situation are the prerequisites of victory. Caesar expressed this in his terse but masterly words: *veni, vidi, vici* (I came, I saw, I conquered).

Throughout whole centuries, the Romans had ample opportunity to verify the battle efficiency of the people inhabiting Ukraine. Here they had to concede the superiority of tactics, featuring movement, maneuver and surprise attacks of the light and highly mobile cavalry of the Ukrainian land. In times of peace and alliance the Ukrainian units joined the Romans as allies in unexpected raids and pursuits of the enemy.

The Ukrainians, in their military actions, are partial to movement and maneuver, but they are lacking in the understanding of a stubborn and stationary (positional) war. Throughout the millennial history of Ukraine we may find many outstanding examples which fully substantiate this generalization. Space is lacking here to analyze the causes which contributed to the development of these military characteristics in the Ukrainians. We can only point out the development of these characteristics and attainments which were engendered by the tactics of movement and surprise attack.

Here are some examples from XVIIth century military development in Ukraine.

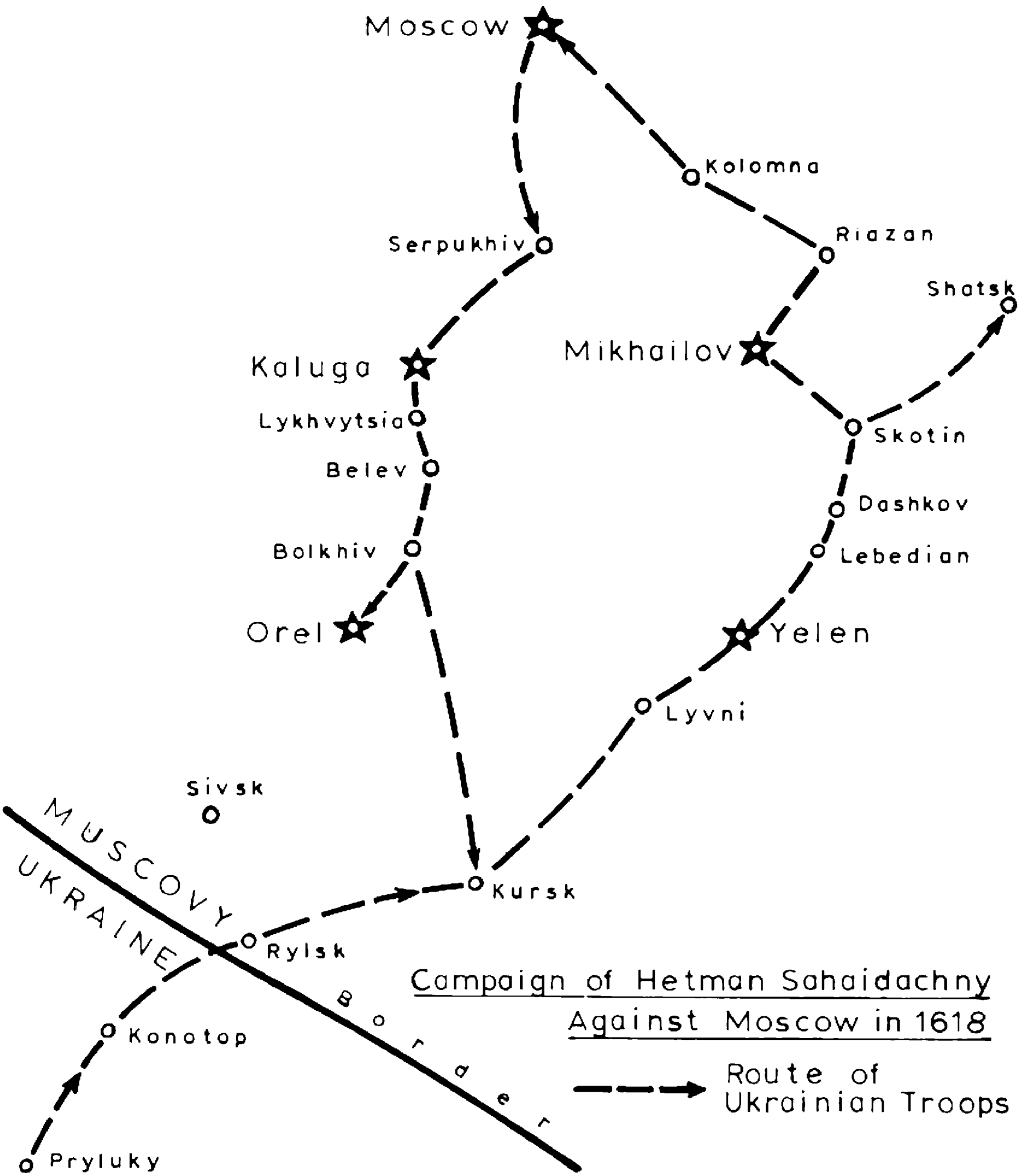
One is the military campaign in 1618 of the Ukrainian military leader, *Hetman* Peter Konashevych Sahaidachny, chief of the Zaporozhian Kozaks. He was widely known as one of the best strategists in Eastern Europe. He was highly rated by both enemies and allies for his military campaigns against the Crimean Tartars and Turkey. Jan Sobieski, noted for his victories at Khotyn, wrote of Sahaidachny:

After defeating the Tartars more than once at the fields of Perekop, he aroused great fear in the Crimea. Here was he known for his luck, which always brought him success in his pirate-like campaigns, his destruction of cities in Europe and Asia, his burning down of areas around Constantinople and, finally, a rare maneuver that he performed in the Khotyn war.

But Sahaidachny's most famous military campaign was waged against Moscow. It took place during the Polish-Muscovite war, in which Ukraine was an ally of Poland. When the Polish troops, assembled and readied for the campaign, had begun their march, Sahaidachny, at the head of the Ukrainian troops, struck out along a different route. Whereas the Poles openly mounted a massive and concerted drive against Moscow, where the Muscovite troops were gathered for its defense, Sahaidachny marched directly from Ukraine deep into enemy territory by using partisan tactics. The Muscovite troops could never ascertain where the principal Ukrainian forces were located. They were everywhere and nowhere. One time they appeared in large strength, another in small groups, which, upon completing successful attacks, were quickly swallowed up by the terrain. Yet Sahaidachny kept proceeding toward the principal objective; by the use of unexpected raids and daring attacks, he destroyed quickly fortified Muscovite cities en route and captured rich military booty.<sup>40</sup> Only at the city of Mikhailov, a well-fortified fortress to which he laid siege, did he have to tarry.

At this moment the Polish troops reached Moscow and called on the Ukrainian troops for support. Sahaidachny interrupted his seige of Mi-

<sup>40</sup> Tys-Krokhmaliuk, Yuriy, "Pokhid Sahaidachnoho na Moskvu," (The Campaign of Sahaidachny against Moscow), *Vyzvolny Shliakh*, Nos. 1-2, 1955, London.



khailov and began an accelerated march toward the Muscovite capital. On his way he completely destroyed the Muscovite forces which were sent to intercept him and took the city of Kolomna before appearing at the walls of Moscow. "His name became a symbol of terror in Muscovy," wrote Sobieski.

In the meantime the Muscovite Czar appealed to the Poles to conclude a peace. The Poles consented to negotiate, despite Sahaidachny's protests and demands that Moscow be besieged and destroyed. After assuring himself that the Poles could not be dissuaded from negotiating a peace, he spurned the negotiations, set fire to the suburbs of Moscow and headed back for Ukraine. On his way Sahaidachny took a different route, conquering several cities which put up hardly any defense.

Another outstanding example of partisan warfare in the same century was the battle of Loyiv (1649) during the Polish-Ukrainian war. The Ukrainian troops were under the overall command of *Hetman* Bohdan Khmelnytsky.

One of the Polish field commanders, Firley, was pinned down by Ukrainian troops in the city of Zbarazh. In order to relieve the siege the Polish King himself rushed to Firley's aid. At the same time Khmelnytsky's scouts reported that in Lithuania a large army was being mustered against him by the Lithuanian *Hetman* Radziwill. The danger arose that Khmelnytsky might have to contend with three powerful armies. Another possibility was that Radziwill would attack the rear of the Ukrainian armies and capture the undefended capital of Ukraine, Kiev. To allow the Lithuanian troops to enter the territory of Ukraine was unthinkable.

Khmelnytsky's response was to dispatch a small but highly mobile cavalry unit, headed by one of the best officers on his staff, Col. Mykhailo Krychevsky.

Col. Krychevsky, marching swiftly, reached Byelorussia, on the way mobilizing thousands of volunteers, untrained and poorly-armed, whom he led through forests and marshes.

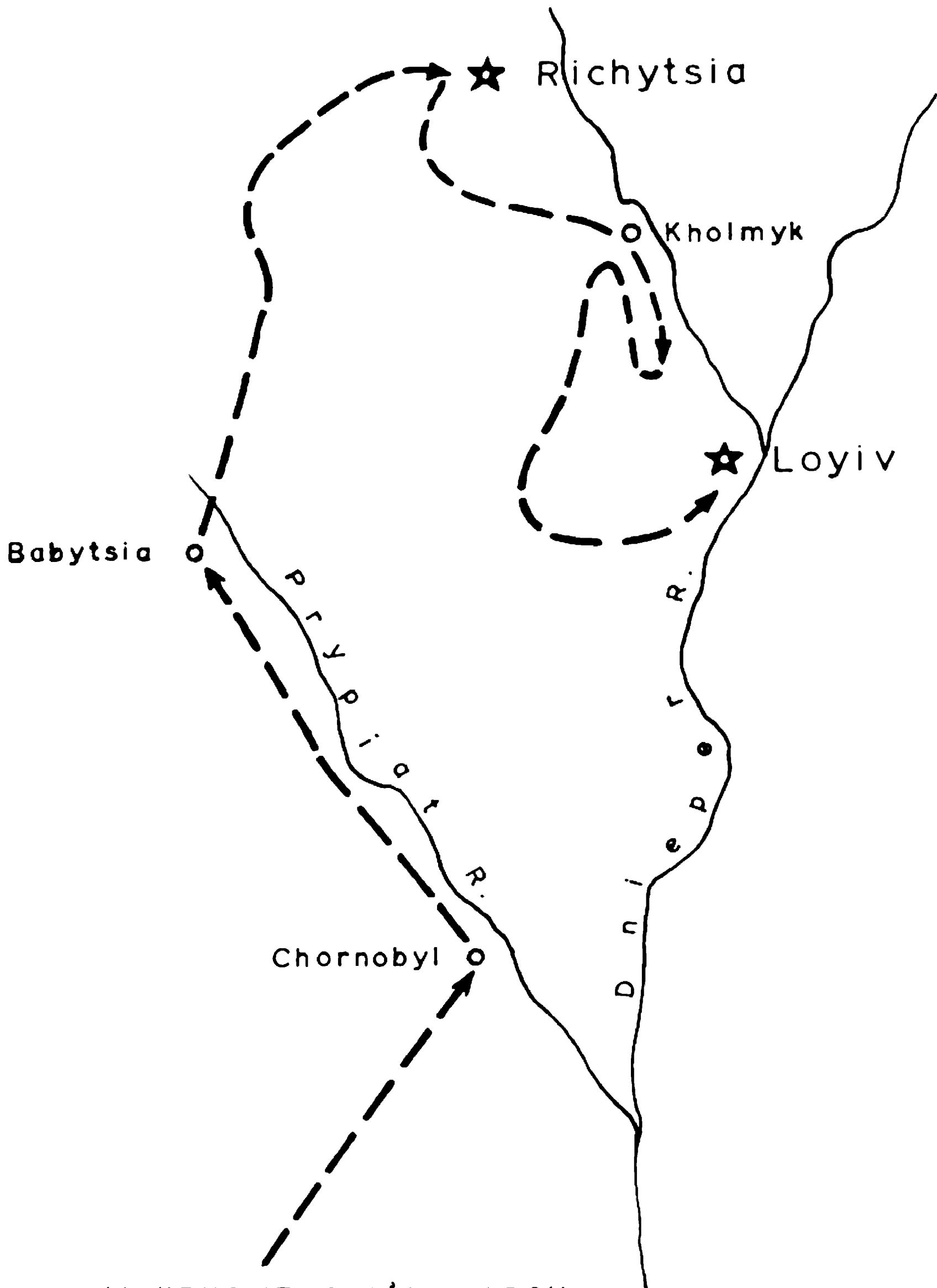
One day, unsuspected and unseen, he appeared at the outskirts of the city of Richytsia, where Radziwill had concentrated his troops. Krychevsky's men emerged suddenly from the woods and lay siege to the city. The city itself was seized by panic, while the Lithuanian troops feverishly prepared for battle.

But the next morning the city waited in vain for sight of the troops of Krychevsky; Lithuanian scouts finally reported that the Ukrainian troops had disappeared.

The contemporary journal, *Theatrum Europeum*, wrote of the Ukrainians:

The enemy is supported by the population and in complete secrecy crosses rivers and dense forests, and no information can be obtained about him. . . .

Krychevsky moved his forces to another sector, defeating other Lithuanian



M. KRYCHEVSKY'S MARCH  
1949

---> Route of Ukrainian Troops  
0 10 20 30 40  
kms.



troops on his way, and reached the fortified city of Loyiv, where Radziwill had stationed his best troops. Expecting Krychevsky's attack from the north, Radziwill deployed his forces in that direction. But when Krychevsky did appear it was from the south, forcing Radziwill to redeploy his troops.

The battle at Loyiv ended with the defeat of the Ukrainians, mainly because the brilliant Krychevsky fell. When his troops withdrew they did so using partisan tactics. Radziwill was tempted to pursue them to Ukraine, but desisted, realizing that Khmelnytsky had strong partisan forces which would be unleashed against the Lithuanians. Shortly thereafter Khmelnytsky and the Polish King signed a peace treaty, and Radziwill demobilized his troops.

Although Col. Krychevsky was killed, he had performed his task successfully. He used the only tactics which could have led to a victory—partisan tactics.

Niccolo Machiavelli in his work, *Il Principe*, wrote:

Money . . . can multiply the forces but cannot create them. In itself, money is worthless and cannot serve anything without an army which can be trusted. Nothing is more false than the thought that money is a nerve of war. A small number of brave fighters can be decisive, but terrain matters even more than bravery. You must alter your decisions when the enemy learns of them. . . .

Montecuccoli (1609-80) wrote:

The effect of surprise is enormous. Vacillation is not wise, because it wastes opportunity. . . . Hard and fast rules should be avoided, since the same conditions do not exist all the time. Application must be made with regard to time, place and people. . . . Thanks to momentum Caesar and Alexander were able to successfully terminate the majority of their campaigns. . . .

Vauban (1633-1707) wrote:

One must always attack the weakest spot, never the strongest, if conditions at all lend themselves to it. . . .

Frederick the Great wrote in his works:

It is a certainty, substantiated by experience, that the best units are those composed of the inhabitants of a given country. . . .

A proper interpretation thereof is that the multi-national state or empire can rely only on those units which belong to the dominating national element (example: The Soviet armies contain millions of non-Russian nationals who cannot be counted upon to be as loyal as the Russians, since their native countries are oppressed and dominated by Russia).

The greatest stroke of a commander is to cause the enemy to starve. Hunger destroys more surely and more completely than bravery.

The basic precept is to compel the enemy to do that which he does not want to do.

Scharnhorst (1755-1813):

Eccentric activity weakens one's strength, while concentric activity augments it.

One must strike at one point of the enemy's position with a concentrated force.

When we review the history of wars, we find out that at all times the decisive factors are not only physical forces, but moral ones as well. Religiosity, respect for the commander, love of freedom and hatred for the oppressor—these constitute founts of unusual moral force, bravery and endurance.

But the tendency has always been to value military art higher than the military virtues of man. Such an attitude has always presaged the decline of nations. Bravery, sacrifice and stability compose the foundation of the independence of nations. If our hearts are not directed toward these treasures, we will lose even amid great victories. . . .

Under military art in the works of Scharnhorst one has to understand in current terminology the technique itself of war—the mastery of formulas of pure routine and the adulation of technical arms as the principal elements of military success.

Napoleon Bonaparte wrote:

It is always true that superior numbers defeat smaller numbers. When I had my smaller forces in front of a great army, I acted like lightning and deployed my units on the flank of the enemy and defeated him. I took advantage of the confusion, which such a maneuver always evoked, and attacked the enemy ranks in another spot, usually with all my forces. So I battled the enemy in various places, and my victory, as you can see, was a triumph of the superior over the inferior.

Karl von Clausewitz (1780-1831):

A war of entire nations, especially civilized nations, comes always from a political position and is caused by political motivations.<sup>41</sup>

The moral virtues belong to the most important elements of war. The value of moral virtues is best demonstrated by their unbelievable consequence—history. . . .

What is the idea of defense? The repulsion of assault. What is its characteristic? Awaiting the assault. A rapid and strong transition into attack and a lightning revenge—is the acme of defense. . . .

Alfred T. Mahan (1830-1914), American professor at the U.S. Naval Academy, saw that life in freedom is a human right, which society is obligated to defend regardless whether such defense will result positively or negatively. A soldier must realize that every military operation may end in combat with bayonets.

<sup>41</sup> Today the popular belief is that war is the result of an unsuccessful policy. Such an interpretation seems to indicate a disease of society, and should serve as a warning to leaders of nations.

This opponent must be thrown into confusion or the victory will be his.<sup>42</sup>

Although Mahan wrote about the operations of the naval forces, he provides nonetheless many principles of general significance which are elevated to top rank by partisan warfare. For instance, when food is scarce in difficult terrain conditions, Mahan stresses rapidity of movement for a swift and decisive battle. He also stresses the importance of greater initiative and the coordination of all service elements.

A. von Schlieffen (1833-1913):

Encirclement must be coupled with a frontal assault. If this is not done, the enemy may prevent the encirclement and even take advantage of the situation for his own victory. . . .

A numerically weaker unit can hardly undertake a frontal attack. It has to hit the flanks and the rear of the enemy at his most sensitive points in order to compel him to change frontal dispositions. But first the enemy must be surprised by the unexpectedness of the assault, which would evoke chaos, precipitous decisions and shaky executions. . . .

Partisans, especially the Ukrainian Insurgent Army, as we can see from the examples cited elsewhere herein, did not deviate from these timeless laws of battle.

<sup>42</sup> *Klassiker der Kriegskunst*, Darmstadt, 1960.

1. The first part of the document is a list of the names of the members of the committee who have been appointed to study the problem of the distribution of the land in the district of the city of Moscow.

2. The second part of the document is a list of the names of the members of the committee who have been appointed to study the problem of the distribution of the land in the district of the city of Moscow.

3. The third part of the document is a list of the names of the members of the committee who have been appointed to study the problem of the distribution of the land in the district of the city of Moscow.

# Chapter Eleven

## ATTACK

The attack is the basic combat action; it is the principal trait of partisan tactics. The tactics of partisan attack take a variety of form: attack, raid, harassment, and the like. Even partisan defense consists of many small offensive and defensive combat actions.

An attacking battalion can hit the enemy on a front of 400 to 1,000 meters. In its approach to the point of departure the battalion moves in a closed column with combat security measures in effect. When the battalion occupies its position as defined by the order of the day, the battalion commander then selects a point of departure for the attack. The battalion forms its battle lines in the closest proximity to the enemy, and its very first blow consists of small groups penetrating the enemy lines and encircling his units.

A part of the battalion is left behind as a reserve whose strength, never constant, depends on the battle plan.

From the points of departure the battalion attacks always with all its companies on the entire sector, and its attack is supported by maximum firepower.

Often, however, the attack is not initiated at the points of departure, but from the approach march itself. Such an attack is usually more successful because the enemy is surprised by a wholly unexpected battle action.

Use of artillery, if available, should be intense, directed especially at the enemy flanks for the purpose of demoralizing the enemy troops. Thereupon the commander orders the companies to attack.

Should the enemy put up a strong resistance, then the first company in

the assault must overcome the resistance or insure a certain number of breaches of the enemy lines. Once behind the enemy defense system, the battalion must forge ahead, regardless of enemy resistance, in such a way that the enemy has no time to regain its balance and regroup for defense or a counterattack. Above all, the partisans should do everything possible to prevent an enemy counterattack. Toward that end the commander commits to action the second echelon, and even the reserve. If the enemy had established strong resistance points, such as fortified trenches, defensive bunkers and the like, then the partisan commander should not attempt to take them, but leave them for liquidation by the second echelon or the reserve.

The battalion should not pursue a retreating enemy too energetically, but merely harass him to prevent his organizing a counterattack. If the terrain permits, the battalion should keep the retreating enemy under machine gun and mortar fire.

In crossing a river that is defended by the enemy, the partisans exert every effort, as a rule, to make the crossing a surprise to the enemy. The first moves at crossing are therefore made under the concealing cover of night. Once on the other bank, the unit should secure it and reconnoiter the river and the enemy positions.

The crossing usually employs this subterfuge: a small detachment crosses at one spot, while the principal force makes the crossing in another. The small unit deliberately attracts the attention of the enemy, allowing the main force to make the crossing in secrecy and security.

First of the main force to cross is the line company with strong firepower, led by its company commander, who will direct the battle in the event the enemy mounts a counterattack. Once across, the first echelon rapidly consolidates its position and secures the crossing of other units. Ideally, the whole action is so timed that the entire force is over before dawn.

On the far bank the battalion should lose no time in attacking the enemy vigorously, especially his flanks, in order to compel him to retreat.

An attack in the forest should encompass, as its first objective, occupation of roads, clearings and, above all, the fringes of the forest. If the forest is small, then the far side of it should be secured as soon as possible. In the case of a large forest the attack should extend along the entire width of the forest.

In the woods the battalion should be secured by visual distance (100 meters) not only from the vanguard, but from the flanks and the rear as well. These security precautions should flush out and neutralize enemy units and groups and any individual soldiers.

Success in forest battles does not depend on special techniques so much as it does on efficiency and daring on the part of the partisans, who must be prepared at any time to grapple with the enemy with their bayonets. Intrepid and forcing attacks with bayonet, hand grenade and submachine gun are the

prerequisites of success. Partisans must be ready to meet all possible obstacles, including ambushes and mines; hence grenades and other arms must be at hand. The enemy must be met with concentrated fire in order to destroy him on the spot, even if this calls for bayonets.

When the objective is a village, the battalion commander and his staff should know the exact layout of the village and its buildings, and those places where the enemy was reported. In planning his attack the commander takes into consideration the sequence of occupation of the various parts of the village, the tactics of taking the buildings fortified by the enemy, the enemy strength as a whole, the mood of the population, the enemy liaison, and the avenues of approach and retreat.

The tactics of attacking a village or settlement are similar to those employed against the forest. The initial objectives are the nearest buildings, and then the outskirts of the village. Open streets are avoided, because of the possibility of enfilading fire and of mines in the street. Hence fullest advantage is taken of orchards and passages between houses.

Forest and village fighting puts a premium on personal initiative and courage. Battle in the village is a series of individual combats conducted frequently without the support of or even contact with adjoining units.

Attack at night demands keen orientation with respect to the terrain. In the approach march to the enemy, the partisans move in straight lines to the closest possible point; they endeavor to proceed in compact columns, constantly bringing up stragglers. The battalion is protected by guards on the flanks and at the point.

During a night operation silence is mandatory. Orders are transmitted in whispers; smoking and unnecessary talking are prohibited.

The second echelon of the attacking force, including weapons units, follows close on the lead units; its objective is to hold the positions wrested from the enemy.

The first company also comprises units whose prime task is to remove obstacles, such as barbed wire, mines, and the like. The company makes its attack as silently as possible; no yelling during the onslaught is tolerated. Its stealth often enables it to destroy the enemy with bayonets alone. Only in extremity are hand grenades used at night.

Should the enemy rally and counterattack, the second echelon is ready for him. It, too, attacks silently. Use of arms is minimal in order not to hit the partisans of the first echelon. When the enemy retreats the partisans keep contact by harassing him with small units. This is especially effective at night, for the enemy has no way of gauging the numerical strength of the attackers; often a small unit in pursuit provokes panic in a numerically far stronger enemy.

In winter success of attack depends on suddenness. The battalion approaches in a frontal direction, but the main blows are reserved for the

flanks and the rear of the enemy. Here speed of action is of utmost importance; in winter fighting men lose their effectiveness far more quickly than in any other season. The heavy frosts dictate even greater speed. Ukrainian insurgents had their best successes in winter when they surprised the enemy in a night attack and when their allies were snow and gale. But such actions demand high combat efficiency and experience on the part of each fighter. For such actions, then, the commander selects only the best and most seasoned fighters.

Retirement of the battalion from the battlefield also should be preplanned in detail, regardless of whether the withdrawal is a result of pressure exerted by the enemy or it is a deliberate maneuver terminating the battle assignment. Withdrawals ideally should take place at night, leaving the enemy in complete ignorance of the reassembly point. In daylight an unhampered departure of the battalion is possible only in a terrain which provides natural cover—valleys, mountains, trees and brush—protections from any enemy relief force and from air attack.

In preplanning withdrawal the commander maps out the route of retreat, establishes defensive flanks and security for the battalion and works out alternative battle plans in event of apprehension by the enemy. The retreat must also be made known to other partisan units close by in the area.

It is so ordered that the first echelon precedes the wounded and the reserves. Should the enemy attack, the retreat is accelerated, precedence being given to the line companies, most taxed of all by the battle operations. Once in a safe place and beyond the range of artillery fire, the battalion falls into column formation. At night during snowfall or rain, the battalion marches in a compact manner, maintaining combat readiness all the while.

During rest periods the battalion should be protected against strikes from the land and the air. Consequently, the bivouac area should be located in a terrain suitable for defense—small forests, dense brush, settlements.

The company effects its attack individually or within the framework of the battalion. It attacks on a breadth of 350-500 meters. It is the responsibility of the company commander that the points of departure are occupied undetected by the enemy and that losses are minimal during the attack. The attacking platoon should be supported by machine gun fire, preventing the enemy from counterattacking. If there is difficulty in taking the enemy position, neighboring platoons provide support by attacking the rear and the flanks of the enemy in the sector. The enemy lines breached, the platoon should clear it at once of all enemy elements.

When the company successfully accomplishes its mission, it then supports the other companies with its fire and manpower. In principle the company pursues the enemy ejected from his position until he is completely destroyed; pursuit ceases on the order of the company commander. In case of deadlock, the company commander secures his flanks and consolidates his posi-



tion. Once having reorganized the company the commander resumes the attack and presses on to victory.

Night attacks of company strength, in the forest, against villages or in crossing of rivers, are similar to those of the battalion. In addition, the company may be charged with a tactical task, as reconnaissance of the terrain. In this case, as an intelligence unit, the company is assigned a sector of about 3 kilometers, usually on both sides of a highway. The company reconnoiters by visual observance and combat at a distance of 3 to 5 kilometers from the battalion in daytime and 1 to 3 kilometers at night. The reconnaissance company functionally consists of scouts backed up by a combat force. As a rule, the scouts number platoon strength and act by visual observation. The company commander accompanies the main assault force; an encounter with the enemy sees him with the scouts ahead.

The main assault force should move without detection. In open terrain it proceeds in single file. It enters a forest or village only after the scouts report absence of the enemy. When the company stays in a village, all the villagers are confined and each house is searched thoroughly; the principal force maintains combat readiness. The task of the reconnaissance company is to ascertain the enemy strength, location and, if possible, plans as well.

When the enemy moves in the direction of the attacking force, the company lets the enemy scouts pass by and then attacks the main force. When the enemy is thrown back into a defensive posture, the partisan reconnaissance company probes the enemy flanks to pinpoint the enemy's weaponry and to bring in prisoners of war. The company also proceeds to break through the enemy rear, set ambushes for enemy liaison, staff and supply lines, and in general, to harass, delay and demoralize him.

At night, the company sentries, which are necessarily limited in number, are spaced apart at a distance determined by the configuration of the terrain.

In the mountains the company occupies the commanding heights and establishes itself in full readiness to receive enemy attack. Its sentries secure the ridges and peaks of the mountains, as well as all gulleys and ravines, in depth. From its fastness the company descends to establish ambushes on the roads used by the enemy, harassing and destroying his supply lines. Couriers and liaison men always travel in pairs in the mountains, never individually.

By day the combat reconnaissance company has the following tasks:

1. Fire on the enemy position;
2. Fire on the flanks and rear of the enemy;
3. Attack in company strength;
4. Engage in battle with the enemy position;
5. Consolidate the taken position;
6. Erect defenses against eventual strong enemy counterattack.

Thus the overall task of the company in daytime is to take the enemy position, capturing prisoners if possible.

After battle and ascertainment of enemy strength, the company often might disappear from the area.

The reconnaissance company also has a platoon of submachine gunners, carrying light equipment. Its heavy fire capability enables it to flush out or encircle the enemy and inflict heavy losses. Similarly, this platoon is geared to execute ambushes and raids on the flanks and in the rear of the enemy. It is first in an assault wave, uncovering the weakest spots in the enemy lines. They blaze their way through these points into the enemy's rear and lay down a devastating fire. In defense this platoon sets ambushes for anticipated surprise attacks. They also counterattack the enemy if he happens to take the company's position. This unit also covers the liaison between units in battle, and in retreat covers the company from the attacking enemy.

The platoon in attack is led by the platoon leader in front with a courier and a man at the point. The function of the partisan platoon is the same as in the regular army. But here the problem of ammunition supply sets it apart. Partisans usually cannot equal the fire density mustered by the regular army because of ammunition scarcity. Generally, a platoon in attack seeks to weaken the enemy by concentrating its limited firepower, and, if possible and expedient, to attack the enemy at a localized point. Assaulting and taking this point, the platoon continues to attack farther enemy positions whether the other platoons have advanced or not. If the enemy manages a counter-attack, the platoon must repulse it even if this means entering into hand-to-hand combat.

In the forest, the platoon moves in complete stillness toward the enemy positions, especially on the alert for enemy fire at clearings and gulleys. In the village the platoon moves through back ways, avoiding the streets. In the mountains it moves along the slopes, never through the valleys and on the ridges, taking advantage of all natural cover along the way. The platoon's operations stretch along a breadth of about 100-150 meters.

The task of the squad, the smallest component of the partisan unit, is to perform certain combat missions. Its tactics differ from those of the squad of the regular army in the same ways as do the platoons. Here attention must be drawn to certain specific tasks of the squad members.

The sniper, taking advantage of the terrain, set his sights on enemy runners, officers, fire nests, and the like. The sniper is specially trained. With submachine gun he attacks the enemy either alone or in a group; in battle his firepower bolsters the weakest spot of his unit.

The outpost man moves toward the enemy ahead of the unit and listens and looks. He lets smaller, usually reconnaissance, enemy groups go by unmolested in order not to reveal his position. He is posted by the commander for a set period of time, at the expiration of which he returns to his unit.

Liaison men in partisan units have especially difficult tasks. In combat they

transmit the orders and messages of the commander to his subordinates or to higher groups. It was learned with time that one liaison man was not enough; one man was too easily ambushed or captured. Thereafter, the practice was to operate two liaison men to maintain contact among the units. Qualifying for this task were men with exceptional physical fitness and combat capability.

In general, partisan units operating in the rear of the enemy have the task of destroying all that is vital—liaison, communication routes, supplies, institutions and staffs. Basically, they are infantry units which also employ the tactics of the paratroopers. They operate in small units, but their power lies in unexpected fire, maneuverability, intimate knowledge of the terrain and in their individual combat training and their dedication.

Faced by an enemy stronger numerically and in armament, the commander of a partisan unit has a far more difficult task than the commander of regular army unit.

Here is a classic example of an UPA attack on Polish Communist forces: <sup>43</sup>

I do not now remember the exact date, but it was a March day, driving sleet. About seven in the morning we heard shots in the village of H., and soon we saw refugees in the fields with cows and horses and terrorized people running to the forests and neighboring villages. A Red Polish group in a strength of 200 had attacked the village and, with 30 horse-drawn carts, were pillaging the village. Soon they were joined by 200 men from the regular Polish army.

I sent our scouts to find out just what was happening in the village. They returned and reported that our villagers were being murdered. They brought a woman along with them who said: The Poles are plundering the village. They have already shot a few men, and just now they tied nine men to posts and ordered another nine men to flog them. If they refuse to do so they will be shot on the spot. During her report we could hear moans and groans from the village. I assembled our men and said:

—Well boys, what shall we do? There are 400 of them, and only 37 of us.

—Lets go!, they all exclaimed.

We had two machine guns. I wrote a message to Potap for his group and the SKV from the village of Ya. to attack from the opposite direction. A runner on horse was dispatched. We loaded ourselves with hand grenades and ammunition and moved out.

I divided our group into three sections. The first squad, under Ostroverkha's command, was to move along the stream and attack the first house at the lower end. The second group, which I took, was to take over the small woods and then hit the middle of the lower end. The third group, under Orach, would move downstream to the center of the village. We could take only half of the village because our strength was inadequate.

<sup>43</sup> *Surma* (The Bugle), Annals, 1949, Munich.

The group from the village Ya. agreed to attack the lower and middle parts of the village.

At 8 o'clock in the morning we begin our attack. The enemy feels so secure and snug that he has even neglected to post sentries. When we get to about 200 meters from the village, we let loose with all the arms at our disposal. Ostroverkha fights fiercely for the lower houses and crosses the ford full of ice floes. Meanwhile we occupy the woods. There is now great consternation among the Red Poles. Some are escaping into the people's houses, others are unloading machine guns from carts and are occupying positions beyond wood piles, cemented wells and in ditches. They return our fire. We take cover and press our advance. Our machine gunner Zoriany knocks out an enemy machine gun nest, which enables us to advance further. We count at least 15 enemy machine guns firing against us. We occupy the quarry pits, while Ostroverkha is taking house after house. It is a fierce battle as the Poles put up a stubborn resistance.

Suddenly the Orach group attacks. The Poles think it is a relief column from the village of R. Soon they discover their mistake, and now they begin to flee. This gives us the opportunity to take them in cross fire. As we pursue the enemy, we hear cheers of "Glory" in the hills around the village. It is the people of the village of Ya. who have rushed to our aid. . . . The Poles are gone, leaving 7 killed and 28 wounded. We have but one wounded. . . .

# Chapter Twelve

## **RAID**

The raid is an attack with a limited purpose: to destroy enemy posts, supply depots, and communication centers, to eject him from a strategic point in the terrain, to capture military booty, to liberate political prisoners from jails and from transport convoys, and to break up enemy-sponsored meetings of the civilian population. After a raid, the partisans disappear. The overall objective of a raid is to terrorize and harass the enemy. Its suddenness compels the enemy to be constantly on the alert and causes loss of a sense of security, which in turn weakens his combat readiness and effectiveness.

A commander preparing for a raid must plan the operation in the minutest detail. On the basis of intelligence reports, he assembles his force, and scouts the terrain, village or individual houses, streets, paths through orchards and gardens, and the like. He must also ascertain the mood of the population and their relations with the occupying power, especially the police and the administration personnel. Also, he must determine the enemy strength, armaments and supplies, and his communication facilities (telephone, telegraph, radio), which should be destroyed before the raid takes place.

The commander must also deploy his troops and assign them the point of departure and the routes of withdrawal. The raid is, as a rule, executed at night, with all the rules of night fighting being applied. Thus the approach to the enemy positions will be conducted in absolute quiet. Again, the raid usually brings the partisans up to the enemy positions without firing, and the enemy is liquidated by close combat, i.e. with bayonets. If necessary, hand

grenades and other explosive devices are used in order to demoralize the enemy.

Time and speed play an exceedingly important role in the raid. If the raid fails to attain the objective, the partisans retreat with the so-called shock troops in the first ranks. They are protected by the security groups, which, if necessary, have to accept the enemy challenge and return the fire. The dead and the wounded UPA fighters were always taken away by their fellow raiders.

An example of a small raid is given by one of the UPA commanders: <sup>41</sup>

My patrol returned and reported that in the house of the forest ranger were a Russian Lt. Colonel, head of the NKVD from Pere-myshl, a Polish captain, and a sergeant, a Ukrainian. I volunteered to capture these three birds, to which the commander gave his consent.

I took with me the brave squad leader, Zalizny, company runner Chorny, and two other fighters whose names escape my memory. Dusk had fallen when we approached the house. The windows were heavily draped, and at first we could not spot any sentries. We sat quietly for some time, and finally made out the silhouette of the sentry. I dropped my musette bag and submachine gun and, with only revolver in hand, began to move over to him. When I was about two yards away he whispered in Russian: "Who goes there?" I grabbed for his rifle and whispered to him: "Be quiet or you will die. Don't move and you will not be hurt. We are the partisans."

We took him away, leaving him under guard. Two of us crouched under the windows, while squad leader Zalizny and I jumped into the hall. I opened the door, throwing myself to the floor. The Russian, who undoubtedly heard the noise, fired three bursts from his automatic in my direction. I replied with my revolver while Zalizny blasted away with his submachine gun. The light went out as the Polish captain fired at us. We retreated from the hall to the barn; around its corner we could see into the house through the open door. We called to the woman in the house, asking her where the Polish captain was. She swore he was not in the house. We ordered her to put on the light, and we saw the captain under a bed. Inside the room we found the NKVD Lt. Colonel dead; we found his briefcase, bulging with documents which included a coded list of informers in the area of Peremyshl. We took the Polish captain, the Ukrainian sentry and all the documents to our Commander. He released the Ukrainian sentry, who cried that now the Bolsheviks would kill him because he had failed to protect the NKVD chief. We advised him to return to his native village and hide for the duration. . . .

### **Raid on the Town of Radekhiv (April 26-27, 1945)**

In the little town of Radekhiv in Western Ukraine the Russians established a huge concentration camp for political prisoners and the civilian population,

<sup>41</sup> Khrin, *op. cit.*

earmarked for slave labor work in Asia. The intelligence of the OUN civilian network sent in a report to the effect that the NKVD was preparing to deport all of the inmates by the end of April.

The UPA groups operating then in the woods north and east of the town were informed ahead of time. The commanders called a staff meeting for briefing and discussion. On April 25, 1945, the UPA units in the area were as follows:

Group "Halaida" I—Commander Peremoha <sup>45</sup>  
Group "Perebiynis"—Commander Shumsky  
Group "Prolom"—Commander Chernyk  
Group "Kochovyky"—Commander Shtyl  
Group "Tyhry"—Commander Romko  
Group SB Combat—Commander Clay

### The Plan of Action

Brought out at the staff meeting of the UPA commanders was the strength of the enemy forces: detachments of NKVD and NKGB about 300 strong, heavily armed and well trained for partisan warfare. The following plan, given here in essence, was discussed and adopted for execution:

1) With use of own forces (as outlined above), to liberate all the prisoners and to take all the military equipment to be found and return to the original positions of each group;

2) Tactical tasks: All highways and the railroad in the vicinity to be placed under heavy guard and security in order to prevent any help for the enemy arriving from other localities. This task was assigned as follows: the highway and railroad Radekhiv-Luts'k—to the "Perebiynis" Group; the Radekhiv-Lviv highway—to the 1st Platoon of the "Kochovyky" Group; the Radekhiv-Lopatyn highway—to the "Prolom" Group; and the outpost of the town of Novyi Vyt'kiv—to the "Tyhry" Group.

In the forest along the road toward the city of Krystynopil three road blocks were thrown up. All the railroads were mined, and mortars were positioned outside the city and were trained on the railroad Lviv-Radekhiv. The CP (command post) of the UPA was established one kilometer from the city.

Departure toward Radekhiv was set for 19:00 hours, the taking of our position for 23:30; three minutes before 24:00 all telephone and telegraph wires were to be cut.<sup>46</sup>

At 24:00 the city was entered by UPA units: the "Halaida" I Group, two platoons of the "Kochovyky" Group and the combat Group of SB.

<sup>45</sup> The group or *viddil* (branch) was a tactically independent unit, designated for special tasks. Its combat strength, which depended on circumstances, ranged from 80 to 150 men.

<sup>46</sup> *U borotbi za voliu, op. cit.*

Moving quietly through the gardens and side streets they reached the headquarters of the NKVD. Here at 1:30 the first shot was fired into a window from an anti-tank bazooka-type weapon. Then a rain of hand grenades killed all the NKVD inside. Simultaneously two platoons of the "Kochovyky" Group stormed the concentration camp and released all the prisoners. Some of the Russian sentries made their escape without firing a shot.

With the bazooka-type weapon we destroyed a small electric power plant, snuffing out all lights in the city. The only stiff resistance was offered by a group of Russians in a bunker in the concentration camp from which they fired machine guns blindly into the city.

All prisoners were taken outside the city whence they dispersed in all directions. At 3:00 the order came to retreat. At dawn not a single UPA partisan was in town.

The result of the raid was gratifying:

The enemy suffered 20 dead and 15 wounded;

Over 200 political prisoners were liberated;

There was a great moral upsurge among the population;

The UPA losses: 5 wounded.

### **Raid on the Town of Yabloniv (July 27, 1945)**

In the summer of 1945 the Russians began an intensive propaganda campaign against the UPA. One of the methods aimed at the dissolution of the UPA were the appeals of the Ukrainian SSR government, and later of minor Communist officials, which called on the UPA fighters to come out of the forests, promising them full pardon. They even designated a deadline, July 20, 1945, by which date all UPA fighters had to surrender if they wanted to avoid the severe punishment awaiting those not complying with the appeal.

The Soviet Russian propaganda was clever and well articulated. Huge posters and the radio proclaimed:

"Only 24 hours remain! After that death will encounter you!"

"Only 16 hours! Surrender, lest it be too late!"

The Bolshevik propaganda reported the surrender of UPA members by the thousands, beseeching the pardon of the Soviet government. It announced that in Volhynia in one day alone 14,000 UPA fighters surrendered. In various localities, they added, hundreds of UPA insurgents were laying down their arms.

Understandably, neither the population nor the UPA put any credence in these reports. After July 20, the systematic propaganda still continued unsuccessfully.

On July 27, in the town of Yabloniv, Soviet officials assembled the population in a cinema hall to view a film depicting the surrender of UPA fighters



in various places. The film featured sequences showing alleged UPA fighters swearing to punish and even kill their commanders.

An UPA detachment which operated in the vicinity of Yabloniv was notified in enough time before the showing of the film to plan a raid.<sup>47</sup>

At the moment the population was being forcibly compelled to view the film, the UPA attacked.

"The Banderivtsi are in town!" went up the cry in the hall, which emptied in a trice. The UPA group destroyed the NKVD headquarters and dispersed the guards, effectively giving the lie to the Russian propaganda. After that no more films were shown in Yabloniv.

The raid on Yabloniv is one of many instances of the UPA struggle against Russian propaganda. The purposes of the raids were many: punishment of the Russians for their crimes and persecution with regard to the Ukrainian people; wresting away arms, ammunition and military supplies and equipment; liberation of political prisoners scheduled for deportation to the slave labor camps in the USSR, and, above all, demonstration of the mendacity of the enemy propaganda to the effect that the Ukrainian underground was destroyed and non-existent.

### **Raid of Soviet Partisans on UPA Military School "Lisovi Chorty" of UPA-North**

*(Reconstruction of a Report by Soviet Partisan Commander P. Vershyhora)* <sup>48</sup>

After attacking an UPA unit in the village of Kukurika, Soviet Partisan Commander Vershyhora departed southward, postponing his raid across the Buh River to a later date. His immediate objective was to liquidate the UPA military training school and to clear the terrain of small UPA units. Vershyhora's force left Kukurika during the night of January 25, 1944; by noon the next day it had reached the Kholm-Kovel railroad near the village of Pidhorodno. The German security sentries posted on the line were taken by a cavalry sentry without firing a shot. At 23:30 hours the commander of the column crossed the railroad track, followed by the entire column a few minutes later. Senior commanders took turns supervising the crossing of the railroad, exhorting the partisans and ready to take over the command in any emergency for, despite security precautions, the enemy could always be expected from any side. The railroad tracks were guarded during the crossing by two companies posted on both sides over a stretch of a kilometer and a half. Scouts were sent to reconnoiter the neighboring villages, while

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>48</sup> Vershyhora, P., *Reid na San i Vislu* (The Raid on the Sian and the Vistula), Kiev, 1961.

the railroad itself was mined. The railroad was used for transport of German troops and materiel east and west. During the operation two trains were blown up. The last partisan groups crossed the tracks at night after a skirmish with the Germans.

In the villages beyond the railroad Soviet scouts found units of the Ukrainian National Self-Defense (UNS). At dawn the column moved into the village of Mosur where it remained for a few days of rest. The pause was motivated by the following:

- 1) The cavalry unit needed a prolonged rest;
- 2) Reorganization of the partisan units was overdue;
- 3) The Soviet partisans had to be prepared for the struggle against the UPA;
- 4) The strength of the Ukrainian national liberation movement in the area had to be assessed;
- 5) Reconnaissance of the terrain;
- 6) Initiation of a series of diversionary actions on the Lutsk-Kovel railroad, a heavy carrier of the German war machine.

Soviet scouts also reported UPA garrisons in the villages, although not a single armed man was actually spotted.

At that time an Armenian unit of partisans, organized by the UPA, had gone over to the Soviet partisans. They reported the location, not far off in the woods, of an UPA military school, in which a Soviet officer, Lt. Semeniuk, was planted as one of the instructors.

Vershyhora received the order to destroy the school, although he had received little information about it. The Armenians knew of only two paths which led to the school, which was some 60 kilometers from the village of Mosur.

Vershyhora determined on the following:

1. To destroy the training school;
2. To attack the battalion of Sosenko-Antoniuk and seize the supply of UPA arms.

Led by an agent, Martyniuk, the Soviet partisans left the village of Mosur on January 26, 1944, at 4:00 A.M., and moved to the railroad south of the village of Turopin. Here they found two bunkers. They blocked them with infantry and destroyed them by artillery. The action was undoubtedly heard at the UPA training school, obviating any possibility of a surprise attack.

Vershyhora crossed the railroad and distributed his forces as follows:

The 1st Battalion with a cavalry squadron was sent directly against the school for a frontal attack;

The 2nd Battalion encircled the villages of Osa and Buda;

The 3rd Battalion went to the left across the Tutia stream. Vershyhora's other units were deployed in far-flung operations and diversionary actions.

First to encounter the UPA school's outpost were the Soviet cavalymen. After a brief exchange of fire the UPA sentry was forced to withdraw. At the same time, agent Semeniuk allegedly convinced the school commandant not to withdraw but wait for "further developments." Vershyhora ordered his infantry to attack, using sleds, which helped them to keep up with the cavalry. The UPA school evacuated in time, the Ukrainian partisans mingling with the fleeing villagers, who had been surprised by the Soviet cavalry. Since it was impossible to fire upon the women, children and old people, the cavalry attacked those who bore arms, barring their escape from the village and at the same time executing the encirclement of the village. One half of the school's personnel was destroyed, the other half being dispersed in the terrain.

Now the Soviet partisans encircled the forest and marshes from the villages of Osa and Buda, pursuing the school's survivors.

At noon from the center of the encircled terrain came the sound of mortar and machine gun fire, and the neighboring farms, known as "Vovchok," were afire. It also appeared that the battalion of Commander Sosenko-Antoniuk might be trapped. It was composed of 7 infantry companies, one cavalry company and a group of Uzbeks (a national unit of Uzbeks fighting alongside the UPA against the Russians).

Agent Semeniuk, now returning to the Soviet partisans, explained that Sosenko had come at night, a fact which he was not able to report to Vershyhora in time, and that Sosenko's unit was moving south to the Porytsk hills and eventually would reach the Carpathians.

Semeniuk was given a cavalry unit to cut off Sosenko's retreat route.

When night came the encircling Soviet units moved closer by 2 kilometers, shortening the front. Only security and reconnaissance units operated. The unit of Semeniuk prevented Sosenko from escaping during the night, and in the morning the Soviet infantry attacked. The UPA units returned fire as they kept retreating by paths they knew to the south. The rear UPA security consisted of villagers of the area, some of whom capitulated to the Soviet partisans. Sosenko and his cavalry unit meanwhile retreated further south.

As Vershyhora's attack began to lose in momentum, the Soviet partisans pounced on the captured UPA prisoners, stripping them of clothing and boots.

Encountering a mine field, Sosenko had to halt his retreat. The Soviet infantry, encouraged by *politruks*, now renewed the attack. When dusk came, scouts reported that the Sosenko group now had only about 50 riders and 70 foot soldiers.

On the third day the UPA foot soldiers also got possession of horses (not saddles, however), continuing to move farther to the south. Pursuing them Soviet partisans left the woods behind, crossed the highway and found themselves in the hilly terrain of the Volhynian steppe, near Porytsk. Here ended

the operation of Vershyhora against the UPA military school and the battalion of Sosenko.

But the military school of the UPA, known as "Lisovi Chorty," and the battalion of Sosenko escaped the Soviet partisan encirclement without losses as great as reported by Vershyhora, who was given the "Hero of the Soviet Union" award for his action against the Ukrainian nationalist fighters.

His report is far from being a straight military one; it is rather a propaganda piece for laymen. For instance, he mentions that the partisan column left the village of Mosur at 16:00 with some 60 kilometers to cover to the UPA school. It succeeded in destroying the "Lisovi Chorty" school and then suddenly made contact with the battalion of Sosenko. Vershyhora apparently forgot to mention that the unit had to spend a night somewhere; it looks as if the entire action lasted only an hour. It must be assumed that the school was destroyed on the second day. But, even here, some facts seem unrealistic. It is almost impossible for any army (not mechanized) to cover 60 kilometers fighting, seizing bunkers and encircling the enemy amid dense woods and marshes, where the paths were known only to the UPA partisans. This is too much even for Soviet experts in partisan warfare.

The story of agent and UPA "professor" Semeniuk should also explain how the battalion of Sosenko escaped the mined field and even procured some horses. All these twists and turns seem to be figments of the fertile imagination of the much celebrated Soviet partisan hero.

### **Raid on the City of Kamin Koshyrsky**

In one of the UPA underground publications appeared a description of the UPA raid on the city of Kamin Koshyrsky. It was written by a participant in the raid known by his *nom de guerre* as "Mria:"<sup>49</sup>

The city of Kamin Koshyrsky was a German base and a center of Gestapo terrorist activities.

In August, 1943, an unprecedented tension was felt; the Germans were preparing for actions against the UPA and also against the Soviet partisans who operated in the area. Our intelligence reported that the Soviet partisans were planning to attack the city. It was also on the operational agenda of the UPA.

Our raid on the city was scheduled for August 20, 1943. Under the overall command of Rudyi were the following units: the battalion of Nazar-Kryha, a company under the command of Lysyi and the company of Kubik. On August 19 these units took up positions in the forest, some 12 kilometers from the city. The plan of the attack:

A special group would penetrate to the center of the city and reach the German fortifications. When the battle started, all other units, deployed in three sections, would attack the city itself.

<sup>49</sup> *Litopys UPA (A Chronicle of the UPA)*, No.10, 1947.

The UPA units were armed with light machine guns, along with a 75 mm. cannon and a few mortars. All fighters were experienced in partisan warfare.

In the evening of August 19, Commander Rudyi assembled the fighters and asked for volunteers for the special group. Its task was formidable: to penetrate to the center of the city and terrorize the Germans, who had strongly fortified bunkers. Commander Nazar-Kryha proposed that the special group be established of those whom he had brought from Pisky. This was accepted. Originally numbering 25 men, the group was augmented by 5 men from other groups. Commander Chernyk was placed in command.

We were to take the "hill"; then, on our rocket signal, the other groups would attack the city. We had 4 machine guns; everyone else had submachine guns (*finka*). In addition, everyone had a revolver, stiletto, matches, flashlights, hand grenades, benzine, axes, saws, shears, and rocket pistols.

At dusk we halted before the city. We took off our boots and hid them in the grass. After resting a few minutes, we headed for the first houses in the city.

The city was sound asleep. To be heard was only the rhythmic beat of German sentry boots. Already among the buildings, we slowly neared the "hill." We could hear the breathing of the sentry. A few of us cut the wires and climbed the "hill." Strong hands grabbed the German sentry, and he soon was dead. One part of our force entered the open German positions, another part sprinkled with benzine the building where the Polish militia was dozing, and a third entered the building where the Germans lived.

In one room in the Germans' building was a light; it appeared to be the guard house. Three of us threw open the door. All the Germans were in bed asleep; only the charge of quarters and a Polish interpreter were awake.

Only one quiet whisper, "Hands Up." and we had the room to ourselves. We took captive 9 Germans, and began collecting their arms. From the second floor came several shots, and the building housing the Polish militia suddenly burst in flames. Grenade bursts and rifle shots were now heard all over the city, especially near the headquarters of the SD (security police—*Sicherheitsdienst*). The windows of the police building were shuttered, the sleepy policemen did not know what was happening. Some of them killed themselves. Now the second floor in the building we had occupied erupted into a blaze, and Germans began firing at us through the stairwell.

We shot off the red rocket flare to notify our other units to attack. There was no reply. Minutes passed as we hung on to boxes with arms and ammunition, machine guns, and the like. After a 25-minute lapse, we finally saw the answering red flare as two powerful explosions rent the city. It was our units in attack. The heavy explosions were repeated, and some five dozen machine guns began chattering at once. The situation had improved. The Germans, who had begun to encircle us at the foot of the "hill," retreated, and those in the building began surrendering.

We seized over 20,000 rounds of ammunition, 5 machine guns,

4 "EMPI," over 100 pistols, 16 typewriters, one car, 4 radio receivers and one radio broadcasting set, 11 horses with saddles, 7 motorcycles, 600 centners of salt, 500 of flour and 800 of sugar, leather, uniforms, and the like. We captured 14 Germans and a Polish interpreter. The leader of the local OUN civilian network, a man known only by the letter *Ya*, approached the captured Germans after talking to Commander Chernyk. He asked them whether they had taken part in the punitive actions in the village of Kortylisy. (In that village the German police and the Gestapo had performed their terroristic actions: they had burned the village, killed several villagers and burned alive the women and children who had taken cover in the local church.) Upon receiving an affirmative reply the leader ordered all the Germans guilty of these actions to be executed on the spot.

Finally our group received the order to abandon the "hill" and to finish off the German resistance in the center of the city. By 17:00 the city was in our hands.

The Germans suffered heavy losses: over 100 dead (a few Polish militiamen were killed as well) out of a total of 147 policemen, 200 members of the *Wehrmacht* and a number of fliers from the nearby German air base, as well as a number of Germans from the administration. On our side we had only two wounded.

To be recalled is that near the village of Kortylisy the UPA slew General Lutze, chief of the German SA formation and one of the closest collaborators of Erich Koch, *gauleiter* of Ukraine and organizer of mass terror against the Ukrainians.

# Chapter Thirteen

## TACTICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF RAIDS

Raids in partisan terminology usually mean long marches, executed by a unit on the basis of a specific tactic and for the purpose of attaining a designated objective.

The purpose of the raid may be a combat one, when encounter with the enemy is dictated in some distant area where he does not expect to see a partisan detachment. In a new terrain the unit may stay for a longer time than usual, especially when it has to accomplish a combat mission on a larger scale or when it has to appear unexpectedly in order to perform a mission and disappear without a trace.

On the other hand, an objective may be political: to attract the attention of the population of the new area. The objective would be defensive when and if the unit protected the civilian population against the enemy. It would be propagandistic when the spirit and morale of the population had to be lifted. Possessing such political significance were the UPA raids to the far-flung regions of Ukraine, as for instance, the area of Odessa, Eastern Ukraine, and Bukovina. Also political in nature were the UPA raids outside the borders of Ukraine—into Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Austria, and the American zone of Germany.

Tactical raids had for their purpose tactical combat objectives, such as a wide bypassing of the enemy preparing for a mop-up operation. Of similar significance and importance were those raids designed to occupy new areas for well-defined purposes of strategical weight. Such raids were executed by the UPA in Volhynia and the Carpathians, where the mountains were taken

for use as secondary bases and as training centers as well as the raids deep into Ukraine in order to occupy and settle strategically important junctions and areas for future operations.

A unit undertaking a raid must be thoroughly prepared. Its staff should map out the entire route of the raid, place along it its own liaison and runners, and insure maximum security for the march.

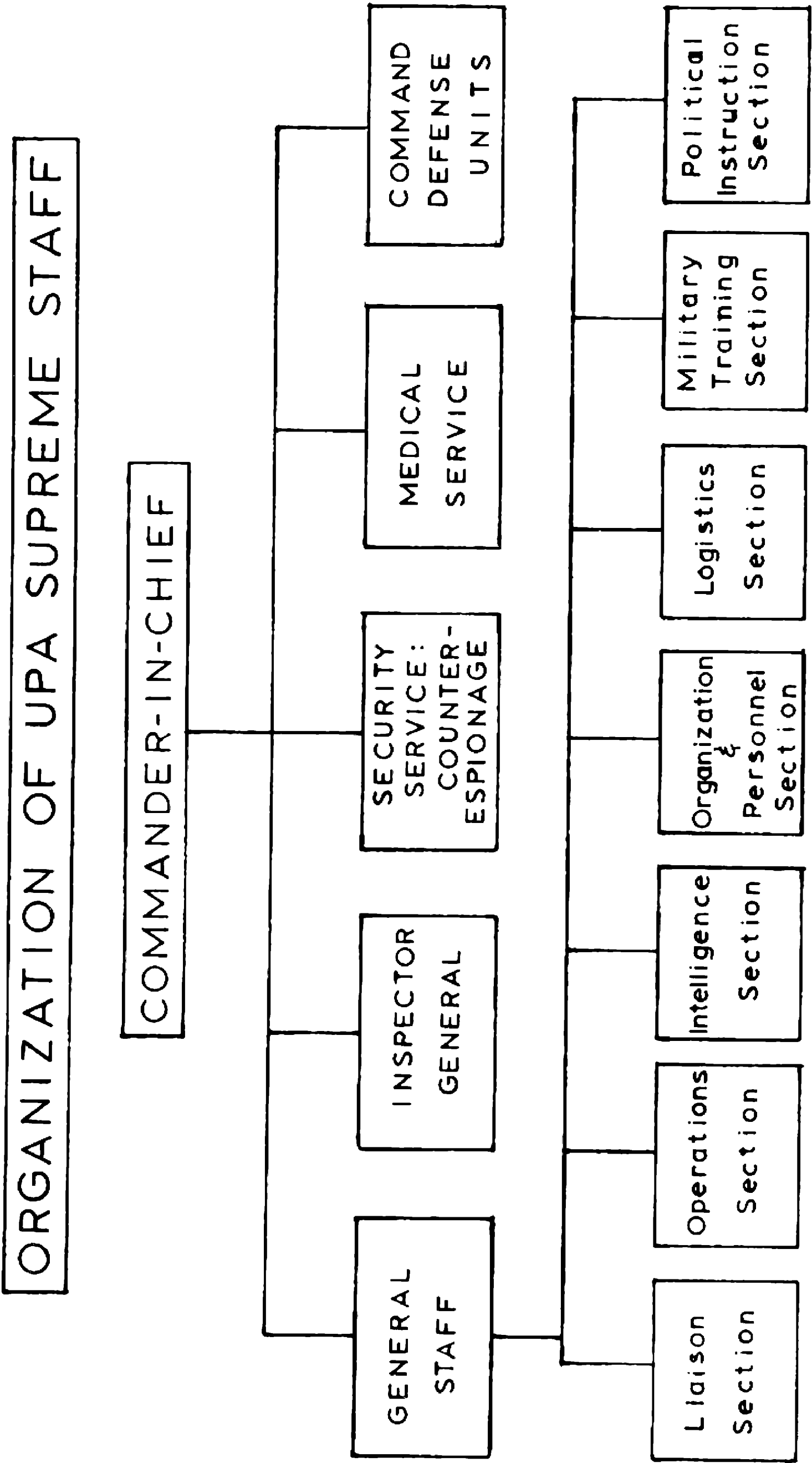
The staff should also thoroughly investigate the route, discuss it with any partisans familiar with the terrain, and collect all information available from the liaison men and the OUN civilian network of that area. This preparation is by no means easy, for the unit must eschew highways and villages in order not to encounter the enemy or to fall into an ambush. So far as is possible the unit does not appear in forest clearings or any other open areas, and does not use the bridges or fords but the "partisan ways," where encounter with the enemy is least likely.

It is also incumbent upon the staff of the raiding unit to check up on the villages lying on the route of the unit as to the strength of the local underground, the attitude of the populace toward the liberation struggle, and the like. Intelligence has to determine the strength and disposition of the enemy troops, their security, armaments, arms, food supplies and their current assignments.

The unit designated for a raid must be in good spirits and on the highest possible level physically, and should muster the greatest partisan warfare experience possible. Novices or recruits and youth who have been in the unit only for a short time should not be among the raiders. They may lack not only physical fitness and training, but also the vitally important experience and expediency of partisan warfare. The characteristics of raids are movement and a constant fight with time. The unit cannot be burdened with heavy equipment, except when it operates in areas clear of the enemy and where security is absolute. For the most part, the unit moves on foot without the benefit of either horses or motor vehicles.

Marches take place mostly at night, ideally in rain, snow or heavy fog. It marches along narrow paths. Every fighter is trained to observe everything around him and to remember the peculiarities of nature. He must know the area by map and by memory in order to avoid getting lost at night and to find the objective of the night march. The unit must wear camouflaged uniforms, and it must move in darkness rather than in the light of the moon or of enemy flares. All fighters must be extremely alert in order not to be heard or seen by enemy intelligence scouts. They must also be on their guard for enemy ambushes and traps. They must remember that at night the voice carries much farther, hence the slightest whisper, footfall and the clanking of arms can easily betray them.





Before moving out, the unit commander must inform his men of the following:

The time of the march, its order, security, liaison, signals and signs; orders governing an unexpected meeting with the enemy; pre-arranged place of reassembly in case of dispersal; information on the enemy; food, arms and medical supplies; camouflage, and all dangerous pitfalls and traps.

Before the march both officers and noncommissioned officers check on equipment, uniforms, shoes. They see that each fighter is equipped with a map, compass and individual medical kit. Just before zero hour the commander reveals to the officers the purpose of the raid, the route, all the intelligence data on the enemy, and the approximate time of reaching the objective. A detail group cleans up the camp, buries all refuse, tin cans and all else that might give away the camp to the enemy.

### **March of the Raiding Unit**

The function of the advance security elements is to insure the unit against an unexpected attack by the enemy and to hold him up in the event the unit has to give combat. The vanguard consists of a third of the raiding unit. It sends out scouts to reconnoiter in front and on both flanks, especially during a day march. At night the unit extends its security either to hearing distance or that of vision, depending on the circumstances.

Scouts must continuously check the route, ditches, bridges, bushes, trees and even the foliage. Arms are kept on the ready. If they run across anything suspicious, the scouts by a sign halt the vanguard unit, which hits the ground while the commander takes two fighters and moves ahead to get the report of the scouts.

Any civilian personnel encountered by the raiding unit are ordered to lie face down while the commander of the vanguard conducts an interrogation. If they appear to be *bona fide* civilians, they are left with a fighter as long as the marching column takes to pass by. Then the civilians are released, the guard rejoining the unit.

The vanguard precedes the main body 300 meters in daytime, 100 meters at night. Similar lead distances are maintained by the scouts ahead of the vanguard group, modified as needs be by the configuration of the terrain.

As a rule, both vanguard and the main body bypass larger villages and towns; if smaller ones cannot be circumvented, they are checked for enemy patrols, spies and ambushers. Usually, hostages are taken into custody to assure the veracity of those who speak for the village. Upon departing from the village, the raiders strike out in a direction other than the planned one so that the enemy cannot learn or make a shrewd guess at the unit's destination.

In a forest march the unit proceeds along either side of the path so as not to leave traces. The vanguard group, upon crossing the intersection of forest

lanes, sets up machine gun positions there in the event of an ambush. The gunners give the unit and the rear guard the direction of the march and then rejoin their group.

Shrubbery, wheat stacks and clumps of trees are usually searched by patrols only, the raiding unit passing by. Gulleys and depressions in the terrain are carefully checked by the patrols from all sides: it was the experience of the UPA to find Soviet ambushers there (for instance, the Soviet raid on the officer training school "Oleni" on October 13, 1944).

On crossing highways and railroads the vanguard security establishes two machine gun posts at a distance of 300 meters with a field of vision in the opposite direction. The main raiding group crosses such strategical places in single file. If the route follows railroad tracks or a highway, the vanguard establishes machine gun posts at both ends of the sector. The sector is crossed by the raiding group by platoons. As a rule, such especially hazardous places are crossed at night.

When the vanguard meets up with weak enemy outposts, it tries to capture them without firing. Should this fail, hand grenades and bayonets are used. In encountering superior enemy forces, the vanguard takes up battle positions, notifies the raid commander and tries to withstand the enemy pressure.

### **The Rear Guard**

The rear guard of the raiding unit has the same security and reconnaissance functions as the vanguard. It, too, sends out scouts some 300 meters by day and 100 at night.

In retreating from the enemy the rear guard destroys small enemy contingents and slows down the enemy attack until the main force is able to detach itself from the engagement. During rest periods the rear guard sets up security posts for protection of the unit from the rear.

### **Rest**

In selecting an area for rest, the commander must ascertain whether it lends itself to defense in case of a sudden enemy attack. It is always important to have water nearby, as well as natural shelter from heat, winds, storms, rain and snow. Officers must see at all times that all fighters are present or accounted for; a search should be instituted immediately for anyone missing.

### **March Discipline**

The unit, as a rule, marches in single file, in more secure places, in a column by twos; never by threes. No one is allowed to break up the column. During the march, especially at night, when it is easy to drop out of the column, the field gendarmes guard against straying. The field gendarmes (M.P.'s) and

their number are assigned and determined by the commander. Since the unit usually has no pack horses, all the equipment is carried by the men themselves. The service squad, which is charged with the equipment, is changed from time to time, depending on the particular equipment, the terrain and the weather. Ammunition, light arms, food, kitchen pots and the like are managed by the service group; if the amount is unusual, it is distributed among the companies, platoons and squads. Heavy weapons are always concentrated near the commander.

All orders and communications are passed along in whispers. Speaking and smoking are allowed only in daytime; at night both are prohibited.

Very important is to maintain a constant liaison with the column; it is easy to lose contact in hilly terrain, at crossings, at night, or in places where the column breaks into smaller groups in order to cross certain areas in double time. At night, the security post and the fighters who point out the proper direction should be attired in white ponchos.

In winter and in storms, rains and gales, sentries and posts must be changed more frequently. In fording rivers the fighters usually hold each other by the hands. In marshy areas the commander must have at his disposal people who are familiar with the paths and crossings, if necessary, obtaining guides from the OUN civilian network. The commander leads his column with his staff, a deputy commander and runners. All orders are passed down through runners or by pre-arranged signs.

### **Encounter with the Enemy**

In the event that the vanguard unit informs the commander that the enemy has been spotted, the unit forms a battle line and takes the enemy by surprise, preventing him from assuming suitable battle positions. Then the unit attacks with concentrated firepower. In the event of victory, the unit collects the military booty (arms, ammunition, food and medical supplies) and tries to leave the battlefield as soon as possible. Should the enemy prove to be stronger than the partisan unit, the commander deploys his unit in such manner as to protect his flanks and forestall encirclement by the enemy from the rear. He then strengthens both flanks with machine guns.

In a difficult battle situation the commander should prolong defensive action until dusk and then disengage.

In the event of retreat, individual companies one after the other join the main body, with the defense line finally taken over by the vanguard group. It resists the enemy long enough to permit the principal unit to remove itself a considerable distance from the enemy. The partisan unit retreats, as a rule, in absolute silence for at least 10-15 kms. with the utmost speed.

If the enemy learns of the partisans' presence in the area, he then cordons off the villages and prepares ambushes and thrusts into the forests. In such

cases the enemy always exposes a position in order to draw the partisans into an ambush and destroy them. On the basis of intelligence reports and the enemy firepower, the partisan commander determines the strength and position of the enemy. He must elude the enemy encirclement with dispatch. If this proves impossible, he must make a breakthrough at any cost.

The chessboard pattern of the Soviet tactical encirclement system initially wrought considerable confusion in the ranks of the UPA underground fighters. In time the UPA came up with a salutary counteraction. The commander of the UPA unit would send out small detachments which tried to provoke the enemy with bursts of fire. The enemy answered with his own fire; but in the meantime the detachments would change their positions and maneuver constantly, thus enabling the UPA commander to map out the enemy positional system. A breakout was then virtually assured.

The UPA raids, and the raids of the Soviet partisans as well, were based on one fundamental principle. If a unit had a specific assignment to perform, it avoided at all costs any and all encounters with the enemy. If compelled to give battle by the aggressiveness of the enemy, it then undertook the action after the most thorough preparation possible, always having in mind its principal task and always trying to disengage. Ordinarily costly, the wounded in the ranks of a raiding column impeded movement, and so were doubly costly.

The important thing is to keep any and all information on the raiding unit in the greatest secrecy possible: if it escapes detection by the enemy, it escapes destruction.

### **Example of Combat Initiative by the Rear Guard**

In the summer of 1945 the UPA unit "Rysi" executed a raid from Galicia into Carpatho-Ukraine. Returning on September 6, 1945, the unit encountered Soviet frontier troops of the NKVD. In the combat that followed, the "Rysi" unit was compelled to retreat, leaving protective cover of the retreat to one of its squads, which successfully slowed down the Soviet pursuit. When the Russians threw more men into the action, the UPA unit withdrew to a forest and set up an ambush. The NKVD troops were permitted to approach within 30 meters before the UPA opened fire. Suffering heavy losses, the NKVD was forced to retreat and abandon the pursuit of the UPA unit.

### **Encirclement and Roundup**

The commander of the raiding unit can usually estimate closely the strength and disposition of enemy forces attempting an encirclement either from his own intelligence reports or from inquiries conducted among the civilian population, especially the children. But it may happen that the partisan unit unexpectedly encounters the enemy in the process of making a broad sweep. The commander must then keep his troops under firm and resolute command in

order to forestall panic. He must personally plan an immediate retreat. In such a roundup action various situations may arise. The enemy may attempt to push the partisans into his own ambush; then the partisans should concentrate their firepower on a weak point of the encirclement and break through even if they must resort to bayonets in hand-to-hand combat. Often the enemy deploys his force in a battle line formation and fires ahead without seeing his target. In such case the commander should not react to the Soviet provocation and reply with his own fire, but should let the enemy pass by and then attack the enemy from the rear, or escape from the roundup area without fighting at all. In the forest special attention must be paid to openings, clearings, paths and the like, where the enemy is likely to set up machine gun emplacements.

The commander, faced with the task of breaking out of the enemy encirclement, must use all means which would serve this purpose, especially initiative and originality of approach. The experience of individual partisans, regardless of their military training, contributes to the lore of specific partisan tactics. Very often, for example, to divert the attention of the enemy from the main partisan force its commander would dispatch a small unit to engage the enemy, thereby allowing the main unit to escape the encirclement without a battle. This was a favorite UPA tactic. Another method was to break down the raiding unit into small groups, with each group proceeding to break out independently. In such case these groups came together at a pre-arranged place of re-assembly once they were outside the enemy encirclement. In winter, it was always mandatory to go deep into the woods until nightfall, at which time it was a fairly simple matter for the partisans to slip through the enemy lines. The worst time for partisan activities was early spring, for the trees, lacking foliage, afforded little protection.

That commander who feels uncertain in the course of the enemy's encirclement and fails to find a successful or feasible mode of escape, should resign his command and appoint his deputy or some other officer of his unit as commander.

### **Bivouac and Defense in the Forest**

During a bivouac both the vanguard and the rear guard security automatically become the security of the camp, setting up posts and outposts in the same manner as the regular army.

When a sentry in the bivouac area spies the approaching enemy, he does not leave his post, but, instead, opens fire. The same holds for a patrol, which should fire upon contacting the enemy. This is a tactical way of alerting the unit, the fastest one of letting the commander know of the oncoming enemy.

The selection of a bivouac site is made by the commander, bearing in mind

the basic principles of security. The site should be, if at all possible, away from the edge of the forest and from highways and paths used by the population, and by the enemy as well. Water must be close by, yet the camp should not be set up on the banks of rivers or streams. The enemy is well aware that partisans, exhausted, perspiring and soiled after a long march, would like nothing better than to camp near water; consequently, rivers, streams and lakes are prime objects of surveillance. Also, a camp should not be set up in deep ravines, as the enemy usually fortifies the hills and peaks dominating such ravines.

If a village is near the camp area, even one with a "friendly population," food supplies obtained from it should be fetched by the partisans themselves and not by the villagers, for security reasons. Partisans going for food take the elementary precaution of taking different routes to and from the village.

Meals might be cooked over a fire, but as a rule fires were prohibited in the bivouac area, except when the firewood was so dry not much smoke could be emitted.

If the bivouac area was accidentally uncovered by strangers (villagers, children or herdsmen), then such became "guests," forcibly detained in camp until the departure of the partisans.

Commanders of raiding units received detailed instructions covering their objectives and methods of execution.

Below is one such set of instructions for the commander of the raiding units of the UPA in Czechoslovakia:<sup>50</sup>

Dear Friend M.:

As you have been informed by Commander R., you have been entrusted with the command of the raiding detachments. You shall take upon yourself responsibility for everything which is done during the raids. On the basis of information we have with regard to yourself, I sincerely believe that you will perform this task with efficient dispatch. In addition to information contained in the "Brief Instructions," you must take the following into consideration:

1. Please carefully review the "Brief Instructions," providing the basics for conduct of your activities during the raid.

2. Call your commanders and the political educators of your unit to a briefing and give them detailed instructions as to what to do and how to do it, including what *not* to do during the raid. You also will have to supply shoes, clothing, food, ammunition, stationery, tar or paint for stencilling of slogans, as well as all propaganda materials, including "receipts" and "communications" for distribution among your commanders.

3. The commanders and political educators of your unit will go over the "Brief Instructions" with the fighters and discuss the additional instructions. Your talks should not reveal the immediate implementation of the raid.

<sup>50</sup> Khrin, *op. cit.*

4. After the arrival of detachments V and B, assemble the commanders of all units and develop with them an operational plan for the raid, and, briefly, discuss all matters connected with the raid; also provide slogans, passwords and other combat signs.

5. After the newly-arrived units have had a respite, you should start your departure. In the last hour before the march, address your unit and brief it about the objective to be attained for the cause of our country. At the same time you must stress that any infraction of the rules on the part of officers and men during the raid, or any misbehavior with respect to the local population, will be severely punished. Each commander will be held to account for his unit's behavior.

6. On the eve of departure a thorough reconnaissance should be made to ascertain what forces are at the borders (Polish and Slovak) and to select an appropriate spot for the crossing of the border. The day of departure and the place of crossing must be kept in absolute secrecy. With the exception of the company commanders, no one should be apprised of this information.

7. Companies should cross the border separately and at different places as well. Utmost secrecy must be observed during the crossing of the borders. In the event of encounter with the enemy at the border or immediately after the crossing of the border, the commander of the unit involved should notify you immediately; the neighboring units should be notified as well.

8. If the borders are crossed without moment the unit should remain in the forest during the day. You and your commanders should orient yourselves to the situation and proceed accordingly. If you fail to cross the border, then you shall withdraw the unit from the border and march into the villages and set up operations. One part of the unit should rest; the remainder, composed of more experienced fighters, should develop a vast informational activity among the population in order to neutralize the Czecho-Slovak troops, in the event the Russians throw them against us. Toward that objective, you must collect all information regarding the positions of the Czecho-Slovak troops and security police, their strength, their attitude toward the Russians, and the mood and attitude of the commanders; all this should be ascertained in detail. You should inform the troops (Czecho-Slovak) about the purpose of your arrival and appeal to them not to be provoked by the Russian Bolsheviks into acting against us. At the same time literature and communications should be sent to the government officials, police, intelligentsia, priests, and the like, explaining our purpose in coming to Czechoslovakia. To more prominent persons you should send Slovak emissaries to inform them orally about us. You should try to explain to all that the Czechs and Slovaks themselves should convince their brothers in the army and the police not to attack the Ukrainian partisans and fighters of the anti-Bolshevik front, and not to become an instrument of the NKVD, as this would constitute a crime with regard to the great and sacred cause of liberation of the enslaved nations from Bolshevik enslavement. You should enter private homes and speak directly to as many people as possible, explaining to them the purpose of our mission and the objective of our struggle. These tasks should be performed in the first hours of



your arrival. All these activities should be directed toward neutralizing the Czecho-Slovak army during the Bolshevik attacks against us. We are not afraid of the Czecho-Slovak army, but to fight them would be inopportune from the political and tactical viewpoints. Therefore, it is imperative that the population know not only that we have crossed the border, but above all, who we are and what we are fighting for, what our attitudes and relations are toward the Czechs and Slovaks, and the like. In order to forestall the effect of the Russian Bolshevik propaganda, we must tell the truth about ourselves in the very first moments of our arrival. We know that in central and western Czecho-Slovakia the Bolsheviks will represent us as murderers and robbers to the population; consequently, we have to provide witnesses and documentation to disprove these accusations. Our appearance in Czechoslovakia should evoke neither panic nor fear, only sympathy for and understanding of our objectives. Czechs and Slovaks should be sent to the cities for the purpose of disseminating the truth about us and organizing all anti-Communist elements in the population, through them developing a vast anti-Bolshevik propaganda in the country. . . . I repeat, do not underestimate the importance of these initial activities. Remember that the first reports and their contents will have much impact on public opinion and the course of its development.

9. You must conduct a vast political activity continuously. You must not go from village to village for the purpose of getting food only. Immediately after the crossing of the border, you should visit the teacher and the priest, asking them to translate your slogans and mottoes into the Czech and Slovak languages. You should obtain the Slovak translations first, since you will be operating in Slovakia and since the average Slovak does not understand the Czech language. Slogans should be painted and displayed on official and other important buildings in the towns which are likely to attract the attention of large numbers of people. You should find local people to help you with these tasks; they also should be sent to the cities to post your slogans and mottoes.

10. Tracts, entitled, "Czechs! Slovaks! Soldiers!" should be distributed among the troops, and among the populace at meetings as well. Above all, the "Declaration" should be disseminated among the intelligentsia, who should be asked for addresses of influential people in the large cities to whom the document should be sent by mail.

11. Meetings should be held in every locality, which should be addressed only by good and effective speakers; the meetings should be called in the evening hours, and not at late hours of the night, as this would smack of repression and coercion.

12. The conduct of soldiers must be exemplary. In entering private houses he must knock at the door; in dealing with people he must be polite. While billeting in private houses, he should maintain immaculate cleanliness and faultless deportment. Those soldiers who step out of line must and should be punished. The population should see in every fighter a dedicated warrior of the Ukrainian liberation cause.

13. Visits to villages with a Ukrainian population should be infrequent, inasmuch as we need work mostly among the Czechs and

Slovaks. The unit should not pass the night in the same village where it had sojourned in the daytime, and vice-versa, it should not pass the day in the village where it had stayed the night before.

The enemy will try to learn our tactics in order to counteract our activities. Therefore, you must not overlook changing your tactics from time to time. If an armed encounter is unavoidable, you must fight bravely. Remember, the battle with the Russians on this terrain is in the international arena; therefore, we must preserve the good name of the Ukrainian insurgent. While billeting in a village, allow no Communist to leave the village; we should tell the Communists that we cannot believe them, since they are serving the Russians, enslavers of many freedom-loving nations.

14. As a rule, avoid any armed encounters. But in the event of your being attacked, you should then try to dissuade the Czechs and Slovaks from listening to the Russians and from attacking us. Otherwise, innocent blood will be shed and people will be killed; we have nothing against them. Moreover, they, too, sooner or later, will rise against the Russians for the preservation of their independence. If these efforts fail, then you must accept the fact that the Czech and Slovak Communists are going along hand-in-hand with the Russians, and you have no choice but to fight. But do not resort to battle without first trying to separate the Czechs and Slovaks from the Bolsheviks.

15. You should take along a few horses to sell immediately after crossing the border, using the money for food purchases. If the people donate food, accept it with receipts. Also, if they give money, medicine, paper, ammunition, and the like, provide all donors with special receipts. In meeting up with troops, efforts should be made to procure ammunition and other military supplies from them.

16. All commanders, political educators and individual fighters should put down on paper all their observations during the raid: battles, conversations with the population, impressions.

17. The duration of your stay in the territory is unknown. Should conditions be favorable you should stay at least 10 days. A longer duration would not be wise. We must appear as a meteor; having fulfilled our tasks, we must vanish. Let them wait for a second coming.

I wish you and all the partisans whom you lead the best military successes. May the Almighty bless you and your deeds.

N. N.

In addition to these instructions, appended were the so-called "Brief Instructions," whose text follows.

### **Brief Instructions for Raiding Units in Slovakia**

The unit should, if possible, be equipped with the best clothing and shoes and armed with the latest in modern weapons. Commanders and fighters should receive detailed information on the political and combat tactics to be employed during the raid.

*The objectives of the raid:* to demonstrate our armed struggle against Russian Bolshevik imperialism, to propagate our political *credo*, ideas and slo-

gans and the facts of the oppression of all the enslaved nations by Moscow; the extent of the struggle of the Ukrainian and other peoples for their freedom and independence.

*Conduct:* The conduct of the officers and men vis-a-vis the local population must be civilized, polite and good-natured, as befits the sons of the great and valorous Ukrainian people and the UPA fighters. Among themselves, they should be friendly without breaking the basic rules of military discipline. Food for the most part should be purchased. In an emergency, heads of villages should be approached to provide food supplies or to allow the UPA fighters themselves to take provisions. In the latter case, UPA fighters are to be told neither to beg nor take by force. They should explain to the population their purpose, so that this in itself would provide the food. On such occasions, they should also disseminate propaganda. They should not request alcoholic beverages, nor imbibe them during the raid; they should decline them even if they are hospitably offered by the local population.

*Battle Tactics:* When we enter a foreign territory, its government, without knowing why we have come, will understandably fight against us. In order to forestall such actions against us, we must at the very outset develop our informational activities under the motto: We come to you not as enemies, but as guests and friends for a specific purpose. It is forbidden to attack army and militia posts, supply depots, and so forth, not only where there are Czechs and Slovaks, but also Russians. It is prohibited to "liquidate" any informers and suspected secret agents. Even Soviet emissaries should not be "liquidated," for we might commit acts of injustice.

In crossing the border, the unit should break up into small groups, so as to encompass the largest possible area. Necessity dictates that we should be everywhere to speak and to explain—and to deceive the enemy as to the numerical strength of our unit. The tactic of high mobility must be applied: to appear and disappear in the shortest possible time. It is prohibited to remain long in billeting areas, or in one locality, unless such is dictated by supreme requirements. The local population should not be burdened by our food needs, and we should be in as many places as we can physically afford to be.

It is imperative that the unit not engage in any battle encounter with the enemy. If we are attacked, we must defend ourselves, but should maneuver ourselves for the most rapid disengagement possible from the enemy. In armed skirmishes which cannot have been avoided, we have to fight bravely, always remembering that we are being watched by all Czechia and Slovakia, and through them, the whole world itself. We must remember that we represent the UPA and the liberation struggle of the Ukrainian people. So, if we have to fight—we shall emerge with honor and glory even if we have to make heavy sacrifices.

*Political Conversations:* We should explain in our talks with the populace

that we are not afraid of the Red Army, because in this army are many brothers and sons of the peoples allied with us in the common struggle. We have to talk about our combat successes and about the desertions of officers and men from the Red Army to the UPA. We have to demonstrate with a great deal of conviction that the ideal of human liberty for which we fight, must prevail, sooner or later. The raiding unit should contain good speakers who know the Czech and Slovak languages fluently.

(Both documents are reproduced here with insignificant cuts. Omitted are the texts of leaflets, speeches, slogans, receipt blanks and other materials which were given to the commander of the raiding unit. A great deal of material pertaining to the UPA raids in Poland may be found in the Ukrainian press in 1945-47, and also in press releases and reports of international newspapermen and correspondents. This material, collected in the UPA archives behind the Iron Curtain, is used only where it bears on the military character of this work.)

### **Billeting and Defense in the Village**

If the raiding unit plans to billet in a village, it must reconnoiter the enemy very thoroughly not only in the area of the given village, but the neighboring villages as well. When the commander makes the decision to billet in a given village the unit enters it in secured formation. When there is more than one road leading to the village, all must be patrolled by sentries until the first dwellings of the village are reached. The principal force of the unit moves forward slowly in combat readiness.

If there are no enemy soldiers in the village, the unit enters the village in force and sets up security posts with machine guns on all roads going out of the village, and sends sentries to the neighboring villages. The commander also establishes sentries and listening posts on hills, road intersections, in neighboring woods and all other strategic points of the terrain.

In the village the unit billets itself in a concentrated area, avoiding dispersing in the various parts of the settlement. All detachments must establish defense positions within their own perimeters. Soldiers must remain quiet, avoid loud talk and keep their arms in readiness. Before falling out the officers attend a briefing meeting held by the commander, at which he assigns duties to individual units, for instance, the service company. He discusses strategic plans, issues alarm signals and assigns a place of reassembly in the event of enemy attack.

The units do not let any one in or out of the village during the whole rest period. All billets are guarded by sentries who are inspected and verified by the noncommissioned officers. All dogs are ordered kept on their leashes.

Since the UPA also pursued political objectives, during the rest in the village the soldiers organized meetings for the villagers and delivered lectures

connected with the liberation struggle of the Ukrainian people and the tasks of its armed force, the UPA. They also described life under Soviet domination, and they organized national holidays and commemorations. This ideological and political activity was conducted by the UPA fighters with friendliness and tact. They also helped the population however they could: with medical care, material and moral support, professional counselling, and the like.

To be found in the Ukrainian literature are memoirs on the raids of the UPA to the West, to the American zone of occupied Germany.<sup>51</sup>

Here follows an abridged memoir of one of the UPA raids. These simple words and expressions of a soldier convey a sense of untold heroism, arduous efforts and the partisan spirit and discipline.

### *Memoir*

#### *At the Cost of Blood and Life*

In the summer of 1947 the Supreme Command of the UPA ordered several UPA units, then operating across the Curzon Line, to head for the occupied zones of Germany. The route led through Czechoslovakia; hence on its territory in the summer of 1947 appeared raiding units of the UPA. The Russians, quickly understanding the direction and purpose of such raids, ordered the Czech Communists to exert every effort to prevent these important eyewitnesses of the revolutionary and liberation struggle of the Ukrainian people against the Soviet Russian enslaver from reaching the West. Acting in accordance with the Soviet-Polish-Czechoslovak agreement of May 28, 1947, military units of Czechoslovakia took part in extensive military operations against the UPA in the southeastern part of Poland. When these troops appeared unable to cope with the UPA detachments, the Czech Communists mobilized former Czech Communist partisans with the aim of surrounding the UPA units in Czechoslovakia, and destroying them, or, at the least, turning them back to Ukraine. Under these circumstances we were forbidden to march in large groups. All raiding units had to split up into small groups, each operating independently.

The civilian population of Czechoslovakia, especially the Slovaks, was very favorably disposed toward us. The Communist government virtually flooded the villages with leaflets dropped from planes, calling on the people to cooperate with the security organs in destroying the "Bandera Fascists" and threatening severe punishments for any help to the "Banderites." But this did not stop the people from being friendly toward us. When we entered the villages, the Slovaks, and the Czechs as well, willingly gave us food, provided necessary information and sheltered our wounded and sick despite the threat of a death penalty. Thanks to them we effectively avoided enemy patrols and ambushes and managed to inflict severe blows upon the enemy in his own territory.

<sup>51</sup> *V riadakh UPA, op. cit.*

Our unit came to rest in the rugged foothills of the Lower Tatra Mountains. Eighteen of us were sitting on the bank of a mountainous brook flowing with ice-cold water. We were dressed in our dark green uniforms and we carried light automatic weapons. We were finishing our rest and preparing to push farther. In the bushes were our sentries, our Commander Maksym was studying a map. After a while, he looked up and said:

"Today is October 9th, or the 14th day of our march through the Czechoslovak territory. So far we have made about 300 kilometers, and we are not yet in the foothills of the Charles Mountains. This is hardly a convenient spot: we are encircled by a highway which crosses our route. We must cross it today, for after yesterday's encounter with us the enemy knows where we are and will try to surround us. We must gain time. Therefore, we have to march! Let us put distance between one another and let us observe absolute silence. . . ."

We start moving, our feet wooden stumps. For the third straight day we bypass the villages because the enemy troops are everywhere. Our food is like that of the monks of the Middle Ages—berries and water.

We are crossing a wide clearing. Suddenly our point alerts us and gives us the signal to halt. At the end of the clearing in some shrubbery are about 10 armed men. The Commander, binoculars to his eyes, confirms the presence of the enemy.

"It is a small group of the enemy," he says. "We shall bypass it, for they have seen us anyway. If they attack us, we'll have no problem disposing of them. . . ."

We resume our march and see the enemy in full flight.

We finally cross a small forest and find ourselves at the highway. We stop and the Commander uses his binoculars to study the area. He suddenly spots the enemy just beyond the highway in the bushes and ditches. He seems to be numerous. His machine gun barrels are pointed our way. We deliberate shortly on what we have to do. Suddenly we hear voices behind us. Apparently the enemy wants to "comb" us out of the forest and drive us into an ambush. The Commander whispers his orders:

"We'll conceal ourselves in the bushes. Keep your arms ready for use. If the enemy uncovers us, let us try to escape in the direction opposite that of the highway. . . ."

We lie quietly without breathing, our weapons tightly gripped in our hands. The enemy is moving toward us, we already hear voices and footsteps. We now see them: they are marching in three lines against us.

But at a distance of a few dozen meters, the first line suddenly splits into two groups: one moves to the right and the other to the left, bypassing the dense underbrush in which we are hiding. The second and third lines follow suit. We miraculously remain unseen.

As soon as they disappear, we emerge from the bushes and rapidly run for a point on the highway a few kilometers away from the place where the enemy had taken his position. We march over an hour through the forest and reach the highway. We stop for a brief moment in a gully to rest. We hear the humming of truck motors carrying

relief units to the enemy which had set the ambush near the highway. Dusk is falling, and in a few minutes we will cross the highway.

But suddenly we hear footsteps, and in a few seconds we see the silhouette of an enemy soldier. He walks straight up to us.

"Halt, hands up!"

He stops, throws down his weapon and raises his hands. But at the same time a new silhouette emerges from behind the first and releases a long burst from his automatic weapon. Instinctively we fire and both enemy soldiers fall to the ground dead. The silence of the night descends again, but it is soon interrupted by moaning. It is our Comrade Bystry, severely wounded. We run to him and only then see that our Commander Maksym is dead nearby, lying face up, blood running from his forehead. He had been hit and killed instantly. His hand still holds tightly his automatic weapon. Fighter Bystry is bleeding and continues to moan heavily.

"My friends," he whispers. "Both my legs are gone. I am useless. . . . Please tell my mother that I died as a soldier of the UPA. . . ."

We walk away. There is the sound of a pistol. Bystry has killed himself, unwilling to be a burden to us.

The dark sky suddenly blazes up by a bolt. Rain begins falling in heavy drops. We dig a grave and bury Commander Maksym and Soldier Bystry for their eternal rest.

We slowly descend the slope toward the highway. Loose rocks begin rolling down. But we are ready to meet the enemy wherever he may be. We want to avenge the death of our friends.

But now there is no enemy. We cross the highway unhindered. Perhaps the enemy even heard us when we crossed the highway, but did not want to get involved at night without knowing the strength of the enemy.

Thus the dangerous ambush on our route is behind us.





# Chapter Fourteen

## HARASSMENT AND DIVERSION

### Harassment

One of the most successful tactics of partisan warfare is harassment of the enemy for the purpose of keeping him in a state of constant tension, uncertainty and alertness. Such a state plays on the nerves of the enemy and diminishes his combat effectiveness. Unexpected firing, especially in an area where the enemy least expects it, sabotage and small raids by small groups of people—all exhaust the enemy and lay him open to panic.

Harassment is usually implemented by small groups, not larger than a section or a squad. If the task of harassing the enemy is given to a larger unit, for instance, a company, then the commander receives a larger area for operation. He then divides the company into small detachments and assigns them specific tasks. He may also execute a number of raids against the enemy in various places by shifting his unit quickly from one place to another.

A commander of such a unit, in dividing it into small groups, not only assigns each of them its own area and duration of action and objective, but may also give them a free hand in choosing their tactics of harassment. If the commander has a specific objective, he then assigns his subunits various tasks, such as raids, diversion, shooting, ambush and the like. Having performed their assignment, or having spent the time designated for a specific action, the units regroup at a pre-arranged place at a certain specified hour.

The UPA often used the so-called “raiding harassment.”

A battalion was divided into platoons, each of them having its own specific area for harassment. After accomplishing their tasks, all then reassembled at a given place for a combat task. Subsequently, the battalion again was broken

down into small units and each individual unit proceeded to execute its own action of harassment.

The UPA also used the so-called "circle tactics" of harassment. The unit was divided into three parts: one swept through the area in a clockwise direction, another in an anti-clockwise direction, and the third straight down the middle of the area. This tactic, which disturbed the enemy from all sides, confused him to such a degree that he was unable to detect the purpose or direction of the harassment. Neither could he ascertain the real strength of the attacking partisans.

Needless to say, these tactics required fighters of greater experience and possessing personal initiative and knowledge of the terrain.

Another form of harassment used by the UPA was to camouflage its raiding group in civilian clothing or in uniforms of the Red Army. UPA units thus dressed could easily attend Communist meetings, theatrical plays for NKVD personnel or any other official function. At a given moment they threw hand grenades or shot down party leaders and police officers.

The action of harassment must be well prepared. Insurgents must know all the features of the terrain where the harassment is slated: bushes, gulleys, streams, bridges, paths, and the like. The equipment of the partisans was, as a rule, light; not even extra food rations were carried. During this action the insurgents were prepared for personal inconvenience and sacrifice, hunger, thirst, sleepless nights, long and tedious marches, and the like. Often they had to carry substantial quantities of ammunition and arms, such as mines and dynamite charges to blow up bridges, railroads and other strategical objects.

Harassment is most effective at night. The unit moves surreptitiously toward the enemy positions, suddenly attacks them with strong firepower, takes military booty, destroys all installations, and disappears.

The UPA frequently made harassment raids on the German *Wehrmacht* for the purpose of spreading panic and demoralization, especially if the German units were too big and too powerful to be liquidated by such a harassment unit.

In its actions of harassment the UPA frequently attacked cities and the larger villages under both the German and the Russian occupations.

For instance, on the night of December 20, 1944, UPA company "Mesnyky" ("Avengers") made a harassment raid on the city of Tovmach. The partisans destroyed the police headquarters, liberated political prisoners and burned Soviet supply stores. The unit disappeared after creating havoc in the Soviet-held city. After their raid the "Avengers" broke into small groups and proceeded to other areas for similar actions.

### **Diversion**

Diversion also is one of the tactical forms of partisan warfare.

The purposes of a diversion may be any of the following:

1. To divert the attention of the enemy from the real action planned by the partisans;
2. To harass the enemy by numerous acts of destruction of property used by the enemy's administration and state institutions;
3. To create chaos and unrest in the ranks of enemy personnel, especially among his civilian administration.

The partisan diversionary action is usually carried out by small groups of highly trained and experienced fighters. Such a group can move easily and imperceptibly in the terrain and even in populated places without attracting undue attention. It can easily evade enemy police.

Such a group may have several assignments within a specified period of time and then return to a pre-arranged place. Such diversionary actions can inflict many inconveniences and not inconsiderable damage upon the enemy: cutting of telephone and telegraph lines, loosening of railroad tracks, or dynamiting them along with transport and freight cars; setting fire to houses which quarter the enemy personnel; burning up food supply depots, sabotaging factories and plants, destroying electric power plants, burning forests, disseminating anti-Soviet literature, agitating among the population against the Soviet Russian administration, and committing individual acts of terrorism against security police chiefs and spies.

The range of possibilities of diversion is extremely extensive, and their application depends on the individual commander, the peculiarity of the terrain and the objectives established in a specific instance and area.



# Chapter Fifteen

## AMBUSH

“Regular armies would rather be pitted against a stronger enemy in a classic war than against a few daring partisans, who are hidden. No one knows where they will attack from. They also disappear in a mysterious way, just when it seems that their capture is imminent. Such constant uncertainty decidedly demoralizes the enemy.”<sup>52</sup>

In every offensive and defensive situation, ambush is the strongest weapon of the partisans. It is especially a powerful weapon in the action to destroy or demoralize the enemy when he is proceeding from departing positions, upon which the success of his operations largely depends.

The enemy, of course, should have no inkling of the time or place of the ambush. The ambush can be implemented during the day or at night, in both concealed and open terrain, around the bends of roads, at forest entries and exits and the like.

The success of an ambush depends on the following factors:

1. *Conspiracy*: Should the enemy suspect an ambush has been set up in a given area, his intelligence should be induced to hand in a negative report. For example, the partisan detachment should be so well camouflaged that the enemy remains ignorant of the existence of ambush until the very last minute.

2. *Terrain*: It should be appropriate and convenient for firing at close range, for the use of hand grenades, and for the use of bayonets as well. It should lend itself to rapid retreat on the part of the partisans, possessing

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*

natural cover which would make pursuit of the partisans difficult, if not impossible.

3. *Surprise*: Fire should be so strong and unexpected that the enemy has no chance to alter his defense positions.

When the commander of the partisan unit receives adequate information from his reconnaissance scouts or from the underground OUN civilian network, he prepares the plan for an ambush in detail.

Basically, for a major ambush operation, the units form 3 to 4 groups:

1. The strongest or "shock group" takes on the principal task of the ambush. Its position in the area is determined by the commander's orders.

2. A subsidiary group, which should not be farther than 100 to 150 meters from the enemy. This group informs the shock group about the approaching enemy, letting the enemy by without opening fire. Only in the event that the enemy occupies fire positions or is in flight does this group fire on him or take part in the pursuit.

3. In special cases, when the enemy seems to be strong and able to elude the ambush and continue his march, and there is a danger of his receiving help, another subsidiary group is placed on the side opposite that of the first subsidiary group, also at a distance of some 100 to 150 meters.

4. Behind the "shock group" is the rear security group, which provides security and protection for the shock and subsidiary groups. It also serves as a reserve unit.

When the enemy moves in long columns, the partisans use the tactic of "chain ambushes." Basically herein several shock groups attack the enemy at one synchronized moment. Because of the numerical superiority of the enemy the retreat of the units must be especially well covered by the terrain and the security unit.

The aforementioned example defining the preparation of an ambush is a general one. Very often it is possible to use the terrain for a two-sided ambush, that is, working both sides of a road. Sometimes the ambush is made by the subsidiary groups. In this case the fire discipline of the partisans is of great importance. With the partisans firing from all sides the danger exists that the partisans may be hit by their own fire. Night augurs the success of an ambush. The terrain is illuminated as need be by rocket flares and tracer bullets should be used.

When an ambush centers about a bridge, it should be mined in such a way as to let the first vehicle pass over the bridge before it is destroyed. All other vehicles are then forced to halt on the bridge, making sitting-duck targets. If the enemy receives help and the ambush unit must retreat, the subsidiary group acts as security for the shock group. In turn, once the shock group reaches a secure place, it covers the retreat of the subsidiary group.

The retreat of the partisans should never disintegrate into a rout. For the

duration of this sequence the unit should be protected by machine gun and rifle fire.

The ambush fails when:

1. The enemy finds out about the ambush ahead of time.
2. The ambush is badly camouflaged, permitting the enemy to uncover it before time.
3. Intelligence on the enemy strength is inadequate.
4. The site of the ambush is unfavorable.
5. Fire is premature, failing to hit the principal force of the enemy and merely irritating his vanguard unit.
6. Arms are poor and the partisans inexperienced.

Basically, the partisans let pass the vanguard unit of the enemy and attack his principal force. Only the subsidiary partisan groups fire on the vanguard and rear guard units of the enemy. But this is not an iron rule, with the action ultimately depending on the terrain, human and firepower on both sides, and on the initiative of the ambush commander. For instance, sometimes it pays to attack the enemy rear. When the principal force turns into the direction from which the attack came, it is attacked by the partisan shock group from the other side and by the subsidiary group from the rear. The ambush and its variations are manifold.

The UPA often used ambushes after a defensive battle, after a raid against the enemy and upon routing his expected attack or in disorganizing his retreat.

In 1943 the Germans conducted a large-scale hunt for the partisan detachment "Trembita," which at that time was undergoing training in its camp in the mountains. The partisans set out for the Germans and attacked them even before the German units could take up battle positions. Victory was on the side of the partisans. Commander Brodiaha, leader of the UPA unit, then decided to set an ambush for the defeated German units. It was learned that the Germans had come into the mountains on a narrow-gauge railroad and that they would return the same way. The ambush was set on a curve of the railroad, at the point where the train would cross a wooden bridge. On one side there was a rocky bank, quite high, and on the other a deep ravine, at the bottom of which coursed the Ilomka River.

The insurgents set the bridge afire at the moment the train entered upon the bridge. On the curve the partisans, hidden by the boulders above, opened fire on the open cars. Hand grenades blasted the train as it traversed the bridge.

The ambush resulted in heavy German casualties: 80 known dead and wounded, not counting others who jumped into the ravine. There undoubtedly were killed and wounded on the train, which managed to keep going. Fifteen German soldiers were captured, disarmed and let go. The insurgents suffered no casualties.

Another type of ambush was executed by Commander Konyk, commanding officer of the officer training school, in April, 1944. A detachment of the Hungarian army was sent against the UPA school. The Hungarian unit went straight along the road where the UPA ambush had been set up. The commander of the training officer school, on his own initiative, emerged from the place of ambush with a fighter and hailed down the Hungarian officer leading the unit. In a few brisk sentences the UPA commander requested that the Hungarians surrender immediately, lest they be destroyed within minutes by several machine guns, whose glinting barrels could be seen pointing at the Hungarians. The Hungarians, ever reluctant to fight the UPA, laid down their arms and turned back.

In like manner Battalion Commander Letun used to disarm German units by dressing his men in German uniforms. In general, UPA commanders were masters of the ambush.

But there also were unsuccessful ambushes, usually prepared by inexperienced officers. For instance, on March 31, 1945, an unsuccessful ambush was set up by noncommissioned officer Kula in open terrain against a unit of NKVD troops. The enemy quickly determined the partisan strength and took battle positions, and the Kula unit had to retreat. In the skirmish 9 NKVD men were killed, but 9 UPA fighters also perished, including Kula himself.

Ambushes against the UPA were organized by the Soviet troops, using highly trained men. Neither the Germans nor the Poles could effectively employ partisan warfare against the UPA. On the whole ambushes against the partisans were largely unsuccessful, unless the insurgents themselves were lax. Moreover, ambushes against the UPA were unusually difficult inasmuch as the UPA not only used secret paths and routes but changed these routes frequently. But the Soviet ambushers were well trained and persistent; sometimes they sat several weeks waiting to ambush the UPA partisans.

With time the Ukrainian partisans became so well trained that they could detect the enemy in both field and forest simply by smelling him out. Soviet NKVD officers were in the habit of dousing themselves with eau de cologne, which can be detected at a great distance in the forest. Sometimes the UPA raiders could literally smell out the NKVD because of the strong lotion they used.<sup>53</sup>

When the Soviet troops prepared larger ambushes, or when the UPA unit saw a favorable and logical place for an ambush, it gave it a wide berth. The vanguard unit was strengthened, subsidiary units scouted the terrain on both sides of the route for some 500 meters. When the vanguard unit passed through dangerous places (roads, underbrush, streams, and the like), it then took defensive positions, with the principal force advancing by leaps and

<sup>53</sup> Khmel, S. F., *Ukrainska Partysanka* (Ukrainian Insurgency), No. 8, 1959, London.



bounds. During a crossing of a suspected ambushed area the rear guard unit assumed battle positions and protected the unit from the other side.

When one part of the unit, say, the vanguard or the rear guard security, fell into an ambush, the other groups would furnish relief so as to enable the beleaguered group to collect its wounded and dead and make away.

Described in the UPA literature are numerous ambushes; selected therefrom are a few examples.

### *Ambush near Khyriv*

(Report of Insurgent K. Buryi): <sup>54</sup>

On February 2, 1945, our liaison man brought a communication from company Commander Bor urging our unit to arrive at 11:00 A.M. at the assembly place specified in the communication. Although there was a severe frost and the snow was over our knees, we arrived on time at the designated place. Here we met two platoons of Commander Bor's company, 85 well-trained and experienced fighters. Commander Bor had received reliable information to the effect that by 1:00 P.M. the entire Soviet administrative apparatus of the district would be moving from Khyriv to Staryi Sambir.

We started to move. Commander Bor had chosen an ideal place for the ambush, a forest bisected by the Khyriv-Staryi Sambir highway. On both sides of the road were high and steep banks, along with combat trenches dug during the war. The two platoons occupied the trenches while our unit, numbering 12 fighters, closed off the exit from the forest. We mined the road in this vicinity in 10 different places.

We waited about one and a half hours in severe cold, almost freezing to death. At 1:30 P.M. we heard the humming of motors—two limousines and one truck—and the tinkling of bells of horse-drawn sleds. We watched the enemy reach the heart of our ambush. Then on the sign of Commander Bor our machine guns opened fire on the enemy rear. The enemy forged ahead, only to run into the mines and the fire of our machine guns from both sides and the front. They could neither run nor defend themselves. To finish them off, we let go several hand grenades. Within an hour not a single Soviet official remained alive.

As a result of the ambush, 34 NKVD officers and 9 security men were killed. We captured 27 sub-machine guns, 4 machine guns, 43 pistols, 1 heavy machine gun, a great quantity of ammunition and 112,000 rubles. On our side we had only 3 badly wounded fighters.

Before leaving the place of ambush, we left a note pinned to the shattered limousine:

"Such punishment awaits everyone coming to the Ukrainian land to oppress the Ukrainian people!"

We took our wounded to our hospital for treatment.

<sup>54</sup> *V riadakh UPA, op. cit.*

*Action against the Village of Labova and Ambush:*<sup>55</sup>

When the Polish red troops extended their operations against the UPA in 1946, the Supreme Command of the UPA reacted by expanding its own operations against them. Accordingly, a new area was organized in the western districts of Lemkivshchyna (the southwestern Carpathians) and two assault groups were assigned for operation: the group of Hutsul, to which I belonged, and the group of Horyslav. A third assault group of 10 young fighters was organized from the local Ukrainian population. Overall command over the three groups was entrusted to Commander Horyslav.

On June 22, 1946, Commander Horyslav gave us an order: To penetrate the village of Labova, occupy the burgomaster's office, post office and forest ranger's office, and remove all documents. The police station had only 12 militia men; we could dispose of them quickly. But the danger lay in Novyi Sanch (Sącz), some 8 kilometers from Labova, through which runs the Novyi Sanch-Krynytsia highway. It meant that military relief could come quickly to the village, and that would mean trouble for us.

Taking this possibility into consideration, our unit was divided into three groups, one of which was Hutsul's, the other two occupying both ends of the village. At dusk we moved stealthily into the village and advanced to the militia headquarters, which was housed in a brick building and girded by defensive trenches. Anticipating stiff resistance, we had brought along mortars to blow down the walls.

But we did not have to use them; our attack proved a great surprise to the enemy. In that area the Poles were not expecting our raids. At dusk they all were asleep, feeling secure in their building. Commander Hutsul jumped inside with a few fighters, while the rest of us surrounded the building. Surprised and terror-stricken, the militia men could not even think of defense and surrendered without firing a shot. The element of surprise similarly liquidated the other posts of the Polish administration in Labova.

Suddenly we heard firing from one of our groups. A runner reported that a Polish military truck, carrying food to Krynytsia, had been ambushed, with two Polish soldiers killed. The danger was that the shooting might have been heard in Novyi Sanch. We had to hurry.

After cleaning out all filing cabinets and desks, we threw hand grenades, setting afire the militia headquarters, and retreated into the forest. We had some distance to go to reach the forest "Runok," where we could rest. Thus far there was no pursuit of us.

At the very outskirts of the forest we encountered three civilian men, who were armed. We captured two; the third succeeded in escaping. They apparently were scouts of the Polish army. We entered the forest, made a fire to cook our breakfast, and went to sleep.

After a few hours we were alerted; the enemy was on the prowl. We immediately began to prepare for battle. We knew the terrain well. We threw more wood on the fire, left a few fighters there, and the rest of us positioned ourselves behind a hill on the right side of the forest, which wedged into a pasture.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*

From our ambush position we could clearly see all the movements of the enemy. He was moving in a column along the same route we had taken, no doubt guided by information provided by the man who had escaped from us. They headed for our campfire smoke, rising above the trees.

As they neared the foot of the hill they began firing on the forest clearing. In answer came the fire from the fighters we had left to mask our position and movements. The enemy brought up artillery and trained their fire on the campsite.

We now received the order to attack. Our machine guns opened up against the enemy, exposed in an open clearing, and we began moving against them. The enemy was completely taken by surprise; they had not expected any attack from the flank we came in on. Many of them must have thought that it was a Polish relief force, retreating for fear of being encircled, and they began to run. Their artillery crew took to flight along with the others. Capturing their cannon pieces, our men turned them on the Poles, thus making for a complete rout of the enemy. Soon the enemy was back in the village, leaving many dead and wounded on the battlefield. We took a rich booty and retreated into the forest.

From a captured Polish noncommissioned officer we found out that a combat company 160 men strong had attacked us, thus outnumbering us 4 to 1.

Ambush tactics were used by the UPA in almost every battle, by way of completing it. Also, ambushes were objectives in themselves. They were conducted by small groups, often not larger than a platoon, but they simulated a mass character. The methods of organizing ambushes were various, depending on the initiative and intrepidity of the ambush commander. Hence no general definition can provide a full understanding of the reality of the ambush, nor can guarantee its success.

Ambush was an integral part of the reports provided by the intelligence, which in Ukraine was extensively conducted by the OUN civilian network. UPA units had means only for a partial verification of the reports provided by the network. Whether or not the intelligence network acted effectively, the task of the commander was to maintain full secrecy to the last minute. In the action itself his orders prevailed.

A commander not only had to foresee the possible development of the battle, but also foretell the plans and possible reaction of the enemy. For every reaction of the enemy the commander had to have a plan, a ready reply, either prepared beforehand or improvised on the spot. It goes without saying that such improvised decisions depended heavily on the military knowledge, experience and initiative of the commander.

Available from the enemy side are a few publications, printed in Poland, which describe the ambush tactics used by the UPA units.

**Battle at Smolnyk**<sup>56</sup>

According to the author of this report, in the middle of March, 1946, a company of the Polish army, commanded by Lt. Wierzbicki, was moving along the Kolonitsa-Smolnyk road through the forest of Khreshchata. Once having left the village of Lubne, the company should have gone to the village of Tysna to join the maneuvering groups of the Polish frontier troops, thence to march together along the narrow-gauged railroad through the villages of Zhubrache, Maniv, Mikhova Volya. But Lt. Wierzbicki preferred to shorten his route by taking a shortcut through the forest.

The OUN network proved effective. At night, when the Polish company bivouacked in the village of Lubne, liaison men of the OUN civilian network reported to the UPA unit in the village of Kolonitsa on the strength and equipment of the Polish company. From Kolonitsa, OUN liaison men passed this information to the village of Habkovytsi, and from there it passed by a relay system to UPA Commander Khrin, who was then operating with his unit in the neighboring forests. As a result, at dusk Commander Khrin knew all about the company of Lt. Wierzbicki.

When the company of Lt. Wierzbicki moved into the forest, secured by a vanguard group marching some 40-50 meters ahead and informed no enemy was in sight, the UPA company under Khrin, by an accelerated march, had reached the village of Yavirne, encircling the Poles from the north. The company of UPA Commander Bor, which had been in the forests near the village of Tysna, was in the village of Volosan, located in the direction the Poles were going. The third UPA company, Commander Stakh's, concealed itself on the slopes of Kruhlytsia Mountain. The entire strength of the UPA force was 500 fighters, about four times greater than the strength of the Poles. But the issue was determined not by numerical strength but the tactics adopted by the UPA commanders at the officers' briefing. The UPA units, unseen by the Poles, shadowed them from the village and the forest up to the place that the UPA commanders considered suitable for attack. Other Polish forces were stationed quite far from the area of action. Polish author Jan Gerhard reports that the Polish frontier troops had departed on a maneuver to clear the terrain from the village of Tysna in the opposite direction, having no information about the company of Lt. Wierzbicki. At that moment these troops were approaching the highland of Vetlynska. In Tysna remained only a small security group. A regiment of the Polish army was stationed in Balyhorod, but it would take it at least 12 hours to reach the area of action.

The UPA units did not attack or fire upon the Poles in the forest, where an ambush could be set up easily and where equally easily a defense could be effectively organized. They continuously moved in unison with the Poles, who failed to notice that they were encircled from three sides. Finally the

<sup>56</sup> Gerhard, *op. cit.*

Poles came out on an open plateau which gradually tapered toward the village of Smolnyk. Both officers and men of the Polish unit breathed easier when they reached the end of the forest and downhill saw the village, objective of their march.

Both sides of the highland were covered with shrubbery and underbrush, while in the middle the wind swept away the snow, revealing that the plateau was cut by a gully.

The Polish company moved by platoons across the highland. But it had barely covered 200 meters when the UPA company under Stakh appeared behind it at the end of the forest. For a half hour the companies of Khrin and Bor had lain in combat readiness in the underbrush at either side of the highland. Ahead towards the village of Smolnyk, the exit was closed by the platoon of Commander Rizun. Thus the Poles suddenly found themselves in a trap, beset by well-trained UPA units on all sides.

The insurgents attacked the Poles from all sides at the same instant. The Poles were helpless. They were cut down like wheat on an open field, having no chance either to defend themselves or to escape. A small group managed to run across the plateau toward Smolnyk, but was met with the concentrated fire of the UPA men commanded by Rizun. The fleeing Poles turned to the right into the underbrush, where they were killed by mines. Only a handful of the Poles succeeded in escaping alive and reaching their compatriots.

This description, published by the enemy, provides a characteristic picture of UPA tactics, demonstrating that the number of fighters taking part in a battle was of secondary importance. The important thing was that the UPA commanders foresaw the direction of the enemy march and planned the ambush at a selected time and place. All UPA units found themselves at the designated place on time; any deviation or change of plan provided the Poles with a margin for escape. All events conformed to the plans of the UPA commanders. They did not even need to push the enemy in the desired direction; the enemy headed into the prepared trap by himself.

### **Ambush on the Tysna-Balyhorod Highway**

The same author also describes an ambush under the direction of Commander Khrin that failed to attain unqualified success.<sup>57</sup>

The intelligence of the OUN civilian network reported a truck convoy en route between the towns of Ustryky Horishni and Tysna and Balyhorod. It was carrying food supplies for a regiment operating against the UPA in the area of Ustryky. Commander Khrin moved his company by forced march through the villages of Yavirne, Volosan and Sasiv, bypassing Tysna from the north. Here he selected the ambush site, located between the villages of Rychovol

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*

and Dovzhytsia, near an intersection hemmed in by dense forest. The site was ideal for both ambush and retreat.

At that time a group of Polish army units, chiefly frontier troops, were operating near the village of Bukivtsi. Left in the village of Tysna, where it had its headquarters, was a small security group only. The UPA commanders took into consideration the possibility of the frontier Polish troops hearing the shooting and coming to the rescue of the truck convoy. Commanders Bor and Stakh therefore each sent a platoon to the village of Bukivtsi, to set afire a few houses, thereby tying down the Polish troops in the village.

In order not to leave any traces, the UPA detachments approached the ambush site by marching along the bed of the Solynka stream. The ambush area was thoroughly investigated by scouts. Everything seemed to go according to plan. Nonetheless, the UPA intelligence was remiss. Before the truck convoy reached the ambush, a Polish battalion fell upon the insurgents who were setting it up. As a result, Commander Khrin had to forego the ambush.

The dispersed UPA insurgents reassembled on the slopes of Lopinnyk Mountain, near the village of Dovzhytsia, the prearranged assembly point for Khrin's company. Eight dead UPA fighters were taken along; the 3 wounded were sent to a hospital in Khreshchata. UPA intelligence had failed to detect the Polish army battalion which was operating in the vicinity.

Despite this setback, Commander Khrin did not give up his mission. By quick march he moved his unit over the slopes of the Durna and Berda Mountains to the vicinity of the village of Bystre. Here the insurgents took up positions on the slope of Berda Mountain, across the Yablanko stream near the Tysna-Balyhorod highway. The slope fell off rapidly toward the stream; the partisans had an excellent field of fire.

The distance from Tysna to Bystre was about a dozen kilometers. The convoy, alerted for an attack, moved in dispersed fashion, 100 meters separating truck from truck, so that it extended for half a kilometer, as there were 8 trucks in the convoy. Each vehicle carried a strong armed guard. Some 300 meters from Tysna the highway made a sharp turn, so that it was not visible from the place of ambush.

When the first three trucks appeared, the first platoon of the UPA unit, under the command of Ukleya, opened fire before the first trucks even reached their position.

The guards of the first three vehicles took cover in the ditches and opened fire on the partisans. The other vehicles were halted back of the curve. Their command decided to surround the insurgents from the left, leaving a few men to defend the vehicles.

Then Commander Khrin ordered platoon leader Ukleya to detach the platoon for a simulated attack to test the reaction of the Poles. At that moment he was attacked from the flank. Believing he knew where the rest of the convoy guards were, he ordered the whole company to attack the three first vehicles.

But the convoy guards had encircled him; they attacked him viciously from the rear. The platoons of Stenka and Rizun had to withdraw along the stream to the forest, while the platoon of Ukleya was pinned down, escaping only in piecemeal fashion. Commander Khrin organized a protecting cover for the platoons in retreat, and managed to reach Khreshchata Kolonytsia.

Thus apparently even such a noted partisan leader as Commander Khrin could find himself in a difficult situation. This encounter, however, still awaits verification by the Ukrainian side.

### Ambush of Gen. Lutze, SD Chief in Ukraine

Among the most cruel Nazi officials in the German administration in occupied Ukraine during World War II was General Victor Lutze, chief of the Nazi *Sicherheitsdienst* on the staff of Erich Koch, Nazi governor of Ukraine. Gen. Lutze carefully studied the Bolshevik methods of destroying the Ukrainians, especially the methods introduced in Ukraine in the Stalinist era by Nikita S. Khrushchev. Gen. Lutze then applied these methods, aping the ruthlessness and sadism displayed by the Soviet Russian tyrants in Ukraine.

Lutze's dictum that the Ukrainian intelligentsia must be eradicated summarily—that a *knout* should be used against all the Ukrainians—became widely known among the people of Ukraine. But his barbarous treatment of the Ukrainians, featuring mass executions and deportations, also became known to the Supreme Command of the UPA.

The Command UPA-North planned for some time to ambush and exterminate the second highest-ranking hangman of Ukraine. In May, 1943, the OUN network, which had succeeded in planting spies on the staff of Erich Koch, reported to the Command UPA-North that Lutze was going to make an inspection of the terrain in which an UPA unit in company strength was operating under the command of Vovchak. Lutze proclaimed that he would liquidate not only the UPA force but the entire Ukrainian nationalist movement as well.

Lutze left the city of Rivne, then the headquarters of *gauleiter* Erich Koch, in a convoy of heavy guards and security and a great number of armored cars and vehicles. At its head were several cars carrying high officials of the Nazi administration and ranking officers of the *Wehrmacht* and the Gestapo, followed by a detachment of S-D security troops on motorcycles. In turn these were followed by some 30 cars with guards. Among these was a car bearing Gen. Lutze. The column sped along the highway from Rivne to Brest.

The ambush was set up by Commander Vovchak and his company (reinforced with a machine gun section and two assault groups for the special assignment) near the town of Klevan. About three kilometers outside the



town the highway, bearing northwest, enters a dense forest. A day ahead of the convoy German security troops checked the forest thoroughly and reported no Ukrainian partisans in sight. The short distance of the forest from Klevan also added to the feeling of security.

The unit of Commander Vovchak possessed outstanding partisan commanders, such as Oleksiy Shum (who was killed a year later in a battle with the Germans), Krylaty and Kubik.

One platoon set itself at the point the highway entered the forest. It was to let the motorized column pass by but to bar its retreat toward the town of Klevan during the ambush and ensuing battle. The second objective of the platoon was to prevent the German troops stationed in the town from joining the fray.

Strongly armed with machine guns and hand grenades the platoon of Commander Krylaty took its position at the point the highway left the forest. Its task was to put down any effort of the column to break through towards the northwest. The platoon could count on fire support from Hill 224, on the slope of which the fighters had placed machine gun nests.

The other units of Vovchak's company and assault groups took up positions in the forest on both sides of the highway along a distance great enough to encompass the entire column.

The Germans entered the ambush area at a fast clip. There were no road blocks or barricades to stop the column; such obstacles would have been seen by the Germans and removed, to say nothing of disclosing the ambush.

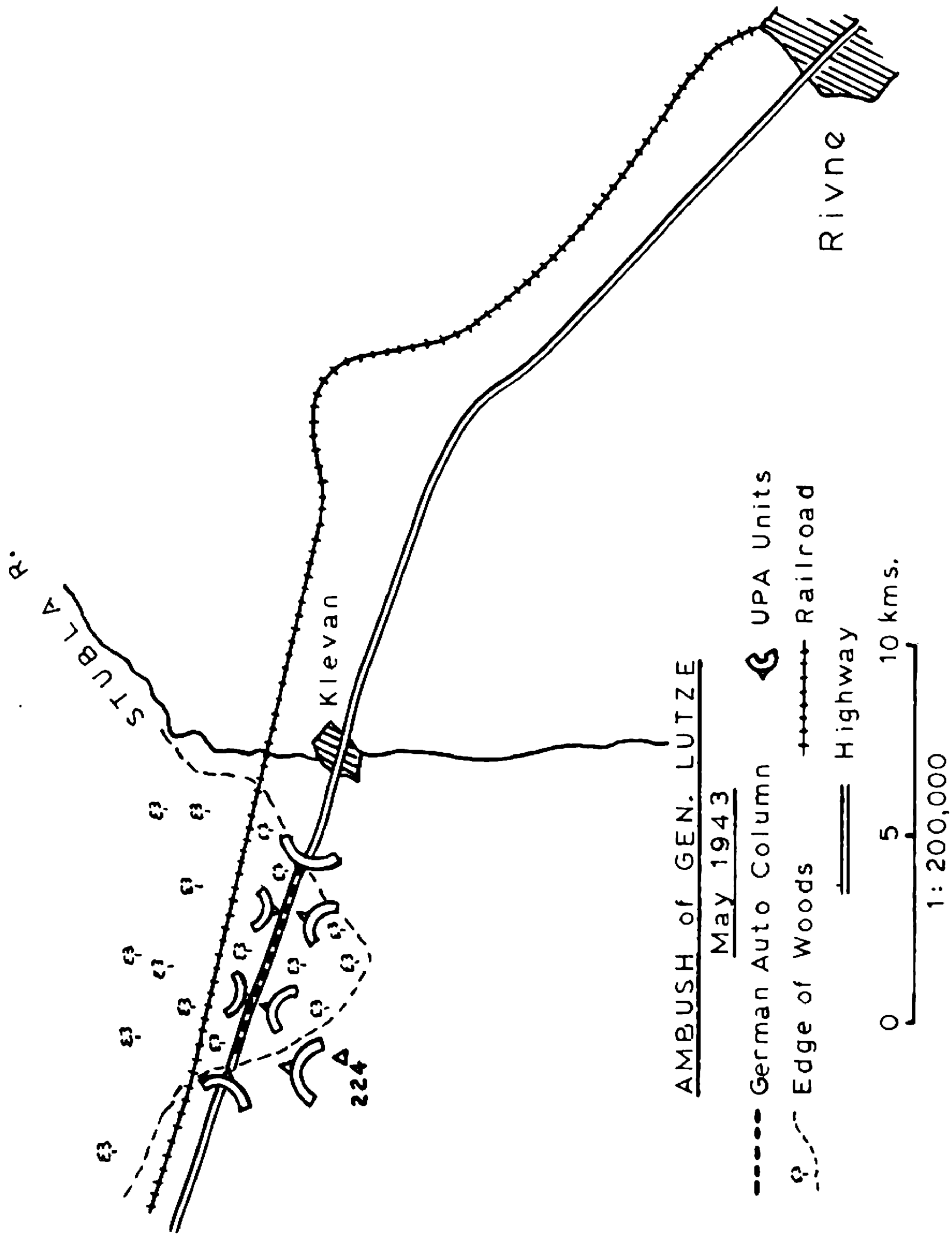
At the pre-arranged time the UPA units opened fire on that part of the column where General Lutze was riding with his staff and high officers of the S-D. The Germans found themselves in a cross fire coming from both sides of the highway and from the front. German security troops and officers alike hurled themselves into the ditches and began firing blindly into the forest. The cars at the rear end of the column did not even try to turn back, being pinned down by heavy machine gun fire from the direction of the town of Klevan. Nor could they break through to the front because of the sustained fire by the platoon of Krylaty. The Germans had no choice but to return fire.

Lutze was riddled by a volley of machine gun bullets at close range. As soon as the objective had been attained—the assassination of a high-ranking Nazi hangman in Ukraine—Commander Vovchak ordered the retreat.

The losses of the Germans were extremely heavy. But the Nazi administration of Erich Koch in Ukraine never officially acknowledged the ambush by the UPA nor the assassination of Gen. Lutze and a great number of high-ranking Nazis.

Instead, an official communique was issued in which it was reported that General Lutze had been killed in an "auto accident."





### Ambush near Chornyi Mist

Insurgent Ivan gave an account of an ambush sprung against a detachment of Soviet partisans: <sup>58</sup>

On February 18, 1945, our unit bedded down in houses near the forest in the village of Rudnyky. On the following morning a farmer came up and reported the presence in the center of the village of a group of Soviet partisans (from the Kovpak group), who had begun plundering the houses. Since it was a cavalry group, it was not practical either for us or for the village to start a battle. Thus we decided to set an ambush.

The best place for an ambush was a spot near the so-called Chornyi Mist on the Nezhukhivka River, where the forest comes close to the highway. We came to the place of ambush, and we hardly had begun inspecting the terrain when our outpost reported that the Bolsheviks were coming. Already we could hear Russian words and the horses' hooves. It was, as later transpired, a group of Kovpak's "heroes," who had become notorious for raping women, pillage and the killing of innocent people. Now the same unit of "heroes" was robbing and terrorizing the Medynitsky *raion* and had begun raiding the neighboring *raion* of Mykolayiv.

Thus, in a few moments we will meet them in combat. They are riding by twos and fours and chatting gaily among themselves. We open a sudden fire, and the horses bunch together, their riders falling to the ground. A group of riderless horses are now running back to the village of Rudnyky, another group is heading for the village of Kernytsia.

In the ditches there is water; some Bolsheviks still alive have crawled there and are yelling for help. Their commander orders: "Machine gun, fire!" The reply comes: "Our machine gun is jammed!" But our machine guns and sub-machine guns are busy cutting down the Soviet partisan group. Finally we seize the ammunition and the stuff they just robbed in the village.

In checking the battlefield, it appears that the Soviet commander, lightly wounded in the arm, has tried to simulate a corpse. To one of our men, fighter H., this corpse looked suspicious and he aimed his gun at the Russian's head. Suddenly the "corpse" spoke up: "Don't shoot, Comrade!" "No, you are not a friend, but the hangman of the Ukrainian people!" was the sharp reply.

One method to deceive the enemy frequently used by the Ukrainian partisans was to don enemy uniforms and carry the enemy's weapons and equipment. This method also was used by the Germans at the close of World War II, especially during the "Battle of the Bulge" in the winter of 1944-45 in Belgium, wherein hundreds of infiltrating German SS troops were dressed in American uniforms and spoke English. Thus they were able to penetrate the American lines for the purpose of sabotage and other disruptive activities behind the American lines.

<sup>58</sup> *Litopys UPA*, *op. cit.*, No. 10, 1947.

### Ambush "Lovy"

In 1944 the ranks of the UPA had swelled to capacity, and the UPA Supreme Command felt a great need for uniforms and arms.

One of the methods employed to procure this equipment is reported by UPA fighter Ivan:<sup>59</sup>

We take a horse-drawn cart and pile lumber on it. . . . A part of the forest abuts on the Rozdil-Mykolaiv highway, and we decide to set up an ambush there. A part of our unit takes up positions in the bushes near the highway. Two of them are dressed as village teamsters, but armed with pistols. They look like father and son. Two others are placed on a hill to watch for the approach of the enemy. When an oncoming enemy car is spotted, our teamsters overturn their cart in the middle of the road. It looks like an accident; the enemy car must stop.

The car halts, and the Germans examine the "accident," some laughing, some annoyed, and when this does not help, all get out to help the teamsters right the cart. . . . The teamsters look carefully to see whether the Germans are toting uniforms or ammunition. In this case nothing is being carried, the car is allowed to pass through. But if equipment is spotted, the teamsters make a pre-arranged sign. The fighters jump out of the bushes, disarm the Germans, and our driver takes the car deep into the woods. One day we captured 36 German cars.

One day we halted a car with 3 Germans. One of them was a tank crew member, and when he saw what was up, began to laugh. We asked him what was so funny. "I was at the Maginot Line in France, and at Stalingrad," he said, "but this is the first time that I've been taken for a 'ride' by the partisans." Our driver was still trying to turn the German car when another German staff car arrived, carrying a German major. We take them, too. Still another German car comes, which we halt. One of our fighters, Hruzyn, orders: "Hands up!" The Germans think it is all some mistake, but quickly change their minds when they see the "teamsters" are armed, and surrender without a struggle.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*



# Chapter Sixteen

## **BUNKERS, HIDE-OUTS AND CAMPS**

In the first years of the existence of the UPA, its units passed the winters in the villages which were not occupied by the enemy. Thus farm buildings, such as barns and storage sheds, would be full of insurgents. The latter kept intact in companies, platoons and squads, maintained their security posts, and had assembly and alert places on the same level as the regular army. When it was inconvenient to hibernate in the villages, the UPA units passed the winter in the forests, where they built livable quarters and wooden shacks, for storing supplies of food, arms and medicine.

In later times, especially from 1946 onward, highly trained enemy troops began concentrated campaigns against the UPA across the Curzon Line and under the Soviet occupation. The UPA units now used two systems of hibernation:

1. Hibernation in the forest featured by constant maneuvering. They slept on makeshift shelters of tree branches, pulp and underbrush, which provided adequate shelter from wind, rain and snow and storms but which failed to provide sufficient warmth, subjecting the men to severe physical stress. In time they became so inured to cold weather and low temperatures that they could not abide room temperature for any length of time.

2. Under the pressure of enemy forces blockading the villages and forests, UPA units hibernated in hide-outs underground. We know how these were made from descriptions and memoirs written by UPA fighters and from materials published in Polish military journals and reviews. (Soviet sources

never published any worthwhile information on the UPA for obvious reasons: the existence of the UPA underground, after a silence of so many years, could not be admitted. What did appear were tawdry anti-Ukrainian propaganda trifles.)

In post-World War II years the forests in the Carpathians and in Volhynia were literally undermined with underground bunkers and hide-outs, built by the UPA in the fall season. Their construction required not only technical and professional knowledge and strict conspiracy, but superhuman effort as well. The excavated soil had to be disposed of far from the bunker; building materials, such as brick, stone, lumber and roofing, had to be procured and transported at great risk.

The construction itself was undertaken either by UPA personnel or by friendly builders, or by both. When the construction site was uncovered by unauthorized personnel, say shepherds, villagers from other areas, and the like, the bunker site was shifted to another location.

The capacity of such a bunker depended on the situation: it ranged from a few fighters to a few dozen. It contained an exit as well as an entrance, both of which were very well camouflaged, as were the ventilators. In addition to living quarters, the typical bunker contained arms and food storage compartments. Only the small bunker sheltering a few men had but one room. Water had to be available near the bunker. The top of the bunker, guarded unceasingly by security guards, had to have a broad field of observation in order to detect any danger.

Ten types of bunkers, as illustrated on pages 183-192:

*First Type:* A typical bunker, with sloping roof, covered with a tarpaulin soil and vegetation. The bunker has two ventilators, snaked so that the enemy could not throw hand grenades down them or shoot through them into the bunker. Ventilators are screened with a metal grating so that the openings cannot be choked by dirt or fallen leaves. Entrances and exits of the hide-out are also constructed in zig-zag fashion so as to provide protection against enemy fire. A pipe brings in water from the stream. There is a door.

*Second Type:* Has two exits and, in the corridor, a storeroom. Both entrance and exit are well camouflaged from the outside. A wooden window is covered with a heavy layer of earth, grass and even small shrubs.

*Third Type:* Two-room bunker with a connecting passage and two entrances.

*Fourth Type:* Two-room bunker, the rooms displaced from each other. If the enemy would take one room, shots cannot reach the occupants of the second room.

*Fifth Type:* A long corridor between two rooms, with two doors, permitting defense and escape through a back exit.

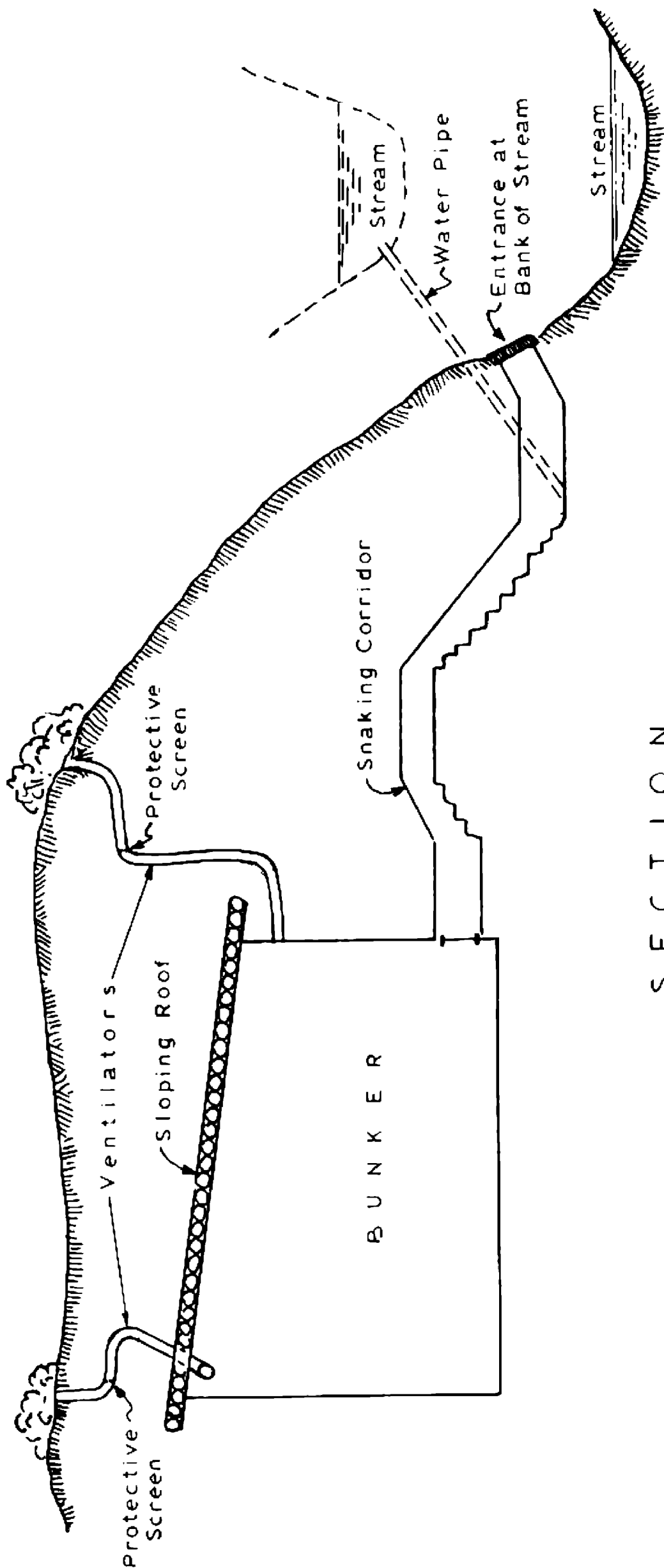
*Sixth Type:* The entrance to the bunker is through a hollow tree trunk, the exit through the bank of a stream.

*Seventh Type:* Two-room bunker with two exits (hospital-type). Exit near the stream is well camouflaged with a heavy cover of earth and vegetation. The entrance from the wood is camouflaged with a tree which "grows" atop the wooden door. Water is piped in from the stream.

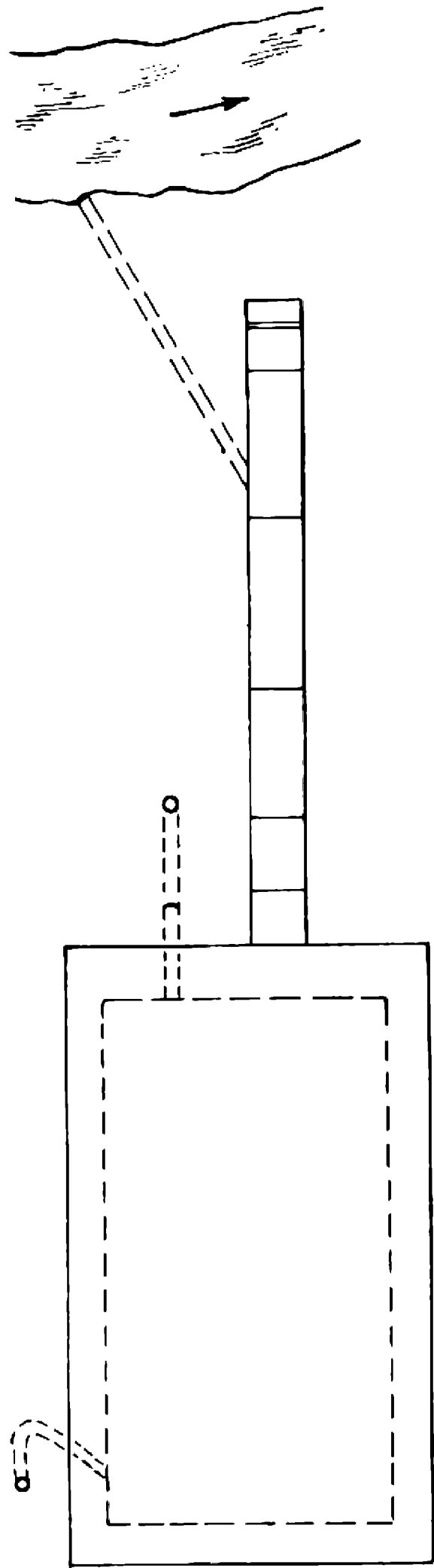
*Eighth Type:* Three-room bunker-hospital with two entrance-corridors.

*Ninth Type:* Separated two-room bunker with a camouflaged passage. In the event of attack, the insurgents may hide in the other room or escape through its exit.

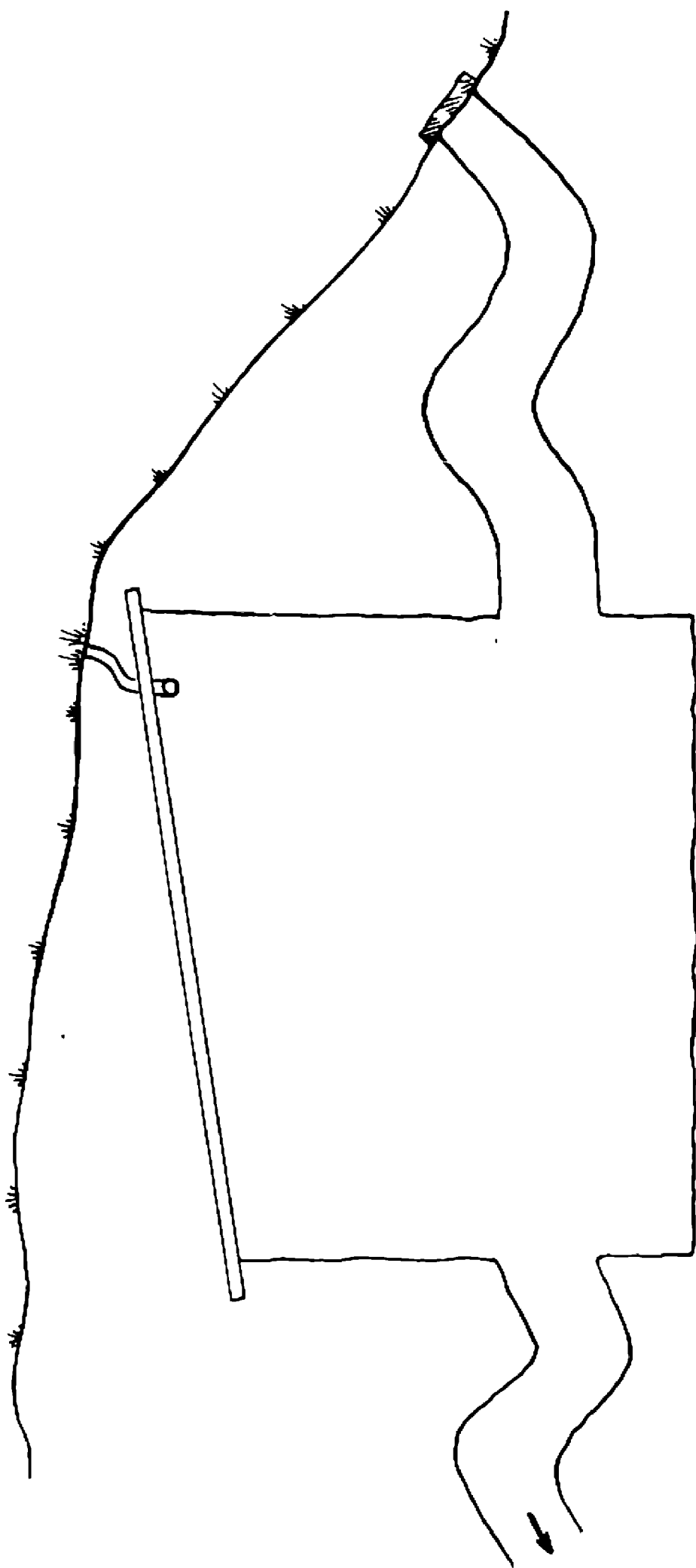
*Tenth Type:* Two-room hide-out with a separating wall. The connecting door is well concealed so that should the enemy occupy one room, the insurgents would be in the other room with a chance of escaping.



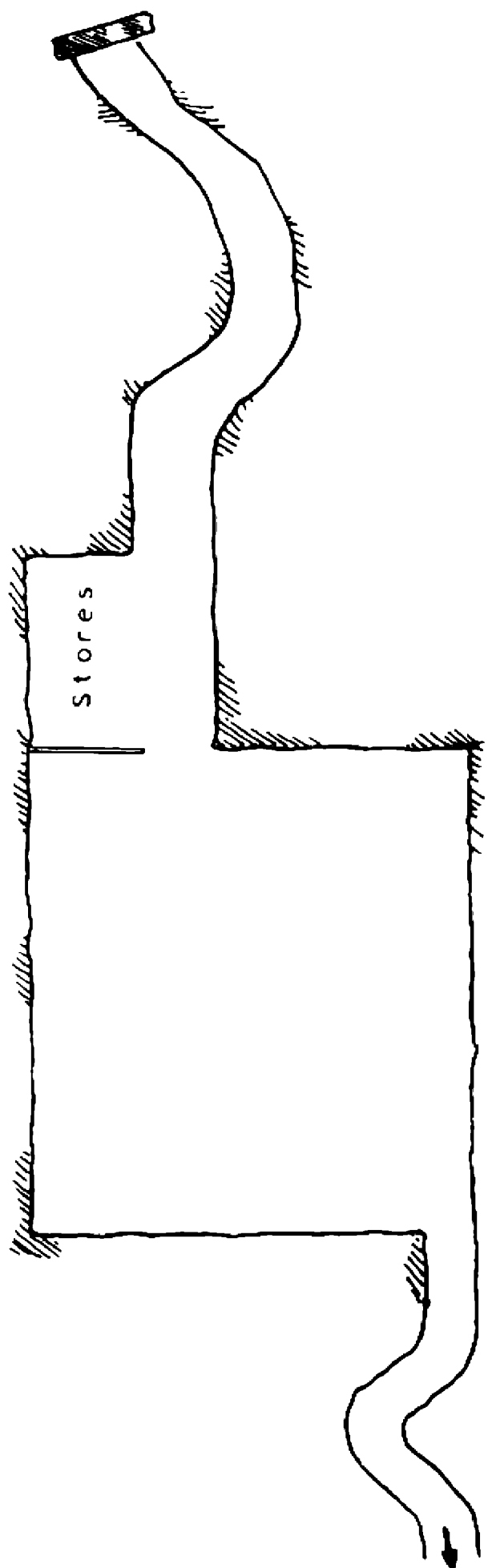
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TOP VIEW

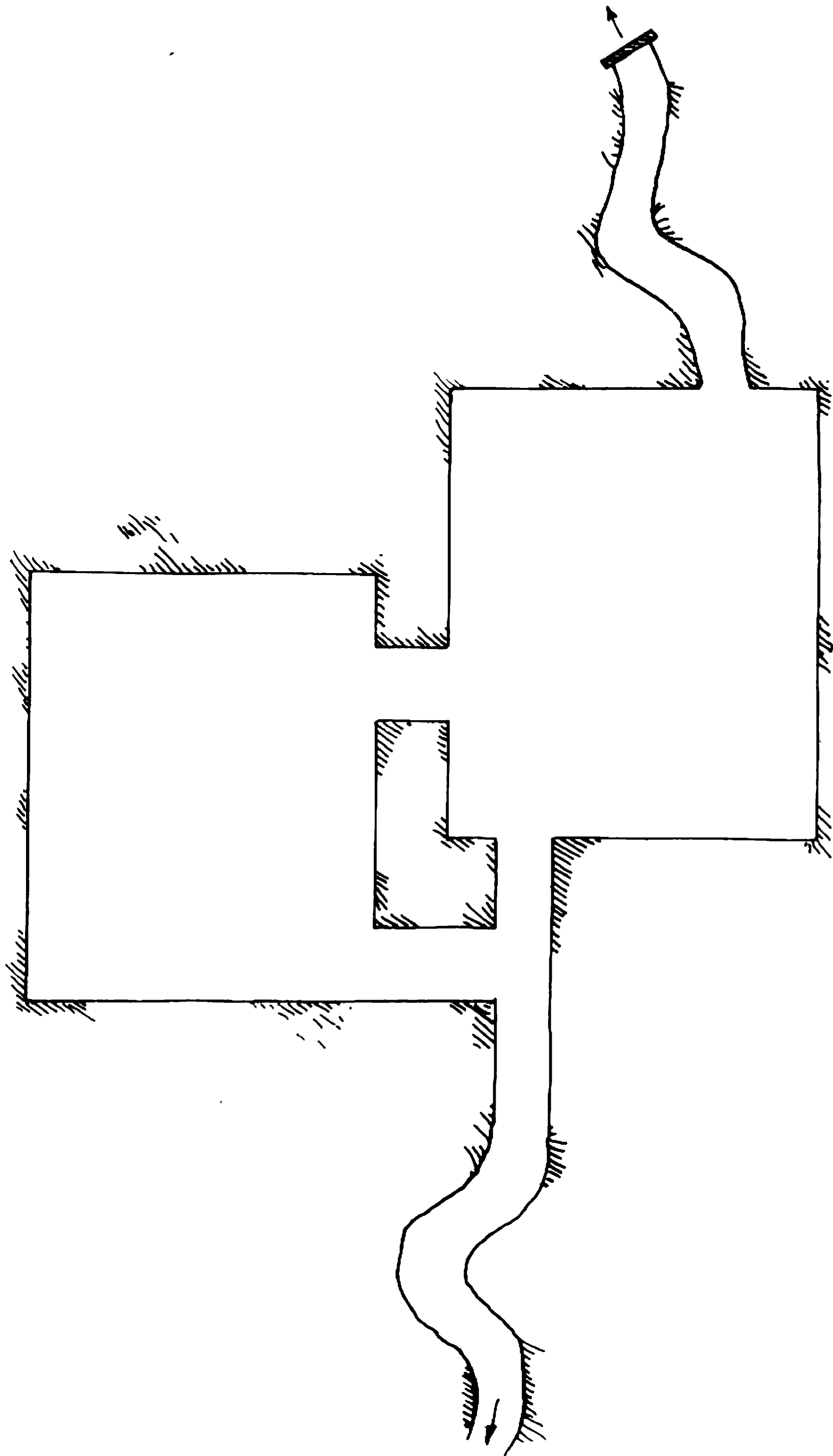


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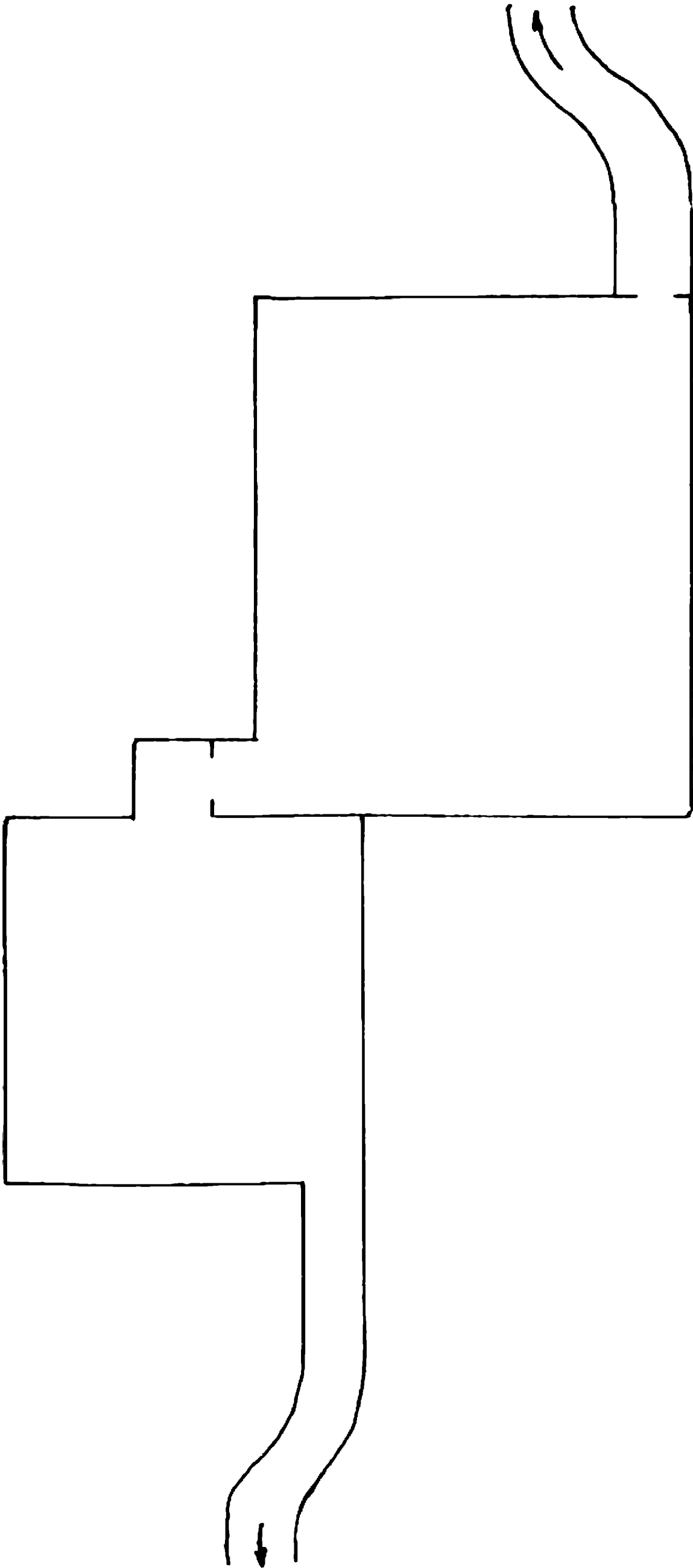


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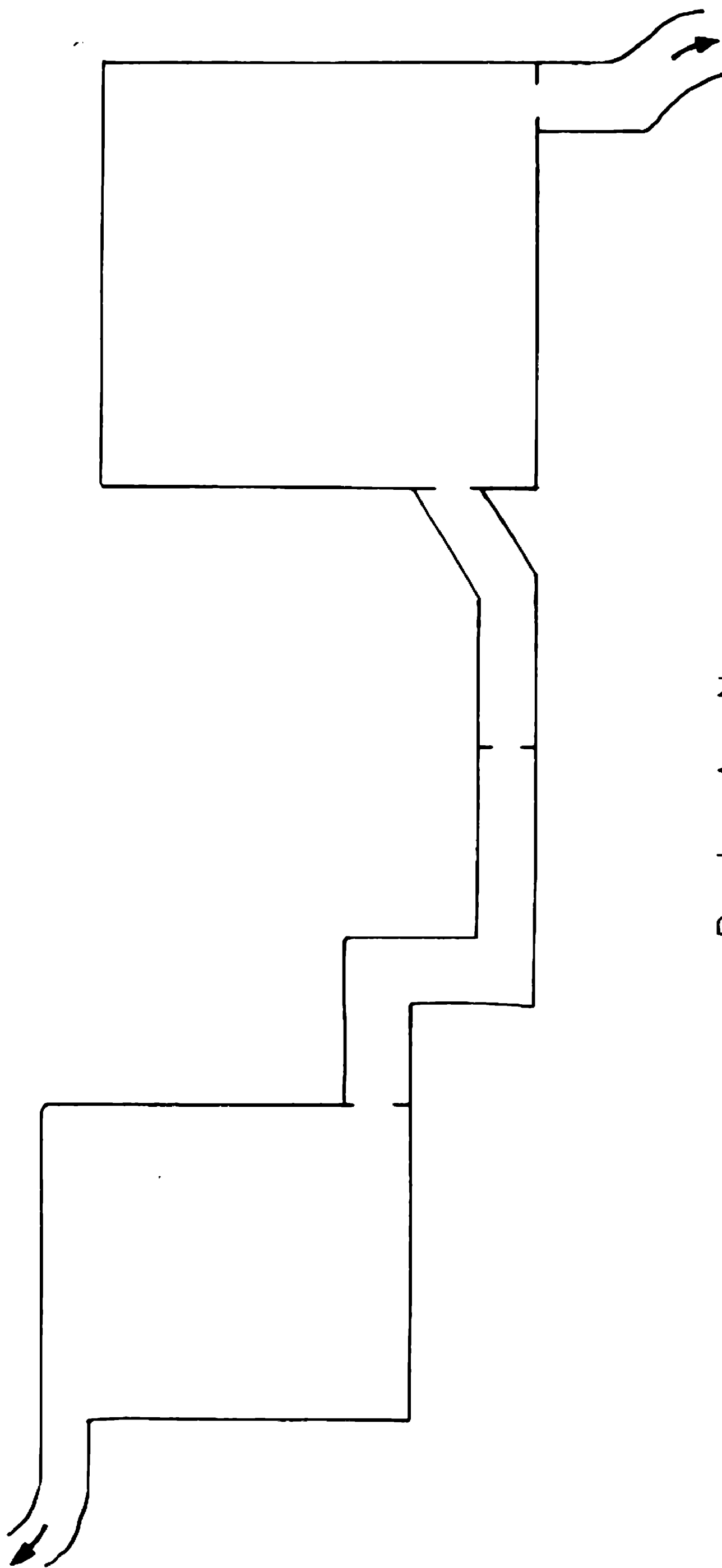




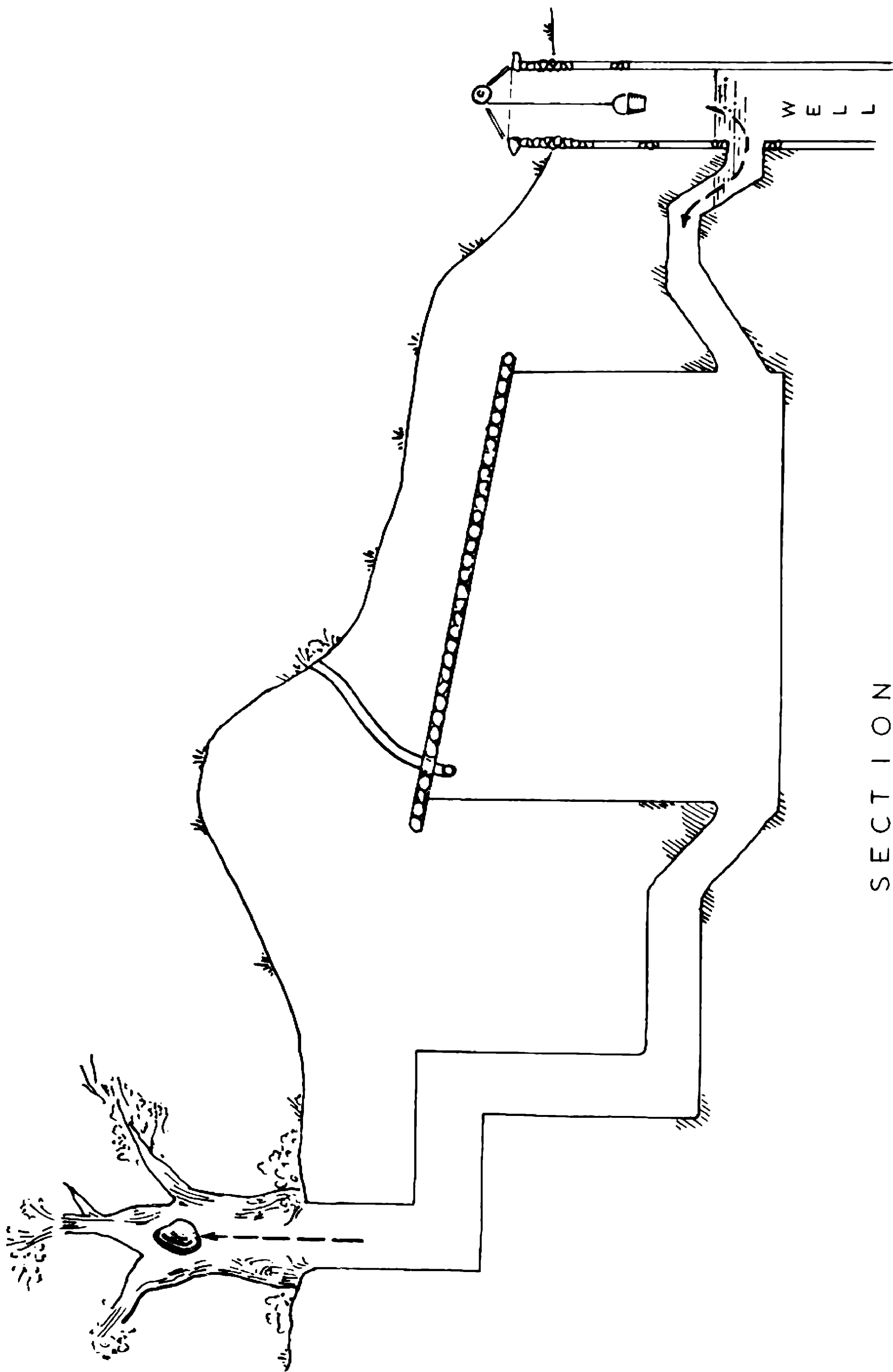
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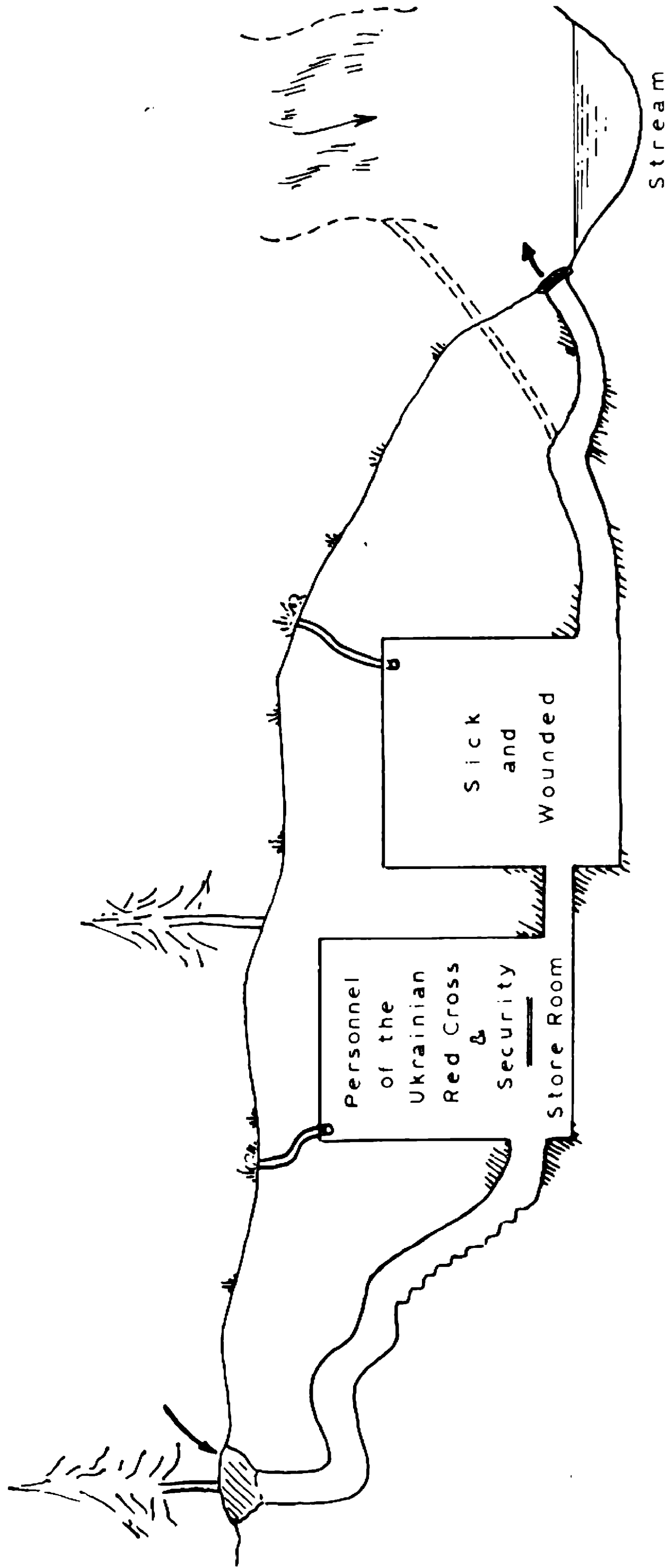
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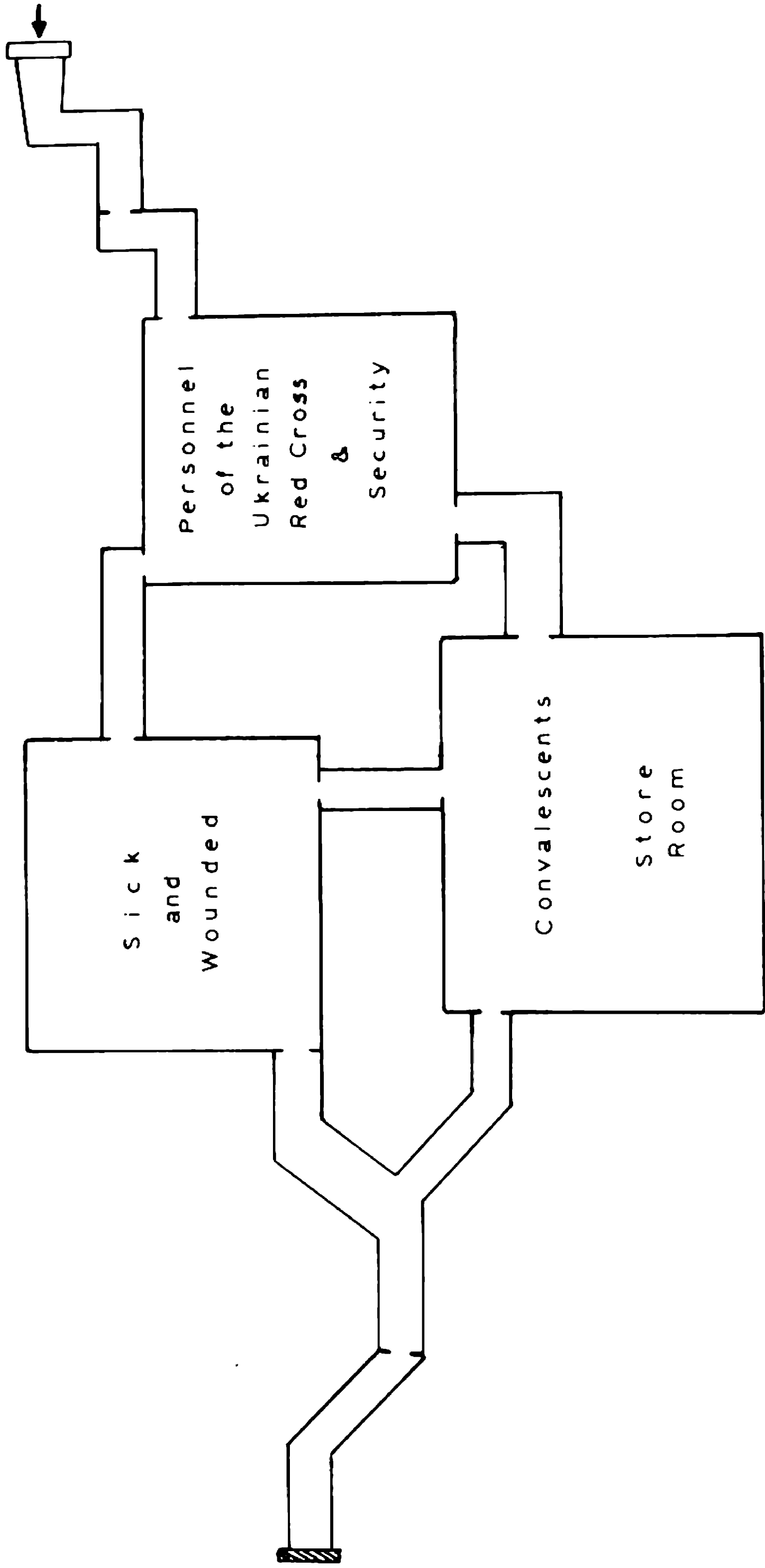
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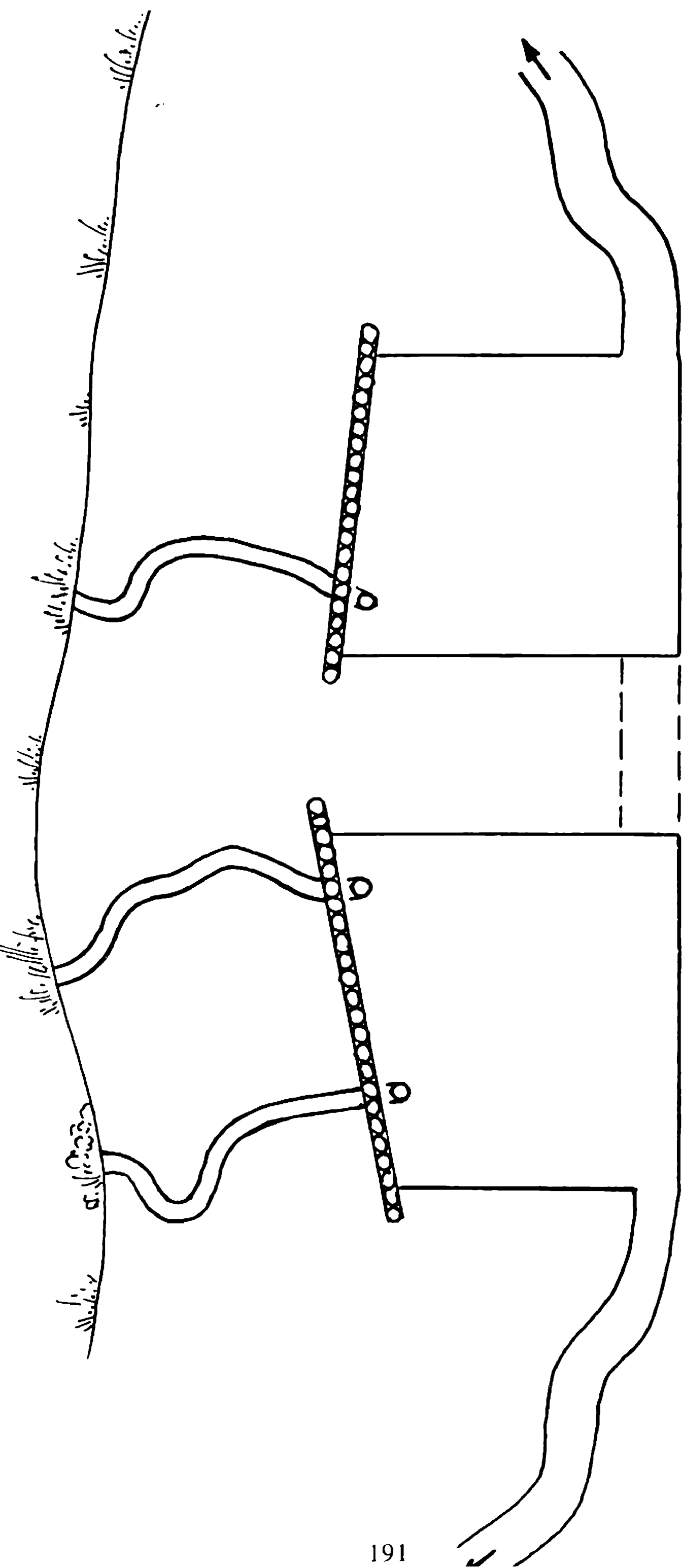
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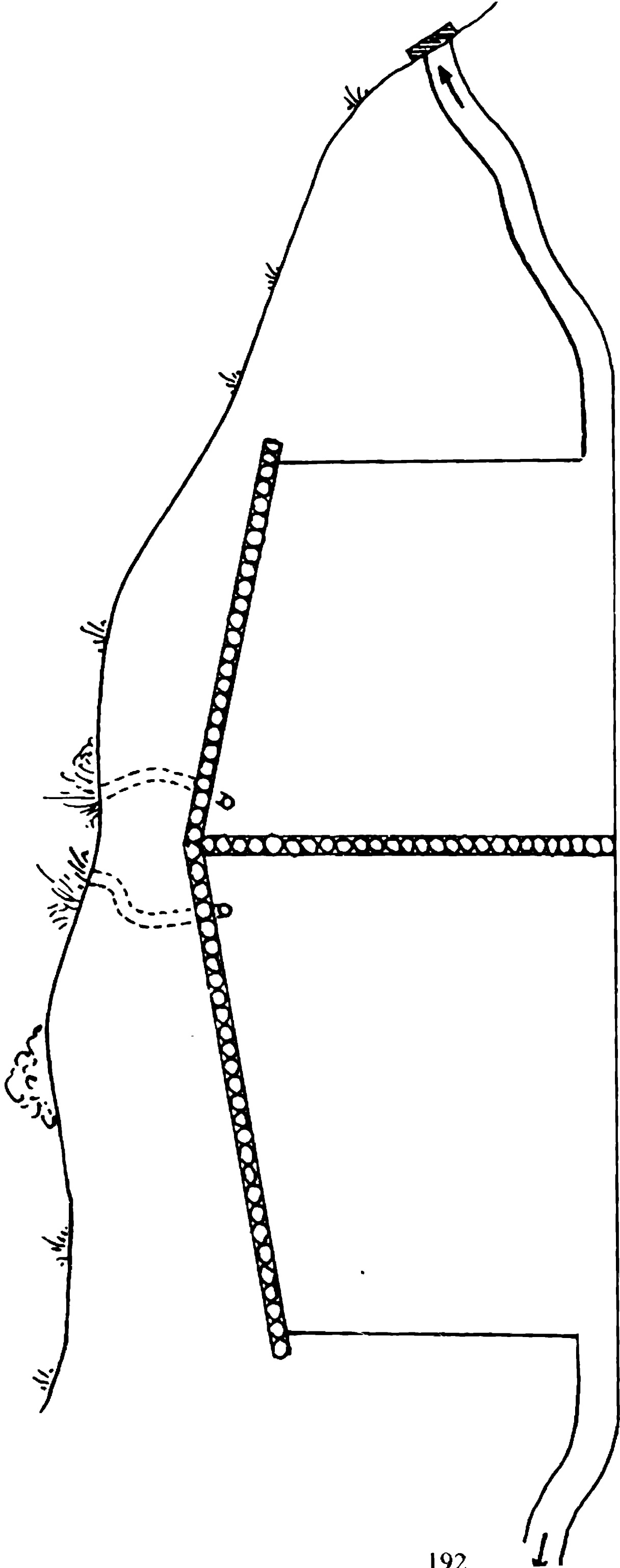


SECTION



PLAN





SECTION



Frequently bunkers were built as two-story structures, connected by a narrow stairway. When the partisans had to leave the bunker for combat operations, they checked its camouflage so that it would escape enemy detection.

As to be expected, life in the bunker was far from comfortable. There was the lack of fresh air, the confinement, the tenseness of fighters having to spend month after month underground. Depending on the terrain and circumstances, some bunkers were fashioned to serve as permanent living quarters. No one left them for the entire winter. Other bunkers were transient shelters, where UPA fighters on the move could drop in, living by the rules set up by the local commander.

A bunker commander had to have plans in readiness in the event of enemy attack, siege, and the like. He would issue orders calling either for a defensive action or a counterattack with a breakthrough. Understandably, both the commander and the fighters had to know every detail of the terrain, all avenues of escape and the place of reassembly.

The Soviet security troops waxed ingenious in detecting UPA underground bunkers. Very often a "wounded" informer from the village was dumped on the ground in the vicinity of a suspected UPA bunker. The cries and moans of the informer would draw the UPA fighters from the bunker. They would tend to his wounds and release him. The Soviet police welcomed their informer and information back in the village.

Soviet secret agents often disguised themselves as local farmers and worked in the fields. When they noticed certain people making frequent visits either to the village or contacting people working in the field, they knew a UPA bunker must be somewhere in the vicinity.

Sometimes village women would be made to run into the forest and cry that Communist troops were pillaging the village and raping the women. As soon as these women ascertained the location of the bunker, they ran back to inform the enemy police in the village.

Once the bunker was uncovered, it, of course, was useless. Usually, the entrance to the bunker would be mined. When the enemy detonated the mines, the insurgents had enough time to emerge and either attack the enemy or escape, depending on the particular situation.

Stores of food and arms supplies, often called bunkers as well, were ordinary pits well camouflaged on the surface.

In contrast to the bunker, a hide-out was a temporary shelter for a few people and for a short time. It was to be found in the forest, village or town; it was constructed by the people who had to use it.

Each UPA unit had several hide-outs. In the areas across the Curzon Line these hide-outs were devised in homes, barns, and the like. Very often these hide-outs were ingeniously camouflaged. The Polish military literature describing UPA hide-outs noted that the entrance to one of them led from a well. Hide-outs also were concealed under the beds of rivers and streams.

The Russians knew that the UPA used hide-outs during the German occupation (which the Germans were unable to uncover). Once the Germans were ousted from Ukraine the Russians issued orders to the effect that all proprietors must come forth and register their hide-outs, cellars, ditches, and any other place affording concealment. Failing to comply with this order entailed arrest of the entire family and exile to Siberia. This was not an idle threat: the Soviets had well-trained and experienced counterinsurgency specialists. They relentlessly combed villages, every building, every yard, every garden in their quest for hide-outs. In the forest they made extensive use of police dogs and anti-mine detecting devices, forcing the UPA partisans to come up with ingenious countermeasures.

In the Polish military literature <sup>60</sup> we find an account of a Polish battalion pursuing the UPA company commanded by Bor in the forest of Kryvania. In their chase the Poles eventually lost all the insurgents except a platoon led by Soroka, to whom the Poles had gotten no closer than an exchange of fire. Near the village of Radiyiv the platoon disappeared. The Poles pounded into the village and questioned the villagers, only to be told that no one had seen or heard them. The Polish battalion finally went to sleep.

"In a week the matter was clarified," ran the account. "The platoon of Soroka had hidden in hide-outs under the houses in Radiyiv. The platoon passed the night together with the battalion of Lt. Gorczynski, save that it slept a story below."

In addition to bunkers and hide-outs the UPA also maintained extensive camps in inaccessible forest and marsh areas. These were fortresses capable of resisting even the strongest enemy attack.

"The Khreshchata forest system was a fortress erected by the companies of Khrin and Stakh. A similar camp was built in the Vetlynska plateau by Commander Bor. Khrin's camp in the Magura Forest had an excellent access to the villages of Mikhove and Smolnyk in the west and the village of Rabe in the south, which meant liaison with the world and food supplies. The vast forest afforded protection against attack on land and from the air. Water from two streams at the foothill of the Magura was abundant. There existed an entire fortification system." <sup>61</sup>

The Polish writer further relates that some 2 kilometers from the camp was a ring of trenches and defense obstacles. All roads to the aforementioned villages were mined. Trenches crisscrossed whole slopes of the mountain. Exits from the trenches were well camouflaged, affording egress from the camp in the event of attack. The hide-outs for the companies were deep, well-heated and spacious. Each contained an oven, kerosene light and beds. They contained also stalls for a few horses, which were used for reconnaissance purposes, a small mill, and a hospital.

<sup>60</sup> Gerhard, *op. cit.*

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*

"The insurgents assumed that in that camp they could await the outbreak of a new war," the Polish author stated.

"In this case the UPA units could operate from the camp in the *hinterland* of the Soviet, Polish and Czechoslovak forces, against which the UPA is waging a war even now," he concluded.

One of the outstanding UPA leaders, Commander Stepan Khrin, dedicated his memoirs to the UPA members living in underground bunkers and hide-outs.<sup>62</sup> Such memoirs were also penned by UPA noncommissioned officer Tetiana.

An excerpt from the memoirs of Khrin relates to the period of 1947; Commander Khrin was returning from an officers' conference to his home terrain. He had left orders that during his absence a bunker be built. Here is his account:

Finally we are near our bunker. The place in which it has been erected is undetectable from the field. From under the hill flows a stream, carving out a deep ravine covered by dense bushes on both sides; it joins a larger stream coursing through the forest. Around the highland, bordered by a dense fir underbrush, is an open field. The enemy will have a hard time finding us here. No one will even dream that we were so bold as to select this place. The stream is not marked on the map, the spot itself is hidden from view and, in the event of betrayal by informers, we could escape alive from here.

"Now, Commander, let us look for the bunker!" exclaims Corporal Buinyi.

Warrant Officer Myron knows where it is; it is he who chose the site. I look around and cannot find it. When I finally spot clumps of clay on the pine needles, I guess that the bunker must be here. All around the earth is camouflaged by pine needles and anthills and fern. The bunker is covered by a yard and a half of clay; when one walks over it, no sound can be heard from under one's feet.

We descend narrow steps, and through a 3-yard corridor we enter the bunker. I cross myself, for it looks like a tomb. For the first time in my life I will spend winter underground.

We greet those present. The eyes of all are turned upon us, curious what news, if any, we bring, whom we met on our way, who has been killed and what, in general, is new in the world. We are tired and need rest. But how can we rest when our friends are so eager to hear the news? So we talk until dusk.

Our bunker is not big, some four yards long, three wide, and two and a half yards high on one side and one and a half on the other. The ceiling slants so that water will creep down without dropping off. The walls are made of heavy wood logs, and against the wall is a long wooden structure—our communal bed. There is no bedding, of course; mattresses, straw or hay would bring in all sorts of vermin, bugs, and the like. In one corner are bags of potatoes, beets, onions and garlic, and in another a small desk with a typewriter: this is the "officer corner." Our Corporal Tetiana has pasted white paper on

<sup>62</sup> Khrin, *op. cit.*

the walls, making for a little brightness. On a shelf over the desk are books, paper, writing implements, and the like. There is a long shelf over the wooden communal bed; here the UPA fighters keep their books, notebooks, personal items, and so forth. Under it is a small medicine chest, as well as soap, buttons, needles, nails, toothpaste, shoe polish, after-shave lotion, anti-bug powder, shaving cream, pencils, pens, fuses, lamps, and the like. There is also a picture of the Holy Virgin Mary, the Ukrainian national trident and a portrait of Col. Eugene Konovalets.

In the opposite corner are piled supplies of flour, barley, beans and peas, and dried bread in bags. Near the entrance is a small stove made of stone, with 2 narrow pipes serving as a chimney, tapered at the top so that the enemy cannot drop hand grenades down them in an attack. During the day the pipes are covered with moss. Near the stove is a wash basin and water jars. Every fighter has to wash every day to the waist in cold water. Into the walls are driven heavy nails, which serve as hangers for clothing and personal equipment. Soap is rationed.

The flooring is of lumber. Underneath it is a big pit which will serve as a water reservoir during the spring thaw. From the rear exit extends a tunnel, 20 yards long, leading to the stream, where its mouth is covered over with heavy logs. There is also a spring near the stream from which is brought our drinking water. In the tunnel we keep barrels of smoked meat. There are also a few bottles of melted butter to hold for the holy days. The tunnel is an emergency escape route in case of a sudden raid by the enemy. In such eventuality we have to break through the enemy ring; as a rule half the insurgents will die. This, of course, only if the enemy uncovers the bunker by accident. In the event of betrayal none of the bunker occupants has any chance of escaping alive.

The bunker garrison is protected by an outpost, or a sentinel, whose duty is to give the alarm should the enemy appear. Because the sentinel could be killed without our knowledge, mines are placed above on all four sides of the bunker, with another mine hung on a tree over the bunker. These mines are connected to the inside of the bunker by wires, well camouflaged. In the event of attack, these mines are detonated from inside the bunker; hopefully, all those around the bunker at the surface are destroyed. Then we would quit the bunker. This is risky, since not all the mines can be counted on to go off.

The guard is fully armed; he has to report everything that comes to his eyes and ears: shots, barking of dogs, whistling, suspicious noises, sound of wood-chopping, slinging of arms and other military sounds, and the like. All this information adds up to the approach of the enemy. The guard passes along what he hears through a window in the bunker, unseen from the surface; he also can set off an alarm bell inside the bunker. He is also ordered to fire against the enemy in the event of sudden assault, so as to give those in the bunker time to collect their arms and emerge. During his watch the guard must not either smoke, eat, sneeze or cough; he may not go farther than ten

yards from the bunker. If he gives the alarm, all occupants of the bunker must come out as quietly as possible and take up battle positions.

Conspiracy is the assurance of our existence and success. We cannot emphasize its importance too strongly. Construction of a bunker, delivery of food and the stay in the forest must be conducted in the strictest secrecy. Guards are posted also during construction of a bunker. If civilian workers are used, their political reliability must be investigated. Very often the Soviet police surprise UPA construction works. In some cases the Soviet police knew of the construction but did nothing until the bunkers were completed and occupied by the insurgents. Then they attacked. The Soviet security police have developed elaborate methods for uncovering the bunkers.

For provisions the UPA fighters go to villages other than the nearest. In winter the enemy does not conduct frequent searches in the villages or manhunts in the forests. Instead, it concentrates on intelligence work. Men posing as beggars go from village to village complaining about the harsh Communist conditions. These "plants" also make guarded reference to the "national avengers" (UPA), hoping to learn whether these avengers are in the village or the next one.

If the enemy uncovers one of our bunkers, he inspects it in detail—analyzing it, sketching its plan and noting its construction materials, describing the area in which it is found, and how it is camouflaged. On the basis of this data, combined with reports received from scouts, secret informers and spies, the enemy tries to reconstruct our tactics. Above all, the enemy tries his best to capture insurgents alive, for this would benefit him in many ways:

1. Under duress and torture the enemy police can wring out much intelligence data: the number of insurgents in a given area, the name of the commander, current instructions and orders, descriptions of the partisans, their code names and armament. Also to be gained is information regarding our tactics and strategy, and the methods of our raiding assaults. Questioning can also furnish information on meetings, liaison, secret codes, routes, contacts and collaboration with the civilian population.

2. Through torture the enemy police may compel a captured insurgent to antagonize the civilian population and the partisans themselves. This to show that we do not have any popular support on the one hand, and, on the other, the defection of UPA fighters, even under Soviet Russian torture, is to show that the UPA fighters are no patriots, but weaklings and pillagers at best.

3. Detrimental to insurgent morale is to find out that a comrade-in-arms has surrendered alive. The Russians may treat him decently for quite a while making a showpiece of him in public places and even allowing him to carry arms. But once he is exploited to the fullest extent, he is liquidated. When the Soviet security troops succeed in capturing one of our bunkers, they take our uniforms and, disguised in them, go through the villages, requesting food and shelter for the night. Thus they make people reveal, unsuspectingly, how they feel and act towards the Ukrainian insurgents and the Russian occupants.

The most important objective of the enemy is to drive a wedge between us and the rest of the populace. Through provocation and fabrication he is endeavoring to create suspicion on the part of the people toward us, and vice-versa. He propagates reports to the effect that a bunker has been uncovered by children, shepherds, girls and farmers, so as to undermine the trust that such people often have been of great assistance to us. Frequently, when shepherds have uncovered a Soviet trap in the forest, they have cried, "Wolf, the wolf is Coming!" and have named the forest or ravine to beware of. This warning has been passed from one group of shepherds to another until it has reached the ears of the partisans. Several of these children shepherds have died of the bullets of the Soviet security police because they saved Ukrainian insurgent lives.

I am told that Warrant Officer Roman has visited the bunker. This is painful to hear, for it is our principle that no outsider, not even another UPA fighter, is allowed in the bunker. I fear that he might discuss our bunker with his men. What may now happen is that some of them are captured and, under torture, reveal the location of our bunker. Also, peasants may overhear fighters talking among themselves and pass on what they hear in ordinary gossip, until it eventually reaches enemy ears.

It is generally agreed that we should not send any of our fighters to the village during the winter. But this is hardly possible; we have to send someone from time to time to the village for intelligence purposes. We must find out what we can about the situation, the movements and the tactics of the enemy. Sometimes talk in the village about "someone seeing a bunker" comes to our attention. Also Soviet security agents can be induced by heavy drinking to sound off on Soviet plans with respect to the UPA.

I am describing here only my bunker, our conditions and conspiracy. It should be understood that ours was only one bunker, and that there were thousands of such in Ukraine. Each bunker or hide-out was constructed differently, each one had its own rules of conspiracy, camouflage and tactics.

Commander Khrin wrote further about his experiences in the bunker during the winter period:

For Corp. Rybalka, Corp. Tetiana and me life in a bunker was completely new. All the others had experienced a winter under the Bolshevik occupation.

We two men had been in a company; during the winter we had made constant raids, waged battles, slept under a naked sky in the snow and near a campfire. Food had been brought to us from distant villages. If the enemy was trailing us and was numerically stronger than us, then we mined the path and we retreated.

Now I feel restless. It seems to me that death in a bunker is not heroic. It is far better to be on the surface, in the forest or in the field, face to face with the enemy. Even in battle I have felt more secure. But I do not wish to degrade the merits of my friends-revolutionaries. You, who work for long years in underground hide-outs,

perform work as important as those who fight on the battlefield. Your health and life is being sapped by damp, raw earth.

There are cases of insurgents virtually being suffocated because of lack of air in their hide-outs. Many of them have drowned in flooding waters. Others, in order to survive, have broken the lids of their hide-outs in some houses just as the village was being combed by the enemy police.

Living in this underground bunker, I have often asked myself whether I will ever leave this hole alive. The hide-out makes a man timid, fearful. Fresh air, on the other hand, makes one daring; fresh air is a stimulant for the combat effectiveness of partisans.

I wonder whether I will live until spring. In winter, the insurgents have many plans, they study them and analyze them and try to find the best possible solutions. In summer we put them into practice, and pass them on to the others. But the conditions of Soviet reality are such that we must go underground. It is impossible for the raiding groups to remain on the surface. The enemy soon will detect our traces, for he has an extensive spy system. Almost half of our population has been arrested. Many have been forced by torture and by threats to their families to sign a "declaration of cooperation" with the MGB-MVD, yet only some 5 percent, mostly cowards and people without any strong faith, actually cooperate with the enemy.

When the enemy special security groups uncover a bunker, they alert the neighboring garrisons, besiege the villages and forests, and conduct thorough hunts until they find and destroy the partisans. To operate with large groups of partisans, as we did in Lemkivshchyna, is simply impossible. First, because the terrain is wholly inappropriate, and, second, because the enemy has a large security network and many security troops, among them many officers and men from former Soviet partisan units who possess not only special partisan training but great practical experience as well. All these counter-insurgency Soviet forces are commanded by Maj. Gen. Saburov.

As every other spring, this one is being eagerly awaited by our insurgents. It seems that it will bring us something new, joyful, a change. We shall see. . . .

There is no forest here where the partisans can pass the winter. Sometimes, when there is no enemy in the area, we hear young girls sing for us. When the villages are being combed by the enemy, we see how the men and women run away. . . . We then pack our things and wait, ready, while our guard is strengthened by yet another man.

The task of our charge of quarters is to prepare the breakfast during the night, and during the day to keep things in order and serve food, either cold or heated on a spirit stove. He sees to it that the dishes and the floor are clean; he also checks that each fighter has done his personal laundry and that his weapons are clean and operable.

From dawn to dusk no one is allowed to unbuckle his belt. The charge of quarters keeps constant contact with the guard, changing the guard every two hours. We pass our days in the bunker with maximum utilization. The order of the day is as follows:

Reveille at 6:00 A.M.; 6-7:00 A.M.: calisthenics, grooming and putting things in order; 7:05: prayer; 7:15: breakfast, and from 8:00



to noon: "occupation." From noon to 2:00 P.M.: lunch recess; 2-5:00: "occupation;" 5-6:00: dinner and cleaning of weapons; 8:15: prayer.

"Occupation" depends largely on current needs. There are no work hours, Sundays and holidays. We learn the history of Ukraine, world history, philosophy, diplomacy, and political economy. We officers thoroughly study the history of national-political thought; we also study the textbooks of the enemy. Evenings we write reports and memoirs, and narrate various anecdotes and our experiences.

In order to effectively fight the enemy, one must know his weapons. Therefore UPA fighters must acquaint themselves with the enemy ideology, his political and economic objectives. We also study the enemy intelligence system, and how to combat it. We also study intensively military doctrine from books that we can get under the circumstances.

Here are additional details depicting the life of Ukrainian insurgents in a bunker as furnished by Commander Khrin:

All the fighters were asleep. The fire was burning in the stove. The charge of quarters was peeling potatoes. He looked pensive and sad. Often when I looked at him, he stopped peeling and stared at the wall.

All of a sudden came cries from one of those asleep: "Ai, ai, give me your hand . . . it burns, burns. . . ." It was Corporal Buinyi, thrashing about in his sleep.

"Wake him up, Rybalka," I told the charge of quarters.

The awakened fighter told us that he just had a strange dream about an attack by the enemy. He was wounded, and we were leaving him while retreating. He asked us not to abandon him, but to take him along.

He was bathed in sweat, but after a few minutes he went back to sleep. . . .

No sooner had Buinyi gone back to sleep than we heard a quiet moaning and crying from Corp. Tetiana. Awakened, she told us of her dream: Her father came to visit her in the bunker, but just then the bunker was raided. She raised her pistol against the enemy raiders, but it would not fire when she pressed the trigger. So she had to weep. . . .

The next day the snow thawed considerably. I took along a few fighters and went for intelligence information to a farmer who had befriended the UPA before. At the outskirts of the village we were told everything was quiet. We sought out and found this farmer who had been recommended as reliable. After an hour's talk we were convinced that he was a decent and patriotic Ukrainian. We agreed on an arrangement: when everything is quiet in the village, he will send his children with their sleds outside the village. The noise and laughter of the children will signify that there is no danger. When, on the other hand, nothing is to be heard, this will mean that Soviet security troops are in the village. Moreover, should they set out to search the forest, the farmer will start repairing his wagon, making much noise as he hammers new iron hoops on the wheels. . . .

—Commander! Get up, our bunker is being flooded! When I rose



from my bunk I saw that our floor was awash with water. The snow had melted and wreaked veritable havoc. Water had broken through one wall and had begun filling the bunker. We had to get rid of the water in order to preserve our food supplies. We formed a human bucket chain and began bailing the water out of the bunker. After five hours of tedious work we were cold and exhausted, but there was not much progress. Then our men took picks and shovels and dug out a ditch all along the tunnel, letting the water flow out to the stream. We began cleaning our vegetables, trying to dry them near the stove. It was cold, damp and raw in the bunker. We all sat on our bunks, shivering with the cold and waiting for the evening to come so we could make a fire.

We also had some happy days, or at least, we tried to make them so. We would tell jokes and funny stories in order to lighten the monotony that was all around us. But as soon as we heard any signal from our guard, gaiety disappeared and we all grabbed for our weapons and made ready to meet the enemy.

When a man sits in the bunker in winter, the day seems to be extremely long, eventless and exhausting. But with any kind of work, it passes more quickly, and one forgets the reality and becomes serener, more content, almost satisfied. Before noon work in the bunker was relatively easy, but in the afternoon, especially after lunch and because of the lack of fresh air, one easily got tired and depressed. One could not think properly and alertly. When at night the guard came to your bunker you felt better, thinking there wouldn't be any attack in the night.

When the snow falls in the winter it is difficult for the fighter to reconnoiter the village. The enemy may follow his tracks back to the bunker. Nostalgia after people and eagerness to have news of the world caused unrest among the fighters. They kept talking about the forthcoming spring, hoping that it would bring some change in their life.

For some time we were visited by dogs. After them came wolves, but the most unwelcome guests were the noisy jays. As soon as any one comes out of the bunker, they raise a horrible racket. We feared that the Soviet police could hear them and thus find the bunker. . . . Therefore, we fed them with our peas and beans; they fell mercifully quiet while eating. . . .

At dawn we send our guard outside. There is never any certainty that while we are sleeping the enemy security police shall not come to the bunker and wait to murder us all. From time to time we check on the guard, especially when we do not hear his footsteps. We fear that he might have been surprised and killed instantly with a knife or with brass knuckles. Although we have another exit, we would have to set the mines off and use the hand grenades, even kill ourselves with them rather than be captured alive by the enemy.

We must send fighters on reconnaissance to the village. They are to bring news, newspapers, food and to find out what the enemy is doing. Before their departure they receive detailed instructions on their conduct.

They must approach the village early in the evening, a time when

people are still to be found on the street. They must see to it that they are spotted by certain farmers. As regards the enemy posts, they, too, change posts and traps and are not to be found at the same place by day and by night. The fighters must return by another route to the bunker. Farmers talked to must be admonished that no one know of their visit to the village. No one is to see the fighters talking with informants. A reliable farmer should drive his horse-drawn sled to the forest and erase the partisan's tracks. When passing by houses, the partisans must check open doors in barns and stables for signs of the enemy. Passing near lit windows is to be avoided. Hand grenades should be kept ready in the event of enemy detection and pursuit. There is to be no knocking at windows and doors of houses; no smoking and no flashlights. If dogs bark, they are to be quieted with food, or a friendly farmer should lock them up. Besides food some alcoholic beverages should be procured from the village so that we may be warmed in the damp bunker.

The partisans depart. Our guard listens attentively for sounds of shooting. . . .

On some past Christmas Eves our insurgents managed to get out and celebrate, but such celebrations often ended by someone being killed by the enemy, hidden in the village, or by a raid on our bunker. We all are determined that this error shall not be repeated this year. The night before Christmas the enemy searches the villages purposely in the hope and knowledge that insurgents will have come to celebrate. . . .

Our scouts returned quickly from the village, bringing newspapers and an alarming report: in all villages searches and hunts have been instituted, for the enemy knows of the arrival of new insurgent groups from behind the Curzon Line. The enemy already has met these new groups at the border and has learned that they are hard and tough fighters. Almost every village has been searched by the enemy. This is greatly perturbing. Many bunkers have been taken. Perhaps the enemy wants to drive all insurgents into the bunker of Commander O. and to kill us all there.

Early the next morning we take all our equipment and come out on top of the bunker. We stay there for an hour, looking all around, but we see nothing. The guard and I remain on top while the rest of the fighters go down again into the bunker. About 10:00 A.M. our guard hits the iron bar three short blows: the enemy is approaching! All rush up to the top of the bunker. In the light of day I notice for the first time the faces of our fighters: they are pale and drawn.

Buinyi, pistol in hand, runs to me and whispers: "The Bolsheviks are advancing against us from three sides. They are heading directly for our bunker." Lt. Pas comes up from another direction and tells me the same thing.

Our hand grenades are ready. All of us leave the bunker, half-running and stumbling down the path through the snow. We circle the highland and plunge into the woods. We hear shooting back at the bunker. After a kilometer and a half our feet and hands become numb, our heads begin to spin—the fresh air is too much. We take cover and listen for the enemy. After a few minutes rest we get up

and run. Not too soon: we look back and see that the Soviet enemy is where we rested. We climb a little hill and see that the enemy has momentarily stopped.

The cold penetrating air and wet snow seem to be too much for us. We must handle ourselves carefully, for all Soviet special troops must have been alerted and all villages blocked. In the evening we go across the fields into the village of L. We try not to leave traces: we wade through a brook until we reach a road, used by lumber-carrying sleds.

Our fighters who have been running about on reconnaissance feel better. But the others are shivering with the extreme cold. Some of the fighters have holes in their boots. We drag a little fir branch after us to erase our tracks. On reaching the forest, we hide in the bushes. We hear dogs barking in the village. We settle down among piles of logs; here we hope to pass the entire day tomorrow. Our feet are soaking wet, but we dare not make a fire.

It is dawn, March 23, and we hear firing: the enemy police are searching for us. Through branches laden with snow we espy forest rangers, most of them Soviet spies. We crouch in our cover without raising our heads, and shiver as if we had malaria. Every one of us is blue with the cold. White spots can be seen on our hands and face. Baidak and Tetiana take off their shoes and rub their feet with snow until their hands get tired. Because we have been in the bunker, our bodies are not accustomed to such severe cold.

At night a snow storm enables us to move on. Behind the village of T. we find a dense pine stand where we make a fire. Here on soft pine needles we spend three days. Again at night we move on, to another forest, where we finally find our liaison and other units. Reliable farmers provide us with food, and we find secure shelter where we hope to stay until spring comes. The Soviet police prowl constantly, but we are not to be found.

Platoon Leader Ostroverkha, who spent the winter of 1947-48 in a bunker, describes his life underground as follows: <sup>63</sup>

Our bunker was deep underground, sheltering ten men. During the winter we had instruction and read educational literature. We made hardly any visits to the village, and to kill time we also had ideological instruction and studied the history of Ukraine and military strategy and tactics from all available textbooks.

We got up at 6:00 A.M., washed in cold water to the waist and had a common prayer. In addition, I recited a prayer of the Ukrainian revolutionary and one article of the nationalist decalogue. Breakfast followed. From eight until noon and from two to four in the afternoon we engaged in various activities. After six one was free to do whatever he wished.

From dawn to late evening a guard was posted outside the bunker; at night one of us had to cook the meal, another one was on the alert—listening.

By the middle of February the snow had thawed and disappeared.

<sup>63</sup> Ostroverkha, *op. cit.*

One day, the guard came inside and reported he had heard Russian spoken by some people not far off. We quickly gathered up all our equipment, and I dug a deep hole and buried my memoirs. . . . Before leaving we made arrangements of material outside the bunker which, if disturbed, would tell us later whether Soviet troops had been in our bunker. A week later I came back to the bunker with three other fighters, and found no one had been in it. So we returned to the bunker, and when the snow melted away completely, we began taking short hikes around the bunker to get used again to long marches.

Here we see three important things. One, the custom of the UPA fighters to leave some telltale markings or signs upon leaving their bunker to see whether in their absence the enemy visited the hide-out. Two, the insurgents would either take along all their documents and papers or bury them; never would they leave them about for the enemy to pick up. Three, they would emerge from the bunker only when the snow had disappeared and with it the danger of leaving tracks and traces for the enemy to follow.

In the memoirs of Commander Khrin, we read the following: <sup>64</sup>

The night of November 9 we went to a village. The civilians, terrorized and suspicious, were afraid to give us any information. The enemy had been ransacking the villages and arresting people. Farmers were afraid that we might be Bolsheviks disguised as insurgents. We picked our way between houses and crossed the Dniester up to our necks in our clothing, for there was no time to take it off; besides, we could have run into an enemy ambush. At night the horizon was obscured by a dense fog. In the forest we spotted the traces of Soviet troops, so we were sure they were lurking about somewhere. We skulked through the woods, often losing our bearings. Toward the evening of November 10 we made contact with the famous partisan, Tarasek, in the village of N.V. We hid our arrival not only from the population but from the insurgents as well. This was a precaution: in the event the Soviet police arrested any of the villagers or captured a wounded partisan, none would be able to say that he had seen us in this area. . . . At night we again were in the forest. After resting for a few hours, we cautiously moved back to our bunker. One of our noncoms stayed half a kilometer behind us to guard against our being followed by the enemy. . . .

In this case, the insurgents left the bunker only to fetch food and information from the village. We have a few examples of their tactics and security and protection measures. Upon entering the village in which the Soviet security troops were operating, whether or not the insurgents could secure any intelligence data, they carefully departed through the woods or by way of the river, going as far as the area of operation of another UPA unit in order to thwart pursuit by the enemy. Even at a distance from the bunker itself, they left a sentinel to be sure the enemy was not pursuing them.

<sup>64</sup> Khrin, *op. cit.*

In the fall when the fighters were preoccupied with the construction of bunkers under the supervision of experienced builders, the commanders, accompanied by their staffs, usually attended officers' conferences and war councils. These were held, as a rule, far away from principal highways and the larger cities, somewhere in the deep forests or the mountains. Commanders exchanged and discussed their experiences, proposed new tactics of partisan warfare, and deliberated on the problems of supplies, especially food, ammunition, medical supplies and clothing. Such officers' meetings sometimes lasted several weeks. Frequently commanders and their staffs were ambushed by enemy security troops, never returning to their respective units.

Commander Khrin reported on one such meeting:

At this conference I experienced one of the best moments of my life. During the official meeting Leader N. read the Order of the Day of the Supreme Military Staff regarding a resolution of the Supreme Ukrainian Liberation Council (UHVR): "For manifestation of valor and heroism, and for his successful command over UPA units in battle, Lt. Stepan Khrin is hereby decorated with the Gold Cross of Merit, First Class. . . ." My dream of youthful years had been fulfilled: to be a warrior in our own army and to fight for the freedom of Ukraine! Such a high distinction!

UPA Fighter Shramenko describes the construction of his bunker as follows: <sup>65</sup>

Commander Orlyk's prime orders were the building of a bunker and the acquisition of food supplies for the winter. It was October, 1947, in an area from which the Russians had deported the Ukrainian population; for the UPA that meant hard times. Both assignments were extremely difficult because those who had succored us were no longer in the area. The forcible requisition of food from the Polish population complicated the food problem. Moreover, the Polish troops and police constantly raided the villages in the daytime, and set up ambushes at night. We knew that death awaited any movement, but we also knew that without a bunker and without food we would perish. Therefore, despite these adverse conditions, we proceeded nonetheless to prepare for hibernation.

We selected a place for the bunker amid a forest where there were three farms which recently had been occupied by Ukrainians. Now it was a wasteland. We first had to get spades and sacks to carry the soil. To transport it by carts was impossible; we would have been caught in no time at all. A group of Polish troops was stationed in a neighboring village some 2-3 kilometers from our forest. Another group, some 200 men strong, was at a like distance in the other direction, in the village of Sebechiv. Thus we had to be extremely careful.

We would work from 9:00 P.M. until 3:00 A.M. During our labors we walked over boards so as not to make a beaten path which could attract the enemy's notice. We dug up the earth with

<sup>65</sup> *V riadakh UPA, op. cit.*

army spades and carried it on our backs in sacks for disposal in the stables. The bunker's final measurements were: the entrance and exit passageways were both 10 meters long; the sleeping quarters were 4 x 2.8 meters, and 1.80 meter high. A storage room was 1 cubic meter. We had a well and a toilet as well.

During construction we had a provisional hide-out, located some yards away, in which we spent our days sleeping. It was a very small and uncomfortable place, as it was dug out of clay and we literally had to slide in and out. It had no wooden walls.

We then went for food to the village. But as soon as we entered the Uhrynivsky Forest snow began to fall. This was bad, since it meant our leaving tracks if we went ahead. We had to spend two days and two nights there until the rains came and washed away the first snow. Only then were we able to come out of the bushes and move on toward the village.

After our return, we began moving our equipment into the bunker, including what we had of food, which was carefully packed and preserved. We also made estimates as to how long the food supply would last. We came to the sad conclusion that it would not stretch out until spring, so that we would have to go again to the village for additional food.

We spent a week in the bunker before opening the door. We were greeted by a dry and cold winter day. All of us came out from the bunker to breathe the exhilarating air.

The long and tiring hibernation began. What we did in effect was to change day for night, and vice-versa. We slept in the daytime, for then enemy patrols were always snooping about, and we worked at night. Guard duty and K.P. duty were rotated among us. Sundays and holidays we read the Liturgy from our prayerbooks. But our bunker was so well camouflaged that an enemy patrol once walked over it without discovering it. We were scared to death, especially because our ventilators came out at a little birch tree. . . .

On March 21, 1948, we climbed out of the bunker to breathe in some fresh air, and were horrified on seeing one another. Each one of us was deadly pale and emaciated. We spent the entire day in the fresh air, staying outside until midnight. But the change of air was too much for many of us. Three of us fell sick, while others felt a great weakening of their organisms. From then on we began going outside every night, and our health visibly improved. We felt we were ready to move and meet the enemy again. After our food supplies were exhausted, we left our bunker for Uhrynivsky Forest, the assembly point for all the groups in that area that had spent the winter in bunkers. . . .

The same collection contains also a description of a bunker built in the fall of 1944 and located on pine-covered Herbut Mountain in Lemkivshchyna, in the general area of the city of Dobromyl. The mountain occupied a commanding position in the area, the range of view sweeping through a 30 kilometer-radius. The bunker was to give shelter to UPA units in the winter and to be used as a hide-out in case of danger in the summertime.

Construction began at the beginning of September. Since the ground was hard the partisans needed a full six weeks to finish it. It was 4 x 4 meters, and 2 meters high. The entrance was so well concealed that the partisans themselves had difficulty in finding it at first. One end of a thin wire was attached to the top of a pine tree; the other end was in the bunker. When every fighter was inside the bunker, the wire was pulled, shaking the snow off the pine so that it covered the men's tracks. As a rule, the partisans used to attach wood slats to their shoes to avoid leaving tracks.

All our work was done at night. All the Ukrainian families, with the exception of three, had been exiled, and the settlement by incoming Poles was slow. The imported Poles were mostly party members and ardent Communists. Therefore, whatever supplies we needed had to be taken by requisition.

Medical supplies were usually purchased from non-Communists, although we knew that these were reported to the police. Therefore, we would come again for supplies only some months later. The police, after waiting for several weeks, usually became impatient and gave up their observation. In the meantime, we had been contacting other Poles. As soon as the police departed we returned to the first dispenser. Fearing for his life, the Pole sold the medicine for the money we provided.

For food supplies and other articles of prime necessity we would go to villages farther away, sometimes 10 kilometers off. We ate only twice in 24 hours, usually soup, tea, bread and, if available, fruit.<sup>66</sup>

### Gas in the Hide-Out

UPA Fighter Slav reported in his memoirs: <sup>67</sup>

The peaceful morning of August 20, 1945, was not in harmony with the alarming situation in the forest as we knew it: the forest was besieged by Soviet security troops. The sun rose high and warmed the tired partisans, who had had to pass through enemy blocks and traps the night before. The dark rainy night and two killed Russians had helped us break through a dense ring of traps and reach the forest. The eight of us decided to hide in a bunker, as one of our number was wounded and two others were sick and could not march farther.

We left S. to guard the entrance of the bunker. About 11:30 A.M. he descended into the bunker and secured the camouflaged door behind him; he had heard the voices of the Soviet police near the well. Moreover, they apparently were proceeding in our direction. Tension mounted in the bunker as every one grabbed for his weapon.

In a few minutes we heard footfalls over the bunker. From their number we could tell there were many of the enemy. The bunker

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>67</sup> *Litopys UPA, op. cit.*, No. 10, 1947.



was so quiet that we could hear the voices of the Russians plainly through the ventilators. Suddenly the footfalls ceased, and we heard a command: "Look well! They can't be far from here!" Our hearts stopped beating. The first time we were in a bunker and we were uncovered! Some of us already started to move to the other exit, weapons clutched in hands. . . . A few minutes passed, and suddenly our door-window was lifted, the daylight striking our eyes. The wounded UPA fighter fired his weapon against the opening, and it was slammed shut. Obviously the enemy now knew we were in the bunker. . . .

We all squeezed into the narrow tunnel toward the escape exit. Each of us had his weapon ready. It was still premature to destroy ourselves, so we decided to wait until the enemy began digging us out. Perhaps we could wait until night, when escape would be easier. Perhaps some of us might escape, if not all. The door was opened again and volley after volley from submachine guns riddled our bunker. Then a heavy thud sounded: some heavy object had been thrown inside the bunker. Our wounded friend yelled: "The bunker is on fire!" Smoke began filling the bunker. . . . They wanted to smoke us out . . . we took off our coats and jammed them into the small opening which linked the tunnel with the bunker. The smoke still penetrated, but now much more slowly. But now it was impossible to remain until evening. No one spoke in the tunnel: there was nothing to be said. Every one knew his time had come. We regretted we could not die in the fresh air instead of this dark hole.

A half hour passed since the smoking started. But what was it? The smoke did not bother our eyes, but we could not breathe freely. Is this a gas? All at once we realized that it was a gas bomb the Russians had thrown in to benumb us and capture us alive. There was not a moment to be lost. Fighter Lysyi threw himself against the pole supporting the escape hatch. It fell down, and with it a mass of earth. We saw the sky. Another of our friends, Fighter Yar, stuck out his head, then jumped out on the surface. A few feet away squatted an NKVD major under a bush, taken aback at seeing a man popping out of the ground. But Yar did not give him much to think about; his sub-machine gun killed him instantly. Fighter Lysyi was second to emerge from the hole. He, too, spotted an NKVD officer, at whom he fired instantly. The dense underbrush did not allow the Russians to orient themselves quickly with regard to the shooting. Our Savka heaved a hand grenade in the direction of the Russian voices. It exploded. Then we heard the moans and crying of the Russians. Yar, reaching the well, spotted five NKVD men. A long burst from his automatic put an end to them before his weapon jammed. He used the butt of the sub-machine gun to finish off a Soviet officer still holding up his pistol. From the bottom of the hill a Russian voice called out: "Who is firing?" In response Fighter Lysyi let go with his automatic in that direction. They were Soviet fighters, including a doctor who was supposed to revive us after we were taken out, gassed, from the bunker. We collected the weapons of the dead NKVD officers, and made off into the bushes. There were some 50 NKVD troops in all, but once their officers



were killed, they had lost their leadership, and fell into a panic. To our great relief and surprise they did not pursue us. Before they had decided what to do next, we were far away in the forest. . . .

In appraising the power and significance of the Ukrainian nationalist underground, Joseph Goebbels, one of the most prominent and leading Nazis, and a close collaborator of Hitler, had this to say about the Ukrainians in his *Diary*:<sup>68</sup>

*February 11, 1942*: . . . The (Ukrainian) intelligentsia stands firmly on our side. The Ukrainian intellectuals know well what will happen if Bolshevism returns. Therefore, they consider that National Socialism is the lesser evil. . . . (p. 78).

But subsequently, on p. 126, we read:

The nationalist movements grow in strength at appreciable pace in the east. . . . Their population believes that the German armed forces will shed their blood in order to establish independent governments in these small states, and that at the end of the war or even sooner they may align themselves with our enemies. This childish simplicity cannot make any impression upon us. . . . We are doing all that benefits the German people; and in this case the interest of the German people lies in our attempt to introduce a severe German order in these countries without paying the least attention to the desires of the small nations, regardless whether these desires are justified in larger or lesser degree. . . .

*March 6, 1942*: The danger from the partisans grows from week to week. The partisans have taken under their domination extensive parts of the occupied Soviet Union and keep them under their terror. The nationalist movements have become even more daring than we noticed at the beginning. This refers to the Baltic states and to Ukraine. . . .

*March 16, 1942*: I received a report from the S-D in connection with the situation in the occupied areas in the east. The activities of the partisans have considerably increased in the last few weeks. It is a well-organized partisan war. . . .

*April 25, 1942*: The population of Ukraine at the beginning was more than willing to recognize the Fuehrer as a liberator of Europe, and with open arms greeted the German armed forces. All this changed completely after a few months. We hit the Russians extremely hard and especially the Ukrainians, with our system of domination. Hitting on the head is not always a convincing argument, especially where the Ukrainians are concerned. . . .

So spoke Goebbels in 1942, at a time when the Ukrainian Insurgent Army was only in its nascent period of existence and operation.

<sup>68</sup> Goebbels, Joseph, *Diario*, 1960, Barcelona.



# Chapter Seventeen

## DEFENSE

Defense does not belong to the characteristic activities of partisan warfare. In the UPA it had specific significance only when entire UPA units had to face enemy divisions. These were special circumstances; the UPA maintained large combat units for a time after the withdrawal of the German-Soviet front to the west and when it had to face the powerful Soviet armies.

In principle, for the partisans defense is not a goal in itself; it is a limited means serving a specific purpose, such as:

1. To stop the advance of the enemy;
2. To inflict upon the enemy the heaviest possible losses before mounting an attack;
3. To provide one's own units poised on departure points sufficient time for an attack, breakthrough or some other maneuver.

When it came to defending their own bases, system of bunkers, hospitals and supply depots, the UPA units then applied only an active defense, never a passive one.

Active defense meant maneuvering to lure the enemy to some predetermined place, there either to challenge him to battle or to resist his attack. To be emphasized is that to maneuver the enemy away from his system of bunkers and hide-outs required outstanding partisan experience and ability. But it was vital to entice the enemy into a terrain favorable to the partisans, for only then could his forces be divided and he could be destroyed piecemeal. Therefore, the defense of a terrain or a settlement was, at bottom, a maneuver.

An UPA unit compelled to undertake a defense received support, if at all possible, from the neighboring UPA unit. This was a law and a basic necessity.

Only the garrisons of underground bunkers and hospitals were constrained to adopt a passive defense. When the enemy uncovered such a hide-out, only in exceptional cases was the garrison able to escape by fighting its way out; as a rule the garrison was destroyed, either by the enemy or by killing themselves in order not to fall into the hands of the enemy.

Once they began learning the tactics of the UPA, the Soviet troops, in their extensive manhunts and their offense against the UPA, followed these rules:

1. To push the UPA partisans far from the towns and villages, thus depriving them of vital contact with the outside world;
2. To pursue UPA units in force and without respite;
3. To prevent them from disengaging themselves from the attacking Soviet troops.

In turn, the UPA units redoubled their efforts at managing disengagement from the enemy, employing all sorts of ruses and maneuvers. For example, when Polish communist troops were pursuing the UPA unit led by Commander Ostroverkha, the latter ordered each section to set three fires on leaving the forest. Thus, some forty fires blazed up. The Poles, certain that the partisans had bedded down for the night, gleefully surrounded the forest. In the morning they launched themselves into the forest. To their consternation, the forest contained not a single soul.

Such tactics were especially used by the UPA insurgents in areas they visited infrequently. Where they camped more often, they tried to efface their traces and conducted their withdrawals in silence and stealth.

In disengaging itself from the attacking enemy, the UPA unit left delaying groups, usually only a few men strong, and set up ambushes whenever possible. When the enemy caught up with the guards and attacked frontally, the ambushers attacked all of a sudden from the rear, compelling the enemy to halt, take up other positions, or even retreat.

In the mountains the partisans set up their ambushes atop the hills. The enemy was not only compelled to advance upward, but suffered the additional disadvantage of having to fire upward. On the other hand, the partisans had the advantage of being able to fire downward.

In staging a counterattack, the UPA units often resorted to all sorts of ruses, including that of simulated retreat. In such case the partisans refrained from firing against the enemy, and tried to detach themselves with the utmost speed. The enemy induced into a helter-skelter pursuit, became disorganized, his ranks breaking up and the units wandering over the landscape. The conditions thus were created for a surprise attack by the UPA either from the sides or from the rear.

A frequently used tactic in defense was that of breaking up the unit into small groups, which constantly shifted their positions and thus managed to

subject the enemy to fire from all sides, sometimes even engaging in close combat. The impression given the enemy was that the partisans had left or that they were fighting their way out of an encirclement. Such tactics disoriented the enemy; the command would lose control, not knowing from which side they might expect a new attack. But such partisan methods required unusual initiative and partisan experience on the part of not only the officers, but every soldier as well, who could not afford to be separated from his unit or to lose sight of the enemy for a single moment. Displayed in such cases were initiative and effectiveness as diverse as human nature itself.

In the field, that is, outside the villages or cities, simulated retreat is perhaps the most appropriate maneuver—to draw the enemy into an open area and then hit him with all available weapons.

As the partisans retreated, a small group would magnify the trail it made, while the principal force would efface theirs (for instance, tracks in the snow in winter). This maneuver would not only deflect the enemy from its pursuit of the main force, but the small unit would lead him to a desired area as well. Then the principal force would execute a rapid maneuver of encirclement and attack the enemy from all sides.

Along their escape routes the UPA partisans placed mines, erected road blocks, and dynamited bridges, rocky hillsides along the road, and the like. They also used a system of snipers who frequently changed their positions, thus subjecting the enemy to constant harassment.

Tracks made in the snow while retreating were erased by fur coats or tree branches. In other seasons the partisans would wrap their boots in rags, or wade across streams and rivers. The UPA enjoyed many victorious defensive battles over the enemy. For instance, UPA Company "Strila" was once attacked by several Soviet units, including mechanized units. The company broke into small groups which operated so cleverly in the area without leaving it that the enemy had enough after but one full day of operation, retreating with heavy losses. This was the well-known battle on December 31, 1944, in the village of Rudnyky.

A similar battle took place at the same time near the villages of Sadzava and Hlybivka. Five battalions of UPA troops were surrounded by a great concentration of Soviet troops, including armored units and warplanes. Only when a fresh Soviet division was thrown into the fray were the UPA partisan battalions compelled to withdraw from the terrain.

When the scouts of an UPA unit quartered in a village reported that enemy troops were approaching, the first task of the commander was to check the direction from which the enemy was coming and to determine his strength.

If it appeared that the enemy force was small, and if its base was far away, it was possible to consider defending the village. Then each unit received its specific task and each fighter was given detailed instructions by the unit

commander. All had to know the escape routes, which, as a rule, were several in number.

The rear guard was to receive the first attack and give battle. Other units secreted themselves in ambush, poised to inflict on the attacking enemy an unexpected concentrated fire, hand grenades, even bayonets.

If, on the other hand, the enemy seemed to enjoy numerical superiority, or if other reasons so dictated, the partisans retreated from the village to an area suitable for their purposes.

Great partisan losses usually were sustained when the enemy attacked unexpectedly in the villages. Rallying, the commander passed orders to his units specifying their assignments (ambushes, breakthrough to a pre-arranged place, defense of certain selected points, retreat, and the like).

It must be added that the UPA units almost never attempted to conduct battle with the enemy in the Ukrainian villages, fearing eventual reprisals for the population. Only in the event of sudden attack did the UPA fight the enemy on village ground.

Here we have a few selected examples, taken from the memoirs of one of the UPA commanders: <sup>69</sup>

One day in the winter of 1946 the Bolsheviks tried to surround us, but we escaped the pincers, going through Maliava, and then to Liakhava. The Russians went after us into the forest. When their movement was reported to the commander, he ordered the unit to march single file, because the Russians were prone to follow us in the same order. After a distance of a kilometer in the forest, he ordered us to turn off to the side and to climb atop a little hill without leaving tracks. Here we lay down, ready to fire. We soon espied a company of Siberians following in our footsteps, plodding along in single file. We could have opened up and killed several dozen of them, but Commander Khrin held our fire, pointing out that at first we would enjoy a measure of success, but that eventually the enemy would deploy his flanks and destroy us in the deep snow. We hastily returned to the path made by us and the enemy and double-timed back the way we had come.

In order to create chaotic conditions in Slovakia, to prevent the enemy from bringing up his forces closer to the mountains and, in general, to impede his movements, the commander had ordered us to prepare explosive materials to blow up bridges and railroad tracks.

At that time an extensive hunt got under way in the district of Peremyshl for the UPA units of Commander Burlaka and other units which, on October 16, 1946, had attacked the town of Dyniv. The commander speeded up the blowing up of bridges in order to relieve the pressure on Commander Burlaka. . . .

All the time we are pursued by a division of Polish and Soviet troops. We blockade whatever village we enter, letting no one out so that the enemy cannot be informed of our presence.<sup>70</sup> . . . Eventually,

<sup>69</sup> Ostroverkha, *op. cit.*

<sup>70</sup> Reference is made here to villages populated exclusively by Poles.

we leave the populated villages and move to those from which the population has been deported, and bring food supplies therein. . . .

Here is an excerpt from a report dictated by Commander Ostroverkha to Corporal Tetiana:<sup>71</sup>

Just think! The enemy becomes bolder and bolder, he now dares to walk in groups of six to ten men. He even enters the woods, and on meeting partisans, not only attacks them but even chases after them. The reason for his doing so is that we are prone to forget that we should attack the enemy first, and only then retreat. The enemy has become accustomed to the fact that the partisans retreat only, and will not attack. Therefore he has gotten bold in his actions.

The losses we always have on our side depress the people. They suffer on seeing our losses, and become despondent and lose hope. Propaganda alone is not enough. From time to time the people must see enemy dead as well. Along with the propaganda we must also have some combat action, we must attack. . . .

On March 18, 1947, the group of Commander Khrin sustained a day-long battle. It was surrounded by a division of Polish troops and Soviet special troops. Three times they almost broke through the ring. Only toward evening did Commander Khrin save the group from devastating defeat. When challenged, "who goes there?" he answered in Polish: "Our own! You must wait up the hill. The partisans have disappeared!" This subterfuge enabled him to bring his unit through the Polish defense perimeter. (Some of the UPA units wore Polish uniforms.)

In the forest located between the villages of Turianske and Pereluky, the commander received a report that a regiment of troops had come to Turianske. The commander ordered us to make fires and to throw explosives into them. Upon detonation they sounded like batteries of artillery. Meanwhile, we had gone on, reaching the Oslava River and crossing the river near the church in Pereluky.

The winter of 1946-47 found us under a naked sky. The enemy discovered our camps no less than five times. Beginning with the village of Prusika, that is, since October 19, we had been pursued by a regiment of Polish security troops (KWB). There were days when we were chased by an entire division. We could have engaged them in battle and inflicted heavy losses, but the order had come from the commander of the sector not to conduct major operations nor to engage the enemy during the winter. The enemy had difficulty moving, reconnoitering and using his motorized units and air force. He could not dispose his forces rapidly, whereas we could cover any distance at least thrice as quickly as he could. A soldier who sits in warm barracks cannot match in physical fitness the one who lives out-of-doors most of the time.

Sometimes we gathered all our food supplies and went into the deep woods, making a fire and staying there for a few days, or at least until our food supplies lasted. Our traces were covered by the falling snow, or we waded through streams and rivers, or we erased our

<sup>71</sup> Ostroverkha, *op. cit.*

traces by every possible means. Sometimes for this purpose we carried straw with us, but very carefully, so as not to drop a single straw. We also had some gay times and laughter, even as our clothing burned at the fire or froze to the ground. Our guards and observers had the worst time in winter, as they had to stand for hours without benefit of fire or warm shelter. Some of us wore light American clothing (American gifts for the Polish population after the war).

In Tyliava I got hold of a first-class military coat. When I returned to the camp I saw my commander walking without a coat. I suggested that he take mine; I would get another one for myself later on. In two companies we had need of 21 winter coats. But Commander Khrin rejected my suggestion, saying: "I will accept this coat only when every soldier is clad." He wore only a tunic over which he wrapped some tent canvas while walking. . . .

Larger contingents of partisans (larger than a battalion) staged a defense more frequently than smaller units. When a defense is foreseen, then the defensive positions must be prepared ahead of time. In the event of defense which is necessitated by a strong attack of the enemy, the unit endeavors to maintain its position and not retreat to the rear. As soon as a battle posture is taken, the commander must organize a battle order, defense in depth, anti-tank obstacles and observation points.

Scouts should be sent out in the terrain and battle security arranged, and the commander must orient himself as to the disposition of his unit. He assigns battle sectors to his commanders, and determines the disposition of machine gun emplacements. He also gives all the units their battle objectives, a plan of defense, the time of the attack by the shock group, escape routes, liaison, intelligence and supplies—all in the same measure as the regular army.

In addition to the command post, the commander assigns two reserve command posts. It is also advisable to erect, if possible, simulated trenches and positions for the deception of the enemy.

When the enemy assumes his points of departure at night in preparation for attack the next day, the commander should concentrate fire on his flank and thus compel him to change his battle position, and to continue to harass his most exposed positions. If the enemy attacks, the commander must hold his ground, retaining his shock group and reserves for the final and decisive action.

If the enemy succeeds in breaching a part of the defensive positions the commander must exert every effort to prevent him from consolidating his advantage and to evict him.

Success in defense depends above all on learning as soon as possible the objectives of the enemy and preventing him from achieving them. The commander covers his flanks and protects them by a system of scouts and observers. The shock group remains some three to four kms. behind the first line in combat readiness. In a crucial situation the commander continues the defense until the shock group arrives to his support. It acts like a lightning bolt and strikes at the most sensitive spot of the enemy.



Mobile defense relies mainly on exchange of fire with the attacking enemy at a distance, on short skirmishes and on retreat to the rear of the terrain.

A battalion on the defense must always be prepared for an attack.<sup>72</sup> Its defense area stretches for about two kms. and its depth is about three kms.

Along with his staff, the battalion commander personally inspects the terrain of the defense, including forefields and flanks. He also investigates the possible approaches of the enemy from the front, the flanks and the rear, and prepares a plan for defense accordingly.

In the front the battalion keeps up a visual reconnaissance of the enemy, and protects itself by a cross fire, by fire points and by a platoon of heavy machine guns.

The defense area of the battalion consists of three sections, each of which is defended by a company. The intervals between the companies should not be visible to the enemy nor be susceptible to cross fire of enemy machine guns.

In the first echelon there is usually one company, with two companies making up the second echelon. At each defense line it is also possible that two companies be put in the first echelon, with a platoon serving as a reserve unit. The second echelon, with one or two companies, must be so placed that it is able also to defend its flanks.

The system of fire lies in the establishment of a strong fire curtain some 200-400 meters in front of the first line. The whole firepower of the battalion combines to create the fire curtain.

The battalion commander, in setting up a defense, does the following:

1. Organizes security and reconnaissance;
2. Devises a system of fire and its plan of operations;
3. Provides for liaison and observation;
4. Provides for the fortification of the terrain and selects observation points;
5. Organizes ammunition points, medical service, the routes of supplies and evacuation.

As regards the battle plan the commander elaborates:

1. Actions in the time of reconnaissance and security skirmishes;
2. Actions in the time of the enemy attack;
3. Actions in the event of partial penetration by the enemy into the defense system;
4. Actions in the event of a breakthrough by the enemy of the defense system, encirclement, and the like;
5. Retreat.

At the officers' combat briefing the commander gives various orders to his officers:

<sup>72</sup> Khmel, *op. cit.*

1. He assigns to the company of the first echelon a section of defense and a range of fire;
2. He assigns sections to the companies of the second echelon, which are bound to help the company of the first echelon with fire and attack;
3. He designates the field of fire to the heavy weapons;
4. He assigns the targets for the mortars.

The command post should be selected in some inaccessible spot, reasonably secured from tank attacks, which should provide the commander with a great field of vision. Observation points also should be selected for the staff, and provisions made for anti-air defense and camouflage. The commander also must be prepared for armored unit attacks. In combatting the tanks, the commander should try to destroy them before they reach the center of the defense area, and the infantry following the tanks should be destroyed by counterattacks or by hand grenades and bayonets. Should the enemy succeed in capturing the defense positions of the first echelon, then the second echelon and reserves should try to recapture them from the flanks.

In mobile defense the battalion develops a series of small skirmishes and battles. The battalion then tries to secure a good field of fire over a long distance and seeks to escape should the enemy press for a decisive battle. The withdrawal is accomplished by leaps and bounds with the units providing security for each other.

In the defense of a forest, the battalion takes its first line of defense at the outskirts of the woods and establishes defense in depth in order to compel the attacking enemy to fight in the forest. Every exit and every corner in the forest must be well defended; at the road crossings and in the glades the commander places the companies of the second echelon, with good fire vision afforded the heavy weapons. The basic tactics employed in the woods are ambushes and sudden attacks. Such battles must be rapid and mobile, characterized by maneuver and concentrated on the enemy flanks and rear. Groups assigned to these tasks should be small and possess heavy partisan experience.

Rivers are defended in accordance with the rules applied by regular armies.

Defense of settlements (villages and cities) depends on selected points of resistance in buildings, cellars, orchards and gardens, with a pre-arranged coordination of all these points. Firing on the streets and crossings should be carried on from nests located in windows and cellars, from behind barricades in the streets and from the ruins of buildings. Strong shock groups should neutralize enemy breakthroughs into the defense system.

Because it is at night that the greatest likelihood of enemy attack exists, the defense must be prepared in the daytime. The fighters must be well acquainted with the system of flare signals. Security and guards must be strengthened, especially during the dawn hours.

The forces of the insurgents must be concentrated, with the second echelon being brought up closer to the first.

Firepower should be directed only on the spot where the enemy is uncovered, while combat readiness is maintained by all other units. Counterattack should be directed against the flanks and rear of the enemy in order to prevent him either from strengthening his positions or from escaping. The counterattack should be made from a close distance so as to inflict the heaviest possible losses on the enemy.

In winter the insurgent battalion remains in a settlement, securing itself with a far-flung intelligence, underground hide-outs and a selection of convenient points of fire for the heavy weapons. Artificial defense obstacles (trenches, and the like) are easily built; hence they should be changed frequently. The enemy should be met with fire as far out as possible in order to prevent him from entering the settlement and to cause confusion and loss of combat effectiveness in his ranks.

The company in defense relies on its platoons as the points of resistance, distributed along a 700-meter line. These points must be strongly fortified and feature the use of automatic weapons. Every platoon has to defend not only its own sector, but also must make counterattacks even when the enemy has taken the neighboring sections.

The resistance points of the company should be provided with a circular defense, making use of all weapons. The units located on the flanks of the defense must take protective measures against a possible encirclement by the enemy. The company commander gives orders to the platoons regarding the distribution of the points of resistance, the range of fire and the route of retreat.

Anti-aircraft defense is set up in the rear of the area. The company command should select two observation posts, from which battle actions may be clearly observed.

An enemy attack ordinarily should be repelled by fire from close quarters; large-scale attacks must be fired upon by mortars and the heavy weapons units. The firepower should increase in intensity with the approach of the enemy. If the enemy penetrates the defense points, then hand grenades and bayonets should be used against his flanks.

When the enemy attacks with armored units, then one part of the company tries to destroy the tanks, while the other endeavors to liquidate the attacking infantry. During the attack of the enemy the commander remains at the most exposed spot.

The interval between companies must be defended with especial attention. Every company is responsible for the interval on its left; it is fortified with mines and obstacles and is covered by firepower.

In mobile defense the company moves by platoons under the protection of fire, and must be alert against counterattacks, ambushes and snipers.

The company can defend a settlement by itself only when the latter is small. In large settlements, the company defends only a group of houses or a section

of the city. The defense area should be protected by barricades, boulders and rocks, barbed wire, and the like.

In the forest the company commander should be well acquainted with all its particular features suitable for defense. Fire points are established in the bushes and at the edges of the woods; they are camouflaged and protected by mines and ditches. All paths, lanes and clearings should be thoroughly investigated. Any obstacles, such as fallen trees, should be made use of for stopping the enemy, even momentarily. It is also essential to establish liaison between neighboring companies and to set up recognition signs and passwords for runners and liaison men. It is always to the defender's benefit if the attacking enemy can be hit heavily before he reaches the forest. If the enemy succeeds in entering the woods, then the defense will consist of a series of small skirmishes and attacks by bayonets, hand grenades and automatics. The commander must always keep the security of the flanks in mind; the enemy must be prevented from encircling the company or its individual units.

In winter the enemy does not enter the woods, because attack against the high banks of rivers, gulleys and wooded hills is then extremely difficult. Consequently, he directs his attention to the settlements where partisans live either in houses or in hide-outs.

It is important to camouflage well all defense undertakings—trenches, fire nests, observation posts, weapons, obstacles, and the like. It is also imperative to fire upon the enemy from a distance in order to demoralize him and cause him to lose effectiveness, especially during severe winter weather.

The platoon in defense has the task of defending its sector, usually about 300 meters long. Even if the enemy breaks through or encircles the platoon, it should defend itself to the last in order to preserve the unity of action of its company.

The sector of the platoon must lend itself to observing the enemy and to providing assistance to the neighboring platoons. The sector should possess favorable defense qualities. Both heavy and light machine guns must be used in the system of the defense of the company in accordance with the plan of the company commander. During the course of the enemy attack, the platoon should allow him to come to within 300 meters before firing with all weapons. When the enemy is very close, he must be met with a great quantity of grenades. Attacking tanks must be neutralized by anti-tank weapons and by dumping clusters of grenades down their turrets. When the enemy breaks into the sector of the platoon, he should be repelled or destroyed by the platoon; it retreats only on the order of the company commander, one squad following another.

At night the success of defense depends largely on the art of firepower. Usually, the enemy is fired upon with flares lighting the foreground.

In the forest the platoon takes its position either at the edge or in the center. When at the edge it is exposed to the full fire of the enemy. In the

defense of the forest the platoons form a sort of chessboard in order to bring adequate firepower to bear on paths and clearings.

In defending a river the platoon must place its fire points and men with a view of securing the maximum field of fire. The fire points should be so placed along the river that the ensuing cross fire prevents the enemy from crossing the river, the fire points being located especially in strategic places (bridges, fords, bends, banks covered with high grass and the like).

The platoon has then the following tasks:

1. Not to let the enemy approach the river;
2. Prevent him from crossing the river;
3. To destroy those units which succeed in crossing the river.

In the mountains the defense of the platoon is circular.

The squad has the task of not allowing the enemy to come close enough to launch an attack. If it fails to do so, the squad then counterattacks by using hand grenades, pistols and bayonets. In the event of encirclement, the squad must find a weak spot in the ring and break through. The retreat takes place only on order of the platoon leader, and it is executed by small groups or singly. The machine gunner is last the man to retreat, covering the group as it goes by.

A vivid example of the partisan tactics of the UPA is provided by the article, "A Company against a Brigade," by Yuriy Lopatynsky and Lew Shankowsky.<sup>73</sup> Following are excerpts:

In the fall and winter of 1944-45 the Bolsheviks tried to liquidate the Ukrainian partisan movement by using the so-called *strybky* ("exterminators"), units of the Red partisans known as the "Red brooms," and detachments of "Stalin's Children," consisting of homeless waifs and *urki* (criminal youth elements). But the detachments of the UPA not only sustained these first blows of "Khrushchev's Offensive," but inflicted heavy losses upon the Soviet forces.<sup>74</sup> Thus the order of Stalin, issued on March 15, 1945, and repeated by I. Profilatov, secretary of the Volhynia oblast of the Communist Party of Ukraine, was not fulfilled.

Having initially suffered defeat in his campaign against the UPA, Khrushchev decided to bring up large reinforcements. Several new brigades of NKVD security troops from Volhynia detrained in Krasne, Zabolotsi, Ozhydiv and Brody. They began moving westward in five large columns. In Zhovkva and Zhovtantsi one brigade of the internal troops of the NKVD made preparations to comb the forest in Turynka, and in Kaminka Strumilova another NKVD unit started moving against the Radvan Forest. It was clear that the Bolsheviks

<sup>73</sup> "Sotnia proty bryhady," (A Company against a Brigade), *Visti Kombatanta* (Veterans' News), Nos. 1-2, 1961, New York.

<sup>74</sup> Kunicki, M., *Pamiętnik Muchi* (Diary of Mucha), Warsaw, 1959. In this book we find a wealth of materials relating to the struggle against the UPA, and a long list of crimes perpetrated upon the UPA.

had decided to liquidate the UPA in the Lviv *oblast*, for that purpose establishing an iron ring along the border of Volhynia in order to prevent retreat to Volhynia.

The UPA forces in the Lviv *oblast* belonged to Military District No. 2 "Buh," and consisted of 3 tactical sectors:

Sector 1: the base of the Yaniv polygon of 5 companies (three companies of the Kholodny Yar and two companies, "Halaida I" and "Halaida II," in the Turyinka Forest);

Sector 2: 6 companies in the Radvan and Brody Forests;

Sector 3: the base in Holohory, the battalion of Maksym and 3 companies of recruits.

Altogether, the UPA forces "Buh" numbered 3,400 men.

Company "Halaida I," with a strength of 167 men, in the middle of March was stationed in the village of Veryny, some seven kilometers northeast of Zhovkva. The company remained in the village at night, but at dawn departed into the forest in order to negate any reports by Soviet spies on the company's whereabouts that night.

On March 21 Company Commander Peremoha was informed by reconnaissance that large enemy contingents had detrained in the city of Zhovkva. The company was placed on an alert, and a civilian OUN network scouting party was sent to Zhovkva. Toward evening reconnaissance reported that Soviet troops had blocked the exits of Turyinka Forest, occupied the villages of Zibolky and Peredrymiky and were moving toward the village of Zhovtanetska Volya, some four and a half kilometers southeast of the village of Veryny. The UPA company immediately departed from the forest.

On the basis of analyses of the enemy movements Company Commander Peremoha concluded that the enemy planned to lay siege to the Zibolky Forest, south of the village of Veryny, between Zhovkva and Kaminka Strumilova.

On the morning of March 22 the company commander selected the positions and gave the order to dig in. The positions were located south of the village of Veryny, in small underbrush close to the forest. Commander Peremoha expected that the enemy would move on the forest without paying attention to the underbrush, leafless at that time of the year. The field of fire was excellent and stretched out to the north and northeast. On the eastern side there was an area of tree stumps. Three platoons occupied the first line, with one squad and two sections held in reserve. At 5:00 A.M. the Soviet troops began their attack.

As expected, the Soviet line bypassed the underbrush and, with cries and firing, entered the forest. The insurgents lay quietly in their trenches, waiting. About 11:00 A.M. the enemy moved their second wave, some 500 men heading for the underbrush. This time the partisans saw that they could not remain without fighting. They let the enemy come within 20-25 meters and then opened fire. Machine guns swept down the first line of the Bolsheviks. A stillness descended, and one could hear only the moans of the wounded. After a few minutes a second wave was thrown into the battle; this, too, received the deadly fire of our company.

Now the enemy took up positions and began firing upon the com-

pany. But the new thrust of the enemy again was rebuffed. Then the Bolsheviks, seeing that by attacking through the clearing they would sustain heavy losses, began encircling the company and attacking through the stump area. The numerical superiority of the enemy being great, they succeeded in penetrating the defense ring and began close, hand-to-hand combat. Then the Company commander ordered his reserves into the battle and the enemy was thrown back. After that it was quiet again.

Now the Company commander ordered a breakthrough. The platoon on the east (Platoon Leader Ihor) would lay down a strong fire on the enemy, with the remainder of the company trying to break through. If successful, they would attack the enemy from the rear. Then the east platoon of Ihor would disengage from the enemy. The breakthrough was scheduled for evening. In the meantime there was another abortive attack by the Bolsheviks, supported by mortar fire.

The breakthrough was totally successful. While one platoon moved against the Soviet line in the stump area, the other reached the forest through a clearing. They then attacked the enemy rear, thus allowing Ihor's platoon to escape. The enemy began to flee, believing the insurgents had received reinforcements.

At the pre-arranged meeting place we took care of the wounded and moved into the Radekhiv woods without entering any village. At the same time the Soviet troops searched for our company in the neighboring woods. After a period of three days the company returned to the site of the battle. It must be added that during the breakthrough the platoon of Ihor got lost and went as far as the village of Dalnych, joining the company only later.

The conclusions of the author can be summed up as follows:

1. A company engaged a brigade of the regular army quite frequently in the history of the UPA and other insurgent troops. In such circumstances decisive are other than military factors. One is the patriotism of the partisans, who knew well for what they were fighting. This awareness gave them a measure of superiority over the adversary, who frequently did not know why he was fighting against the partisans; more often than not he was not loyal to the communist regime. Cases of troops of the Red Army or the *Wehrmacht* being averse to fighting against the UPA were quite numerous during and after World War II. This was not alone the experience of the UPA on the Ukrainian lands.

2. Russian tactics for centuries have been based on a system of mass attack regardless of human losses. The Russian proverbs, "We will cover the enemy with our hats," or "A soldier's life is worth a kopeck," are only too well known. Marshal Zhukov is reported to have said that to clear a mine field the Soviet command should use a division rather than tanks, "because the tanks are more expensive" than human lives.

3. The Soviet command was unprepared to meet the partisans in that place; therefore, the mortars were brought up too late, after they had suffered heavy losses and become demoralized.

4. The support of the UPA troops by the civilian population, which was not true of the Soviet troops.

5. A clever maneuver of the UPA company, containing the following elements:

- a) Readiness to give battle with a more numerous enemy;
- b) Uncovering of the enemy plans and a well-prepared ambush;
- c) A breakthrough, which caused consternation; then the attack and retreat into the woods, the attack on the enemy rear and the breakthrough of Ihor's Platoon;
- d) After the breakthrough, departure to farther regions, thus eluding the enemy search, and finally, return to the old base.



# Chapter Eighteen

## **UKRAINIAN INSURGENT ARMY UNDER GERMAN OCCUPATION**

The so-called "Self-Defense Bush" (SKV) detachments of the Ukrainian underground which sprang up in the Ukrainian countryside were able to protect the populace only at the beginning of the war. It soon became apparent that these forces were too weak and ineffective. The Germans introduced the Nazi terror, and similar terrorism was practiced by the Soviet partisans in the woody areas of Volhynia and Polisia. Because of the activities of the latter, the Ukrainian people often had to bear the brunt of Nazi persecution.

As a result, the OUN sent into the terrain its officers and noncommissioned officers to train the SKV. Subsequently the OUN established special armed groups which were always ready to help and support the SKV and the population as a whole. These groups grew, and with them the necessity of having training bases and special areas for organization and other purposes.

In order to assist the population and to combat the Soviet partisans and German police units, three different Ukrainian political organizations used to send their groups into the area. Thus, at the beginning, three insurgent groups conducted their operations independently. But between 1942 and 1943, they either merged or were eliminated from action. From that time on there existed solely the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) under the political influence of the OUN of Stepan Bandera.

The German administration in occupied Eastern Europe organized the so-called auxiliary police, recruited from the inhabitants of the occupied terri-

tories. As a result, there soon were the auxiliary Ukrainian, Polish, and even Jewish police. Before long, however, the Ukrainian police detachments began deserting to the UPA in Volhynia and Polisia. Later on they were organized into special battalions of the UPA ("Druzhynnyky," "Halaida" and the like), becoming well trained and patriotic Ukrainian soldiers who distinguished themselves in battles with the Germans and the Russians.

The organization of the UPA units was in the hands of special territorial staffs, which also established military training schools for officers and non-commissioned officers in areas secured from the enemy—the so-called partisan bases. But the stronger the UPA grew the more urgent became the need for the creation of a unified staff which would direct and coordinate the entire operations of the UPA. In August, 1943, the Supreme Staff of the UPA was established, with headquarters in Polisia, north of the Kovel-Sarny railroad. In the second half of 1942 and at the beginning of 1943 the UPA units had cleared this area of Russian partisans, and it became the fundamental base of the UPA, receiving the name of "UPA-North."

Because the Germans had established a police post in the city of Volodymyrets, a UPA company raided this locality, dispersed the Germans and seized great quantities of arms and munitions. In subsequent months the UPA extended its military operations to the whole of Volhynia. UPA control became so firm that neither the Germans nor the Russian partisans could appear in the area without trepidation.

In February, 1943, appeared the first units of the well-organized Soviet partisans. In command was General Sydir Kovpak. They tried to cross the Horyn River, but on meeting Ukrainian nationalist insurgents for the first time, they decided to retreat, fearing that contact with the UPA might create ideological dissension in their own ranks. Also, Gen. Kovpak, who wanted to reach the Carpathian Mountains, feared that fighting the UPA would cost too many of his men. He therefore bypassed the woods occupied by the UPA, and reached Galicia. He marched by night and camped in the woods by day. The Germans, surprisingly, did not bother to stop his march. On the other hand, the appearance of the well-armed Soviet partisans automatically necessitated the establishment of some self-defense and a self-protecting organization for the population of Galicia. Thus under the leadership of the OUN there were created detachments of the "Ukrainian National Self-Defense," which subsequently joined the UPA and became known as "UPA-West."

In March and April of 1943 several detachments of the so-called *Schutzmann*, consisting of Ukrainians who had been trained as auxiliary police for the guarding of factories and other possible objectives, went over to the UPA with their arms and equipment. From that time on there were innumerable armed skirmishes with the Germans. The UPA executed hundreds of raids, ambushes and encounters in a systematic effort to prevent the Germans from taking over Volhynia and Polisia. The Germans had to have these areas for

their strategical value: they protected the left wing of the long German eastern front. The forests and marshes of Volhynia and Polisia, where the insurgent units had their bases, constituted a chronically dangerous situation for the German operations and threatened the supply routes to the front. But the Germans were unable with their police forces to do any damaging harm to the UPA. In fact, the Germans managed to hold only the larger cities, where they kept large army contingents and garrisons to protect their administrative apparatus from the raids of the UPA.

When the hundreds of Ukrainian auxiliary police went over to the UPA, the German administration brought in the Polish auxiliary police which had been guarding the administration, as well as such Polish personnel as the forest rangers. The Poles, who considered these territories as still "belonging to Poland," eagerly helped the Germans to destroy the Ukrainian patriotic personnel in the towns and villages. On the other hand, the UPA could not allow Poles hostile to the Ukrainian administration to remain unchallenged on the Ukrainian land.

The Polish auxiliary police went so far as to help the Germans in the hunts and pursuits of the UPA. The UPA Command issued an appeal to the Poles, asking them to leave the Ukrainian territory by a certain time. But the Poles, relying on the strength of the German army, chose to ignore this appeal and failed to leave the territory by the end of the time period. As a result, the UPA raided the Polish resistance points and armed forestry personnel and liquidated them. At the same time the UPA raided the fortified German resistance points, which were defended not only by the Germans but by the Polish auxiliary police as well.

Thus, on April 21-22, 1943, the UPA units raided the strongly fortified town of Ivanova Dolyna, which was an important economic center for the Germans. Losses were heavy on both sides. The Germans and Poles lost several hundred dead. The same month saw the destruction of the German garrisons in the towns of Horokhiv, Tsuman, Olyka, and others. Large-scale battles were waged throughout Volhynia. At that time SA General Victor Lutze was ambushed and slain.

The sudden growth of the UPA perturbed both the Germans and the Russians. Both became alarmed by the extent of the Ukrainian liberation movement. Where the Germans were concerned with the economic role of Ukraine, however, the Russians saw in Ukraine a political factor. Ukraine, in the plans of both the belligerents, was to serve as a ground of colonization—either Germanization or Russification. Neither was interested in any rights of the Ukrainian people.

The Germans began a systematic struggle against the Ukrainians. The German government conceived of this struggle in three aspects: propaganda, terror and military operations. The propaganda failed to produce any positive results, since it was conducted on a very primitive level and lacked any

understanding of the mentality of the Ukrainian people. But the terror was positive enough. Almost all the Ukrainian intelligentsia in the cities of Volhynia were killed, including many teachers and professors, and many villages were burnt down to the ground by the Nazis.

Their military actions began in the area of Horokhiv in May, 1943; acting in unison were motorized units, heavy weapons and the air force. To be attacked first were the areas of Berest (Brest), Lutsk and Kostopil. By June the anti-Ukrainian military operations had spread to the whole of Volhynia. But here the results for the Germans were negligible. The UPA units not only defended themselves successfully, but went on the offensive, attacking the German military units, the fortified and well-defended cities and the transports. As a result, the Germans were driven to establish a special staff and to begin their "BB" actions under the command of Gen. Platle ("BB" stood in German for *Bandenbekämpfung* or the "Battle Against the Bands").

But OUN reconnaissance acquired intelligence reports relating to the German plans well ahead of time, including plans concerning their military operations against the UPA. In most cases the German expeditions simply could not locate any "bands." Only when the German units were engaged in destroying villages and executing the populace did the UPA units attack the German units. One of the major UPA efforts against the terroristic expeditions of the German security police was the attack on a train near the station of Nemovychi on June 23-24, 1943. Some 150 Gestapo men were killed; they belonged to the so-called punitive Nazi unit. The attack was executed by two UPA companies, "Dorosh" and "Yarema," in the course of which both commanders were wounded.<sup>75</sup> Operations by a few SS German divisions against the UPA, on the other hand, were largely ineffectual.

Toward the destruction of the UPA the German government assigned General von dem Bach, a notorious specialist in terror and destruction of underground movements.

The world learned about the Nazi criminal destruction of the Czech village of Lidice. But in Ukraine such destruction was commonplace. Today many of these villages are no longer on the map, for they were never rebuilt by the surviving villagers. The Nazis and the Russians were equally guilty in pillaging and razing the Ukrainian villages. They competed in terror; each diligently studied the methods of the other in endeavoring to perfect genocide.

The terrorism of General von dem Bach evoked genuine admiration in Moscow. In order to assist the Germans in their enterprise, the Soviet government threw thousands of their Red partisans against the UPA. The Nazis attacked from the west and south, the Russians from the north and east, both aiming at the destruction of the UPA and the Ukrainian liberation movement

<sup>75</sup> "The Ukrainian Insurgent Army," by Lew Shankowsky, in *Istoria Ukrainskoho Viyska* (History of the Ukrainian Army), Winnipeg, 1953.

as a whole. The Nazis and the Russians were tacit allies in the struggle against the Ukrainian people.

The terrorism of General von dem Bach—a specialist in burning people alive in closed buildings and churches—provoked a mass flight of the Ukrainian populace to the woods, which in fact, contributed considerably to the strengthening of the UPA ranks. But it must be noted that the majority of those fleeing from Nazi persecution had no military training and that among them were many older people, women and children, whom the UPA units sent to remote bases or maintained under their protection until the Germans departed from the villages.

In the end the methods of General von dem Bach proved a total failure. He was replaced by General Prutzmann. It was during the time of the latter's command that the Soviet government launched a general campaign against the UPA led by some of its ablest partisan commanders.

By the summer of 1943 the UPA had increased substantially. It operated with heavy weapons, artillery and mortars, all of which had been captured from the Germans. In Volhynia and Polisia the partisan warfare developed to great dimensions. Hundreds of engagements, systematic attacks against the German units, battles in the forests and marshes against the Soviet partisans, and the like, characterized the second half of 1943 and the first months of 1944. But at the beginning of 1944 the greater part of these lands were under Soviet Russian occupation, the Germans holding only the western part of Volhynia. Opportunistically, they ceased their operations against the UPA and endeavored to reach an understanding. But the UPA command issued a strict order forbidding any negotiation with the Germans. Two UPA company commanders who parleyed with German army commanders were court-martialed, sentenced to death, and executed.

The example of Volhynia proved inspirational in other parts of Ukraine. UPA units sprang up in Right Bank Ukraine, in the Kholodny Yar, in the area of Uman, and in Podolia near the city of Kamianets Podilsky. For purposes of coordination and command these new groups were integrated into UPA-South, which was placed under the command of Batko, whose real name was Omelan Hrabets (he died in a battle with Soviet troops on June 10, 1944, in the area of Vynnytsia).

At the same time, the detachments of the "Ukrainian National Self-Defense" were integrated into UPA-West under the command of Shelest (Vasyl Sydor, who was killed in a battle with Soviet security troops near Perehinsko on April 17, 1949).

The expansion of UPA activities dictated the creation of a UPA Supreme Staff.

Meanwhile a Bukovinian Self-Defense Army was organized in the Ukrainian territories formerly under Rumanian occupation. All its units were later subordinated to the overall UPA command.

The entire year of 1943 was marked by the great dynamism of the UPA. The raids and attacks on the Germans reached out in scope to embrace the entire territory occupied by the Germans. In addition to Volhynia, large-scale battles were waged in the Carpathian Mountains and the forests in their foothills. In other areas of Ukraine the UPA units carried out raids and ambushes which inflicted heavy losses on the Germans.

To the very last day of their stay in Ukraine, and even a few kilometers from the Soviet-German front, the Germans still combatted the UPA with their best combat units, including SS formations, thus swelling their losses as they retreated into Polish territory, to the city of Cracow.

In their approach to Western Ukraine, the Soviet command decided to reach the Carpathian Mountains and thereby achieve a double purpose:

1. To occupy the mountainous terrain which was indispensable to the German defense;
2. To prevent the UPA units from establishing themselves in the Carpathians.

The Russians failed to attain this important objective. The Soviet partisan units under the command of General Kovpak and others were destroyed, partially by the German armies and exclusively in the high mountains by the UPA. Thus the Carpathian Mountains were an UPA preserve for several years after the termination of World War II.

In the spring of 1943 the Ukrainian partisan movement extended to the banks of the Dnieper with the creation, as mentioned earlier, of UPA-South under Commander Batko. In order to strengthen these UPA units the Supreme UPA Command dispatched two UPA battalions there under the command of Enei.

At the same time the struggle of the UPA to dominate the Carpathian Mountains had begun in earnest. Numerous units of the "Ukrainian National Self-Defense" in Galicia moved into the mountains, where there soon sprang up partisan training schools, camps and bases. This became UPA-West, commanded by Shelest, who heretofore was chief of staff of UPA-North.

After a reorganization of the UPA Supreme Staff, the Supreme Command was entrusted to Taras Chuprynka, whose real name was Roman Shukhevych. He was fully responsible for the reorganization of the UPA Supreme Staff, geared to the new conditions of struggle, for the expansion of UPA operations to the vital areas of Ukraine, and for the preparation of the UPA towards new tasks and objectives necessitated by the moving of the German-Soviet front to the west.

The presence of the UPA in the Carpathian Mountains compelled the Germans to wage extensive operations in a mountainous terrain. Despite the critical situation at the front, the Germans threw considerable forces against the UPA, as if for the Germans the Ukrainian independence and liberation movement was more important than their struggle against the Soviet armies.

Whole divisions and police and security regiments took part in the operations against the UPA at a time when there was an acute shortage of German manpower at the front and their garrisons in the hinterland were so weak and inadequate that Soviet spies and partisans operated virtually unchallenged. Some of the Ukrainian military commanders speculated that the Germans were planning to mount a determined resistance in the Carpathian Mountains, but such thinking was to prove groundless. The Germans battled the UPA to the very last day, often when the German front lines were dangerously exposed.

Under these conditions the UPA had to wage stubborn battles against the Germans at the same time they fought Soviet partisans and paratroopers in the mountainous areas.

The number of UPA fighters in Volhynia and Polisia, that is, UPA-North, was about 100,000, organized in 65 battalions. Among them were 15 battalions composed of soldiers of other nationalities whose home countries were under the domination of Moscow. This number is substantiated by figures and estimates appearing in German intelligence sources.

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The Ukrainian Insurgent Army grew in strength and importance in the defense of the Ukrainian people against German exploitation and acts of terror. This was in 1942-43, years when the areas in which the UPA operated were occupied by the Germans. Inimical acts on the part of the Polish underground came quickly to an end: leaders of the UPA and OUN succeeded in reaching an understanding with the Polish (non-Communist) partisans which led in time to the waging of joint operations against both the Germans and the Russians.

By the second half of 1943 the UPA already was combatting the Soviet troops. These operations were preceded by the appearance of the Russian Communist partisans on that territory of Ukraine dominated by the UPA. From this time on battles between the UPA and the Communist troops grew more and more frequent and severe.

Comparing the struggles waged against the UPA by the German, Polish, and Russian armed forces, the least prepared for partisan warfare were the Germans, the most implacable were the Russians.

The Germans initially sent against the UPA their police units, supported by the city militia, consisting of Polish elements. These police units had neither adequate combat training nor military spirit. The situation changed considerably when SS units were thrown against the UPA. But these, too, were not familiar with partisan tactics; frequently they were ambushed and annihilated. Moreover, they could not operate with armor in the wooded areas, nor could they avail themselves of the dynamism of mobility. The partisan tactics were totally unknown, much less understood.



Failing utterly in their attempt to put down the Ukrainian partisan movement, the Germans resorted to mass acts of terror. In the cities the S-D conducted mass arrests of the Ukrainian youth and intelligentsia and kept them as hostages in prisons. Few of those arrested were ever seen alive again; virtually all were executed by the S-D, often on the suspicion of having committed acts of sabotage or having participated in UPA operations. In those areas in which the UPA operated, the Germans executed people at random and burned villages and churches, leaving scorched earth behind them. When in 1943 and 1944 UPA activities intensified, the Germans were compelled to throw considerable forces against the UPA if only to protect their communication and supply routes to the eastern front and to assure routes of escape for the *Wehrmacht*.

As a rule the UPA did not attack units of the *Wehrmacht*, knowing that it was fighting against Russian Communism. Likewise, front-line forces of the German army did not take any part in manhunts and operations against the UPA, sometimes even refusing to assist the German security and police forces against the UPA.

In 1943 the Germans, because of the technical and manpower superiority of the Russians, began losing the initiative. By orders of the German High Command, defensive tactics were adopted, the aim being to hold the captured territories at all costs. But the heavy pressure exerted by the Soviet troops inexorably compelled the Germans to retreat. Today German military critics of that period are prone to express their views. They are of the opinion that the German armies should have stepped up their operations and staged even large-scale offensives, inasmuch as the German troops *per se* were superior to the Soviet troops, possessed a better officer corps and enjoyed a superior morale. But, on the whole, the Germans had become disoriented, especially the police and administration officials, who frequently fell victim to Soviet Russian provocations, burned the Ukrainian villages and executed the Ukrainians *en masse*, thus engendering a fanatical anti-German feeling and vengeance among the Ukrainians.

In their anti-UPA operations the Germans could not enlist a single Ukrainian man or woman. The only methods they knew were terrorization and bribery. It is small wonder that the Ukrainian civilian populace should have fled to the forests when German punitive units approached the villages. If there were Soviet partisans in the woods, they shot the Ukrainians on the suspicion of being "Ukrainian bourgeois nationalists" or "German spies." How ignorant the Germans were of the situation in Ukraine is fully corroborated by several German specialists and authors.<sup>76</sup> One author was a German officer who spent a number of years fighting the partisans in the east. Unable

<sup>76</sup> Redelis, Valdis, *Partisanenkrieg* (The Partisan War), Heidelberg, 1958.



to understand the essence of the Ukrainian liberation movement, he proposed to buy the loyalty of the Ukrainians with "cigarettes and vodka."

In the summer of 1943 the Germans staged one of the greatest operations against the UPA; it was commanded by *Obergruppenfuehrer* General von dem Bach-Zaleski. The military operations were preceded by a "psychological war": distributed were hundreds of thousands of leaflets by the German Command which appealed to the UPA to lay down their arms. Some of these leaflets were signed by UPA commanders, others by Soviet marshals, and so on. The response was nil. The Germans then began their military operations with large police and security units. Principally, these units indiscriminately killed people, sacked villages, and bombed the forests from the air. For instance, when the German units surrounded the Kremianets *oblast* they failed to enter the woods, even after the UPA groups had retreated there. There were no large-scale battles, only small skirmishes and actions from which the UPA groups escaped at will. The Germans then began to withdraw, suffering heavy losses in ambushes set by the UPA. Countless raids and attacks by the UPA now forced the Germans not only to retreat in disorderly fashion from the area, but also to abandon large supplies of arms and other military equipment.

The causes of failure of General von dem Bach's operation were as follows:

1. The mobility of the UPA units which minimized the possibility of capture or encirclement;
2. The approach of the eastern front. The Germans decided to conserve weapons and ammunition, since the Soviet troops were now approaching the areas in which the UPA operated.

In Galicia, because of the mounting activities of the Ukrainian nationalist organizations, the OUN and the UPA, the German administration of Governor Frank proclaimed martial law on October 10, 1943. The Germans began mass arrests and hangings of Ukrainians and burning of their villages. This policy lasted until the retreat of the Germans, specifically the retreat and flight of the Gestapo and S-D units. At least 1,500 Ukrainians were publicly executed (shot or hanged), including a great number of the Ukrainian intelligentsia,<sup>77</sup> according to official German sources. Other thousands were killed without trial (including a number of Poles).

When announcing the names of those condemned to death, the Germans cited one of the following reasons for their execution:

- a) Membership in a terrorist organization;
- b) Membership in the OUN;
- c) Membership in resistance movements;
- d) Sheltering of and sympathies for the "bands" and the Jews;
- e) Possession of weapons and ammunition.

<sup>77</sup> Lebed, Mykola, *UPA* (The UPA), 1946.

German General W. Lange admits that the Ukrainian partisans did not attack the *Wehrmacht*,<sup>78</sup> but reveals his ignorance about the population of Ukraine by calling it "Russian." The Germans, in fact, had a common label for all the peoples of Eastern Europe, calling them either *Russen* (Russians) or *Ostvoelker* (Eastern people), thus displaying a total ignorance not only of the political aspirations of the non-Russian nations in the USSR, but of elementary history and geography as well.

Fully aware of the incapability of the Germans to wage an effective war against the partisans, author Redelis proposed the organizing of volunteers from among the Eastern peoples to be used against the partisans, because, he contended, they know the Eastern languages, Soviet ideology and terror, and know the difference between the West and the East. But he failed to point out or to recognize that the "Eastern peoples" had lost whatever trust they had had in the Germans, were impervious to empty propaganda slogans, and would have insisted on ironclad assurance that the Germans would recognize their right to freedom and national independence.

When the German-Soviet front approached the terrain occupied by the UPA, the Germans were amazed that the Ukrainian partisans, with the exception of a few skirmishes here and there, did not engage the German troops in battle. The strategy of the UPA now was to avoid battles in the subfront areas in order to prepare themselves for the new methods of struggle against the Russian communist occupant. One had to employ partisan tactics against the partisans, an axiom which the Germans could not perceive or grasp.

When the Germans raided the Ukrainian villages to take contingents for slave labor in Germany, the Ukrainian youth escaped to the woods under the protection of UPA units. Following them, the Germans encountered all sorts of traps and resistance on the part of the UPA. These usually ended with German defeats. Before they could call up reinforcements, especially heavy weapons and armored troops, the partisans were far off in other places.

To protect bridges and railroads against sabotage the Germans used to maintain extensive guard units. Since a great number of people were needed they commandeered villagers and, under threat of killing them or their families, forced them to guard these objectives. In order not to endanger these unwilling guards, the UPA, in such cases, reserved acts of sabotage for other places. For a protective buffer, the Germans attached freight cars filled with stones or sand in front of their trains. All railroad personnel were armed. Sometimes the train carrying German troops and supplies was preceded by an armored car, while all along the route ahead of the train all natural cover, such as trees, bushes and the like, was destroyed.

The Germans were also unsuccessful in the use of heavy weapons and

<sup>78</sup> Lange, W., *Korpsabteilung C* (The Corps Unit C), Neckargemuend, 1961.

armored units in their struggle against the partisans; these were effective in the open fields, but not in the woods or mountains.

### **Battle at the Village of Stizhok**

The battle at Stizhok is an example of many such battles waged by the first UPA partisans, who were still "green" and who lacked adequate partisan military training. This battle was not planned as a tactical operation: it was an instinctive reaction against a German attack which brought considerable harm to the Ukrainian people. Therefore, although this battle was a definite victory for the UPA, it was improvised from the outset. Almost all the initial skirmishes of the UPA were similarly unprepared and improvised. From them UPA fighters learned the first lessons of combat. Subsequently, they eagerly shared their experiences at officer and noncommissioned officer training schools.

The command of the German police forces knew that the villages around Kremianets could rely only on the support of small UPA units, camped in the neighboring woods. When they raided the villages to seize food and cattle for delivery to the Reich, they behaved savagely and inhumanly. For the least resistance they beat the peasants, and frequently shot men, women and children. When they suspected that the village was under UPA protection, they burned the village to the ground, taking hostages and executing those suspected of being connected with the Ukrainian underground. In making these punitive expeditions, the German command never knew or cared whether the Ukrainian partisans were close by or not and whether the partisans might seek revenge.

The German unit raiding the village of Stizhok consisted of the police force of the city of Kremianets and a few detachments of Polish auxiliary police, numbering in all some 180 men. On the night of May 8, 1943, these units arrived at the village of Lishnia. Leaving their vehicles there, they proceeded on foot and surrounded the village of Stizhok. The night guards in the village barely had time to raise the alarm. Some villagers managed to flee to the woods. But the Germans and their Polish police swooped down on the village, firing on the inhabitants; whoever was taken prisoner was locked up in the larger buildings, which were then set afire.

Not far from the village were two UPA units: one in the forest near Stizhok and the other a little farther away at the Franko Zalizhska Hill. Members of the latter unit would pass the night in the village.

One of the participants in the battle, Maksym Skorupsky (*nom de guerre*, "Max") described it in his memoirs:

Refugees from the village notified our camp (Commander Khrin). A runner was sent immediately to the camp of Kruk (on Mount Zalizhska), and I along with Lytvyn was sent to reconnoiter around

Stizhok, because we both knew the area well. On reaching the outskirts of the wood we could see the village and the Germans. Some 100 meters from us, through a few pine trees, we spotted a fat German guard, who, without seeing us, began firing his automatic rifle blindly into the woods. We turned back, circled a little hill and crawled very close to the village. At its center was a battery of German mortars which was firing into the woods. The rest of the Germans were dug in around the village, and the village itself was on fire.

We returned to the camp with our intelligence. The camp, which contained 200 Ukrainian partisans, had been alerted and was preparing for battle. Ammunition was distributed and platoon leaders were assigned—indicating the imperfection of our organization. Soon ready to march were 40 young fighters with an old "Maxim" machine gun mounted on a light carriage.

According to the plan, we were to set up an ambush near the village of Lishnia, some three kilometers from Stizhok, hoping that on their return to Kremianets the Germans would be less alert and over confident after burning the village. If the Germans remained in the village or departed in an opposite direction, then those UPA fighters—some 150 men—who had remained in the camp would attack the Germans in the village or compel them to retreat to Lishnia. Then our group would bar their retreat. We hoped also to receive reinforcements from Commander Kruk, who had been apprised of the plan.

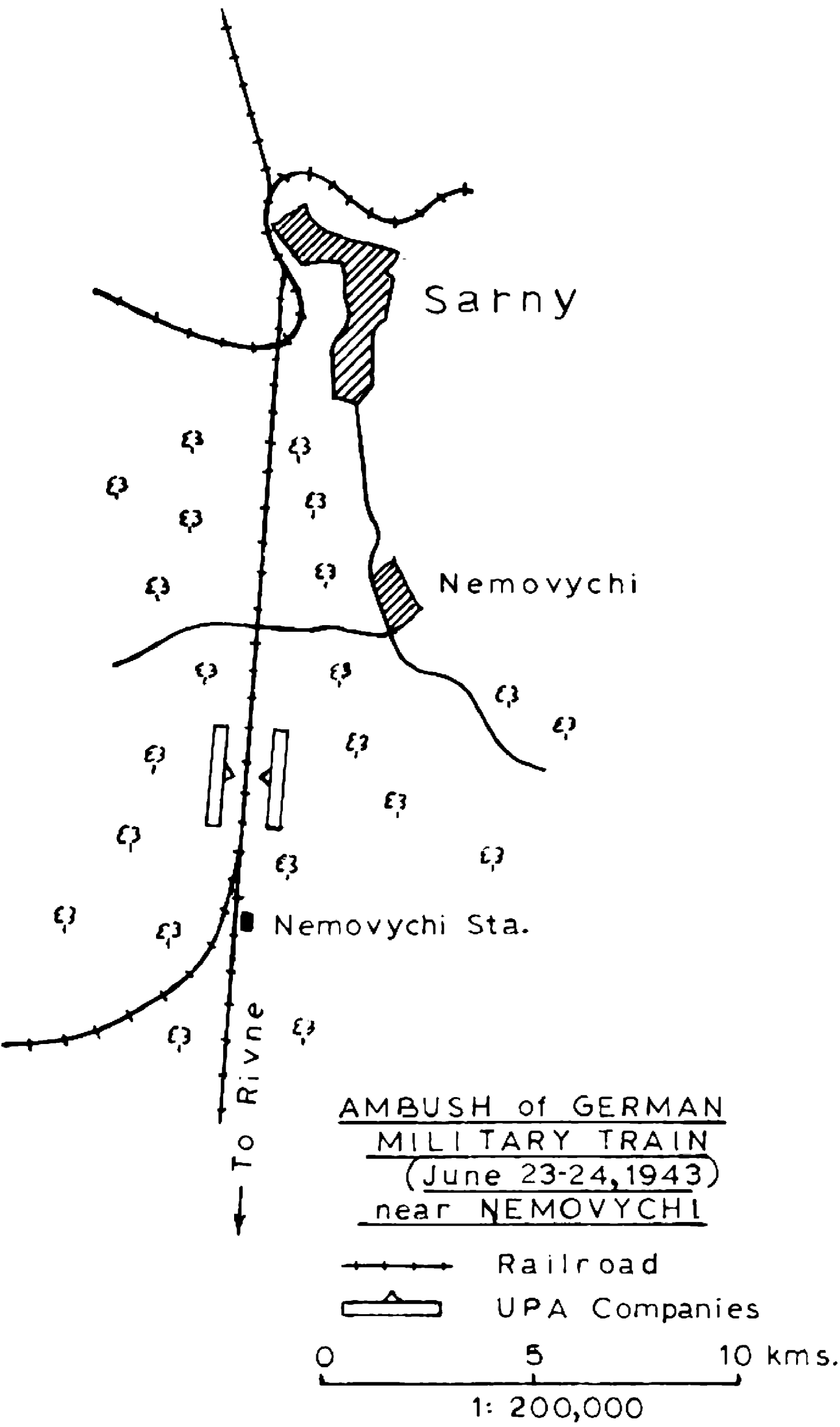
As our group was moving to the place of ambush, we were informed that the enemy had attacked the village of Bushcha in order to disorient and confuse the partisans. Near Lishnia our group met Commander Kruk with 20 men. About 150-200 meters from the village, at the junction of the road and the woods, we took up positions, having at our disposal one heavy machine gun and six light machine guns. At the same time we dismantled a wooden bridge to prevent the Germans from getting away in their vehicles.

It was a beautiful, sunny day. Our eyes were pinned to the clouds of smoke and tongues of fire from the burning village of Stizhok. With bated breath and burning with desire to inflict our vengeance on the Germans, we waited.

Suddenly our hearts began to beat faster. On the road from Stizhok a column of dust rose in the air. "Be ready!" went the whisper from man to man. The wind blew away the dust, and we saw a great herd of cows being driven by the villagers. We could not see any vehicles. When a few peasants had passed our positions, we herded them and the cattle into the woods. Then the dust rose again and the German truck convoy appeared, coming right toward us. It was moving rapidly, and soon we were able to see the faces of the German policemen. . . .

In front was a beautiful limousine. When it was some 25 meters from our old "Maxim," we opened fire from all sides. Germans began falling to the ground, killed or wounded, and the medical staff car caught fire. Those Germans not killed took cover in the ditches on either side of the road. With every shot by Lysenko a German died. We now held our fire for about 10 minutes.

On the German side first to return our fire was the armored car,



which had been at the end of the column and which now was out in front. The car commander shouted orders to the prone Germans, setting them up in defense. Then we received the German fire. Pine needles began falling on us, which meant that the Germans were firing from a prone position and firing too high. One of the small caliber cannons of the armored car fired along our positions, but the shells burst behind us. For several minutes there was a great symphony of firing from both sides. From time to time there were short spells punctuated by individual reports, always giving way to sustained fire. In 45 minutes we began running short of ammunition, although we saw we were winning the battle. The German firing grew weaker and weaker. Our fighters wanted to counterattack. But the armored car was moving directly against us, spouting fire from its heavy machine guns. Our commander yelled: "Hand Grenades!" One of our fighters threw a grenade, which exploded near the armored car without damaging it. What was needed was a batch of hand grenades to knock out the car, but we did not have them. The order came to retreat. As one man, we rose and began running into the woods. The Germans began regrouping, but already we were beyond their reach, feeling secure and victorious. We did not destroy the Germans completely, but we had inflicted terrific losses on them.

The groups that were poised to attack Stizhok found no Germans in the burned village. As soon as we had begun the battle with the Germans they had headed to our defense, but came too late.

Surprisingly, we had only 3 wounded. The Germans left 90 dead and wounded. For the destruction of the village of Stizhok the Germans had paid heavily with their blood. And we were convinced that the ambush and sudden attack had offset our shortcomings. . . .

The significant shortcomings of the UPA in this battle are apparent. The partisans were not ready until told that the enemy was in the village. At the last minute they organized a battle plan, assigned commanders, and the like. Good intelligence would have saved the villagers and the village. The ambush was set up only from one side, leaving the enemy secure from the rear. The retreat from the firing line, without cover and without observing the most basic military rules, betrayed the lack of training. But the success was indisputable, owing mainly to the courage and patriotism of the partisans, abetted by the German ignorance of partisan warfare.

### Operations of the "BB" Staff

The operation of the "BB" (*Bandenbekämpfung*) under the command of *Sturmabfuhrer* SS General Platle, and later under Gen. Hintzler, produced no results whatsoever. On the contrary, the cruel and inhuman methods used against the Ukrainian population resulted only in strengthening the UPA. The youth swelled the ranks of the Ukrainian insurgents *en masse*, the UPA becoming a stalwart if not the sole champion and hope for the defenseless inhabitants of northwestern Ukraine.

This catastrophic development for the Germans was the subject of several discussions by the staff of Himmler which resulted in the sending to Ukraine of General von dem Bach-Zaleski, notorious specialist on "BB" actions and, as an *Obergruppenfuehrer* and general of police, responsible only to Hitler himself. The methods introduced by von dem Bach-Zaleski were cruel in the extreme, surpassing all the other crimes of the National-Socialists in World War II.

Moscow followed the actions of the Germans with an eager eye; the suppression of the Ukrainian armed liberation movement was in its own interest as well. In time Moscow sent to the terrain occupied by the UPA detachments of its own partisans, forcing the UPA to fight against two enemies on two fronts at the same time. The tacit collaboration between German National-Socialism and Russian Communism against the Ukrainians has yet to be properly evaluated in political and military literature. It demonstrates conclusively how dangerous for Moscow Ukrainian nationalism was and still is.

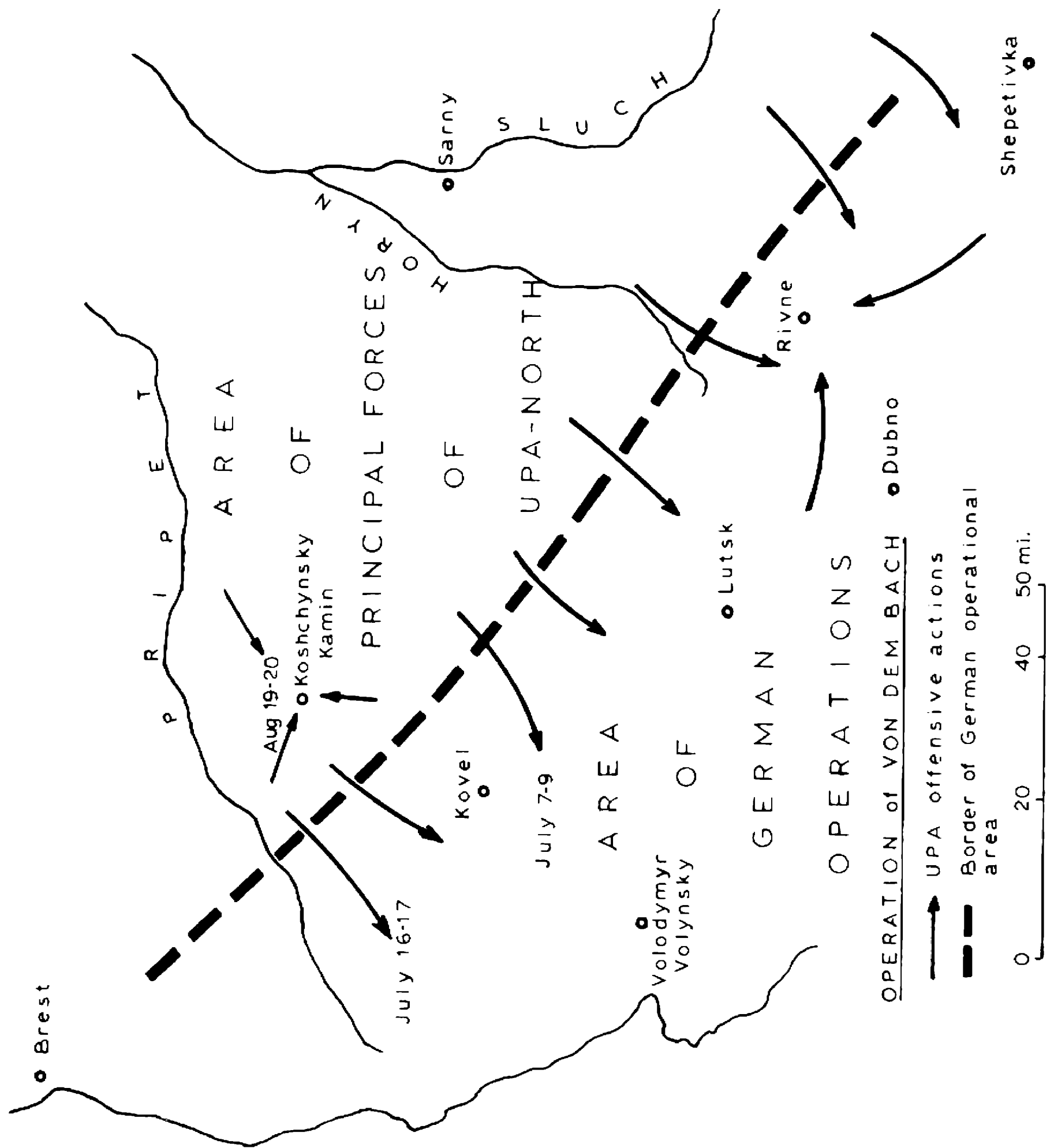
The overall purpose of General von dem Bach-Zaleski was to destroy UPA-North, thereby recapturing the areas occupied by the UPA and assuring security of communication and transport in two directions: to the west (transports from Ukraine carrying food supplies and people forcibly conscripted for slave labor in Germany) and to the east (transports bearing troops, military supplies and equipment and foodstuffs for the German armed forces on the Eastern front).

The plan for the implementation of this objective called for the progressive physical destruction of the Ukrainian population in the area by ruthless and implacable methods in order to deter it from cooperating with the UPA. It called also for a decisive offensive against UPA-North to be undertaken in a three-stage program:

- a) To destroy with overwhelming force all the UPA units operating in open terrain in Volhynia and Polisia;
- b) To break up the great complexes of forests into small sections, trapping UPA units in each, and then destroying them piecemeal;
- c) To clear the terrain of dispersed UPA groups and to secure it by a network of German military points.

The area of operations embraced small towns and numerous villages in the south; toward the north the population density grew lighter. The whole area was muddy and marshy, some sections being completely inaccessible; it was covered by great forests and jungle-like growth. Communications were sparse and undeveloped, and operation by the armored troops was possible only in the southern part of the terrain.

In the north the terrain was under constant attack by the Soviet partisans. They avoided any armed encounter with the Germans; their objective was to sweep out the Ukrainian nationalist insurgents and to occupy the area for themselves.





The German forces varied in number and composition from place to place; their total strength cannot be closely estimated. It can be definitely stated, however, that used in this operation were several AA divisions, two regiments of the Hungarian army, one regiment of the Cossacks—organized by the German command from among the Soviet POW's—and detachments of the Polish auxiliary police.

Nor can the UPA forces be determined with reasonable exactitude. With the terroristic attacks of the Germans, hundreds upon hundreds of Ukrainian village youth swelled the UPA ranks, with the result that companies and battalions doubled and tripled their strength almost overnight. At the beginning of the German operations led by Gen. Hintzler, UPA-North numbered some thirty-odd battalions in nine large groups, totalling a minimum of 10,000 men.

Overall command of UPA-North was in the hands of Col. Roman Kliachivsky (Okhrim, Klym, Savur), with Col. Leonid Stupnytsky (Honcharenko) as his chief of staff.

The UPA military forces were subdivided into three military districts (V.O.), headed by Commanders Rudyi, Ptashka, and Bereza. Each military district had three detachments, and each detachment three to four battalions. This organizational system survived the German occupation and the German-Soviet front and operated successfully after the war against the Soviet security and police forces.

General von dem Bach-Zaleski opened his operation in June, 1943, with a vast and intensive propaganda drive against the UPA. The entire area was literally flooded with leaflets in which the Germans threatened "God's last doom," stated that the anti-German opposition had been instigated by the "Galicians," charged that the UPA was acting for the benefit of Jews and Communists, and finally warned that all sympathizers of the UPA were faced with physical destruction.

When this propaganda failed to produce the desired reaction, General von dem Bach instituted his terroristic program. In the cities the German police arrested all outstanding Ukrainian citizens and executed them summarily. In a brief period of time some 2,000 prominent Ukrainians were thus killed. At the same time the Ukrainian towns and villages were strafed and bombed by German dive-bombers. Finally, the "BB" Staff staged sudden raids on the villages, during which the inhabitants were fired upon without warning, dwellings and farm buildings were burned, and the captured villagers herded into a church, locked up and burned alive. Ukrainians point out that the world knows of the fate of the Czech village of Lidice, which the Nazis destroyed with its 187 inhabitants, but the world continues to ignore the fact that in the same manner the Germans killed at least 15,000 Ukrainian villagers.<sup>79</sup>

<sup>79</sup> Shankowsky, *op. cit.*

At his disposal General von dem Bach had the following units:

10 battalions of motorized SS troops with heavy weapons and artillery;

10,000 German and Polish police;

2 regiments of the Hungarian Army;

3 battalions of Cossacks, organized from among the Soviet prisoners of war (the Cossacks of Ukrainian nationality assigned to this operation went over to the UPA);

50 tanks, 27 planes and 5 armored trains.

According to German intelligence, the "BB" Staff was convinced that the principal forces of the UPA were operating south of the line Brest-Kovel-Rivne and Shepetivka. It was in this area, therefore, that General von dem Bach concentrated his forces and conducted the offensive operations.

In reality, however, the German intelligence was not accurate. In the aforementioned area, active were only small, though numerous, UPA units, consisting for the most part of newly-recruited elements led by a cadre of experienced and seasoned partisans. On the other hand, in the north were located the military and training bases of UPA-North, as well as its principal assault units. They frequently operated in the area occupied by the Germans and staged numerous offensive actions. For a few months of General von dem Bach's operations the Germans could not understand how the Ukrainian insurgents were managing to raid the German bases, failing to see that their entire action did not so much as touch the principal insurgent forces deep in the forests. The insurgent raids were directed usually against the small towns that were fortified and defended by the German troops. These German resistance points were the objective of many UPA attacks. Typical was the battle for the important point of Stepanska Huta, which the UPA took after a bloody battle on the night of July 16-17, 1943. On July 29-30 the UPA captured a train loaded with weapons and ammunition, and on August 19-20 the UPA took Kamin Koshyrsky, a fortified military center, capturing huge quantities of arms and munitions. The German garrison, which consisted of a few battalions, was rapidly dispersed and destroyed. On September 7 a fierce battle took place at Radovychi, not far from Kovel, in which three battalions of the UPA "Tury" troops participated. Over 300 Germans perished in the battle, and Kovel's garrison and entire administrative apparatus fled in panic.

As a result of the complete failure of the operations, General von dem Bach was recalled from his command. He was charged with a number of military defeats. The overwhelming German superiority in manpower and arms had proved inadequate in themselves to liquidate UPA-North.

The German failure can be ascribed to the following factors:

1. The German operations were directed mainly against the Ukrainian civilian population, not the armed forces of the UPA. This only strengthened the UPA morally and made for the enlistment of hundreds of new fighters.

2. The Germans fought the partisans with conventional war techniques.

Only partisan units using partisan warfare tactics can cope with other partisan forces.

3. The UPA had a decidedly political character as well; in this field the Germans were wholly helpless. Although they had nothing to oppose the ideal of a Ukrainian independent and sovereign state, the Germans deprived themselves of capitalizing upon this political weapon; as in the case of the Soviet troops, they relied solely on their military power. This was not enough.

### **Operations of General Prutzmann and Cooperation of Germans With Soviet Partisans**

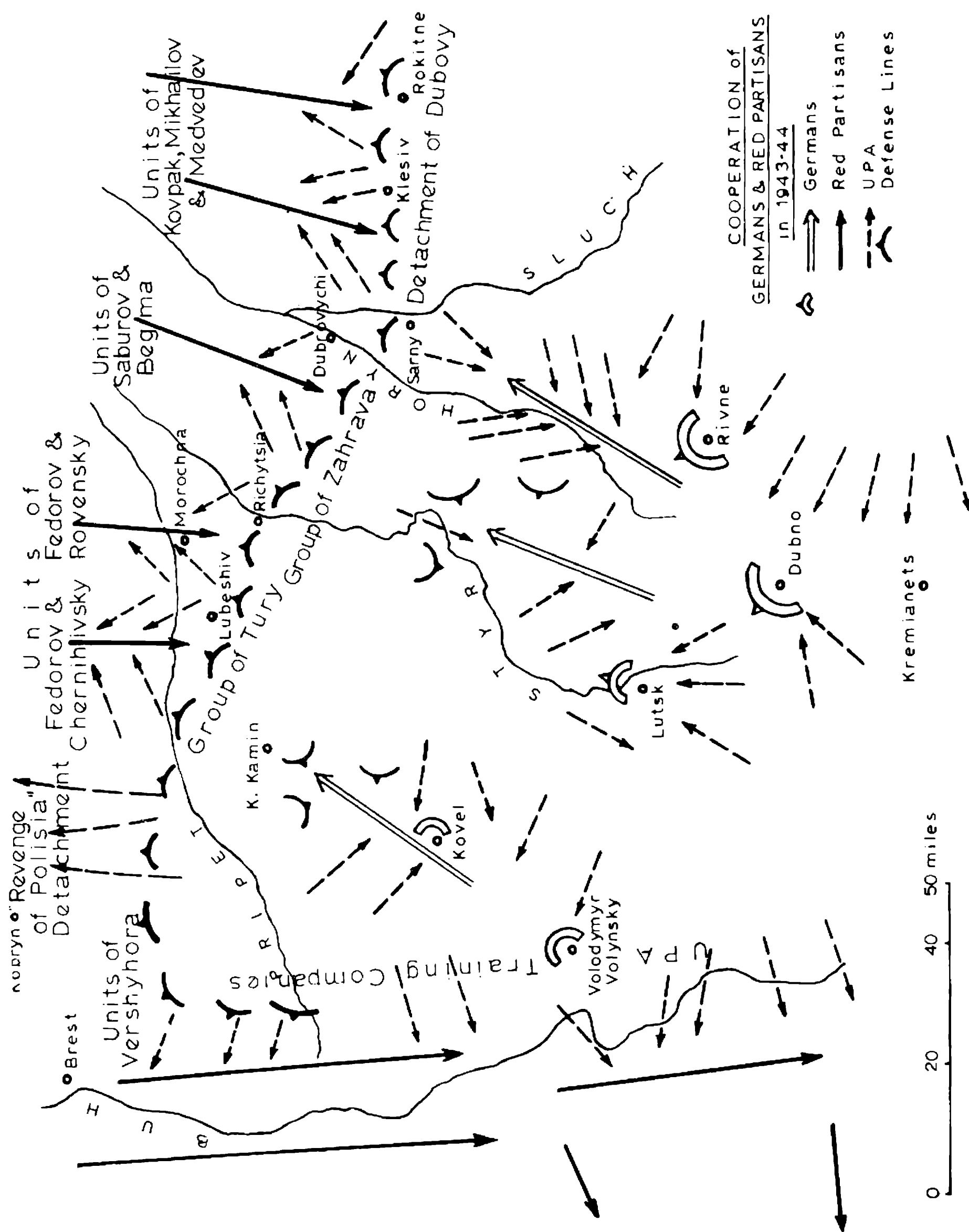
General Prutzmann, von dem Bach's successor as commander of the "BB" operations, did not introduce any new methods in combatting the UPA. With the steady growth of UPA-North, the Germans, apart from terrorizing the civilian population, were virtually limited to defensive actions. Only from time to time did General Prutzmann, his forces strengthened by the arrival of new reserves, make deep inroads into the terrain controlled by the UPA units. Here he was confronted by a formidable opponent, Col. Klym (Savur), commander of UPA-North.

The situation in general for the Germans was becoming more and more chaotic. They barely held the Soviet troops on the Dnieper, and there existed a permanent danger that the Soviet divisions would break through the left wing of the German front. In such case the Eastern front in a short period of time would be rolled back to the terrain of operations of General Prutzmann. Under these circumstances, therefore, his tactics consisted of waging individual battles at the fortified resistance points, usually the cities, thus protecting and reassuring the terrorized administrative officials. Only when his troops had had no contact with the UPA for some time did he break out into the terrain for purposes of reconnaissance and to consolidate control of the resistance points system.

At the same time UPA-North was steadily strengthened by new recruits. In one two-month period their number increased threefold. This opened up the possibility to accelerate combat activity, mainly by harassing the German garrisons and reconnaissance units by sudden raids and skirmishes. The UPA units were now constantly on the march, moving from place to place, constantly startling the Germans where they felt most secure, and ranging through their hinterland.

For instance, in these months UPA-North established and fortified a strong base in the forest of the Kremianets area from which they then attacked the German rear on the border of Volhynia and Galicia.

To be emphasized is that the Supreme Command of the Red Army in Moscow and its partisan staff followed the developments in the UPA-North-occupied area very closely. So far as the Russians were concerned, the Ger-



mans were only temporary occupants. The units of General Prutzmann did not constitute a significant danger to the Soviet front divisions since Moscow could not doubt that they soon would be withdrawing. On the other hand, the Ukrainian liberation movement presented an unending menace for the USSR; the Kremlin had always been afraid of any unrest and disturbances in Ukraine. The UPA, as an expression of the Ukrainian quest for their freedom and national independence, was far deadlier to Moscow than anything else, especially with the German-Soviet front approaching the terrain occupied by the UPA and the possibility that the UPA operations would shift to the east.

Therefore, at the time the Germans were finding their situation increasingly desperate and they were debating what could be done with the UPA, Soviet partisan units, commanded by Kovpak, Mikhailov, and Fedorov, were ordered into Byelorussia for the purpose of occupying the areas of the UPA and cutting the UPA forces off from the forest of the Chernihiv area in Northern Ukraine.

The Red partisans began to move in from the north in three columns.

One followed along the Buh River, another moved on Lubeshiv, Morochna and Richytsia, and the third came down on both sides of the Sluch River.

The staff of the UPA-North immediately grasped the objectives of the enemy. The moment was crucial. The Soviet partisans enjoyed not only a numerical superiority over the UPA, but they were also trained and experienced fighters commanded by wily and seasoned officers. If the UPA lost its terrain, it would be doubly hard to recapture it later on. For one thing, the Russians could shove large forces into the forests to prevent the influx of new elements into the ranks of the UPA.

As far as the UPA was concerned, the partisan front was immeasurably more important than the German front. Consequently, Commander Savur decided to throw his principal forces to the north in order to stop the marching columns of the Soviet partisans.

The move of Col. Savur proved successful. The UPA units soon made contact with the enemy at the border of their territory. In a series of small skirmishes they stopped the enemy on the line Brest-Lubeshiv-Richytsia-Sarny-Rokitne. The western column of Soviet partisans, squeezed out of the Ukrainian territory, could not sustain itself west of the Buh River and moved farther south to Galicia, avoiding any armed encounters with the Germans.

The middle group was halted on the Prypiat River, and the eastern near the city of Sarny. Here for the next few months battles were constantly waged, but the UPA succeeded in holding its lines.

In the west UPA-North had only training and reserve units, so that it could not challenge the trained Soviet partisans. Eventually, they marched only on the outskirts of the UPA territory. The greatest danger came from the units

of General Kovpak,<sup>80</sup> Mikhailov and Medvedev, which stubbornly pressed on the Sluch River by using the trickiest partisan methods. For instance, some partisan units were clad in Ukrainian uniforms with Ukrainian insignia (the trident), made in Moscow. By posing as UPA units, they tried to penetrate the terrain held by the UPA. In constant battles the UPA held its territory, keeping its stronger bases in the south, created not long before in the area of Kremianets and in the forest north of that city. This provided the command of UPA-North with the possibility of throwing back the Soviet units to the north, where strong Soviet partisan units were operating around Sarny, Klesiv and Rokitne.

These developments in the northern sector of the Ukrainian territory soon became known to the Germans. General Prutzmann, in tacit cooperation with the Soviet partisans, attacked UPA-North with three motorized columns: one from the city of Kovel northward in the direction of Kamin Koshyrsky, another from the city of Lutsk toward the Styr River and the third from the city of Rivne in the direction of Sarny.

Small UPA units began harassing and attrition tactics against the Germans by executing sudden raids and ambushes. The Germans failed to make combat contact; despite extreme efforts to attain at least some local successes, the columns had to return to their bases empty-handed.

Up to the end of 1943 (with especially heavy fighting in the months of September and October) UPA-North waged 54 battles against the Soviet partisans and 44 against the Germans. In the battles with the Germans the UPA casualties were 414 dead and wounded as compared with 1,500 German dead and wounded. This none too favorable ratio for the UPA is explained by the fact that the Germans had finally gained some experience in partisan warfare.

In October, 1943, the Soviet partisans assassinated an outstanding leader of the German administration of Ukraine. The Soviet partisans subsequently allowed the Germans to "find" an incriminating notebook which contained the identification card of an OUN member. Readily convinced that the assassination had been carried out by the OUN, the Germans under the personal command of General Pritzmann began a new and violent terroristic action. Villages were set afire, innocent people were hanged or shot; towns and cities were bombed and strafed, and executions of Ukrainian leaders took place in such cities as Rivne, Lutsk, Kremianets and Dubno. The Germans gave this explanation for their actions:

Recently two attempts were made to assassinate a person highly placed in the *Reichskommissariat* of Ukraine. Thanks to a thorough investigation, ascertained was the connection between the circles com-

<sup>80</sup> They succeeded in reaching the Carpathian Mountains, where they were annihilated by the UPA.

mitting the assassination and the ideological abettors. Decided upon and implemented were measures against a great number of prisoners belonging to the guilty circles. . . .<sup>81</sup>

In retaliation for the assassination the Germans executed 600 Ukrainians. It later transpired that the assassination was committed by Nikolai Ivanovich Kuznetsov, a member of the reconnaissance unit of the Soviet partisans commanded by Medvedev.<sup>82</sup> Kuznetsov was subsequently captured by the UPA and executed. This example is typical of how easily the Germans were fooled by the Russian propaganda, especially when it was directed against the Ukrainians.<sup>83</sup>

With time the position of the UPA became more difficult, that of the Germans hopeless. When the Eastern front ominously neared at the beginning of 1944, the Germans appealed to the UPA with a proposition to enter into "friendly relations" in order to wage a common struggle against the Russians. The commander of UPA-North replied with a series of attacks on the German positions and forbade his subordinate commanders to negotiate in any form or wise with the Germans. As mentioned earlier, two UPA officers who disobeyed this order were court-martialed, condemned to death, and executed.

Continuing their struggle with the Soviet partisans, the UPA units not only raided the vast areas in the north, but were also able to station their units therein. By the time the Eastern front receded to these areas the UPA had already extended its dominance across the Prypiat River to the southern areas of Byelorussia.

Regrettably, sources pertaining to the military character of the UPA struggle in this period are sparse. In addition to some data in UPA archives outside the borders of Ukraine and some material appearing in Ukrainian publications,<sup>84</sup> there appeared a work by a commander of the Soviet partisans: *Raid to the Sian and the Vistula*, by P. Vershyhora.

Vershyhora's account contains a great deal of propaganda material, false information and a number of instances involving the struggle and tactics of the UPA. The reader will easily discern its tendentious and propagandistic ideological line, dictated by the Communist Party. The author undoubtedly was compelled to write about "facts" which were non-existent and to omit what was inappropriate for the interests of the Communist Party. It is typical that in his first book Vershyhora praised Stalin as a "genial military leader," while in his second book Stalin's name is conspicuously absent,<sup>85</sup> his place having been given over to Nikita S. Khrushchev.

<sup>81</sup> *Volyn* (Volhynia), a newspaper, October 24, 1943.

<sup>82</sup> Medvedev, Dm., *Silniye dukhom* (Strong in Spirit).

<sup>83</sup> Lebed, *op. cit.*; Shankowsky, *op. cit.*

<sup>84</sup> Mirchuk, *op. cit.*; Shankowsky, *op. cit.*

<sup>85</sup> Vershyhora, P., *Ludie z chystoy soviestiu* (People with Clear Conscience), Moscow, 1951.

At the very beginning of the book we find that untruthful information was imparted by the officers of General Kovpak to Marshal Vatutin and Khrushchev himself. They allegedly informed these leading personalities of the USSR that in the Carpathian Mountains they had destroyed the German SS units and a part of the Ukrainian SS "Galicia" division.

The fact is that the Germans had destroyed the partisans of Kovpak in the late summer of 1943. At the time the Ukrainian division was only in the stage of formation, some of its units being trained in Poland and Germany. The first units of the "Galicia" Division to take part in battles were a few battalions given accelerated training; these arrived in western Ukraine only in February, 1944, and operated not in the mountains but on the border of Volhynia and Galicia.<sup>86</sup> Since these facts were reported in many Ukrainian publications as well as in German official documents, it seems impossible that such Soviet leaders as Vatutin and Khrushchev would not have known them. The information supplied by Vershyhora has propagandistic overtones throughout his book as a whole: he omits by silence the battles of UPA-North with the Germans, but stubbornly repeats groundless statements about the "collaboration" of the UPA with the Germans.

Instructions from the Communist Party came down to the units of Vershyhora, about which he himself reports:

What is the "Banderovtshchyna?" . . . One battalion we destroyed. Yet here we have another one. . . . Whole regiments, peasants, people. . . .

Such was the reaction of an officer of the Soviet unit, but this displeased the others. They denied that the population was on the side of the UPA. But the Commander (Shumeyko) insists on his own opinion:

And the villagers? They arm themselves with sticks and forks. Whom did we meet? And the "self-defense" in the villages, of whom does it consist? . . .

After a heated discussion the officer from the political affairs committee calms everyone down by reading a "party instruction:"

—About our attitude toward the Ukrainian nationalist partisan detachments:

—. . . Leaders of the Ukrainian bourgeois nationalists are for all intents and purposes German agents, the enemies of the Ukrainian people; true, a part of the rank and file participants in these detachments sincerely wish to fight against the German occupants, but they are duped by the bourgeois nationalists. . .

—Did you hear that, Shumeyko? Will this directive filter through your brain?

Evidently a directive from the Central Committee of the party to the

<sup>86</sup> Tys-Krojmaluk, Jorge, *Guerra y Libertad* (War and Freedom), Buenos Aires, 1961.



effect that the UPA was collaborating with the Germans was far more important and valid than the reality observed day by day by the Soviet partisans. Logically, of course, no mention in the memoirs of Vershyhora could be made of the battles of the UPA against the Germans.

It is impossible to ascertain for what reason Vershyhora gives false information regarding the chief of staff of UPA-North, General Leonid Stupnytsky (*nom de guerre*, Honcharenko). Vershyhora reports that Honcharenko was a corporal in the Polish army who was apprehended and executed by the Soviet partisans in the second half of January, 1944. From his comical descriptions it would appear that Honcharenko was a callow youth who sneaked into the ranks of the Soviet partisans in order to find out about their strength and weapons.

In actuality, Gen. L. Stupnytsky had been a colonel in the army of the Ukrainian National Republic (1918-20), one of the outstanding commanders of the well-known "Winter March," and a recognized military historian. Promoted by the High Command of the UPA to the rank of general, Stupnytsky was killed near the city of Ostriv on July 30, 1944, in a skirmish with a unit of the Soviet army.<sup>87</sup>

The units of Vershyhora operated along the Buh River, where the UPA forces were weak. For the most part they consisted of untrained young partisans, and, being numerically smaller, could not resist or stop a sizeable Soviet partisan force. The staff of UPA-North successfully maintained a defense of its bases east of the Buh River, thereby allowing the group of Vershyhora to reach their objective on the Polish territory.

Although Vershyhora did not meet the combat UPA partisans—merely its training and recruiting units—he frequently expresses great respect for the Ukrainian partisans. At the beginning he ponders on whether or not it would be better for him to operate in Podilia, because here in Western Ukraine "there has appeared a new enemy, the nationalists." Upon leaving behind his "partisan country" and entering Ukraine, he records in his memoirs that "our good-time stroll was over." Vershyhora is perturbed by the fact that apart from small skirmishes he could not "contact any real military power." He concludes that the enemy is "a coward, and was afraid of close combat," although he hastens to add that the vanguard patrols had to be strengthened—"which exerted our strength."

In fact, the route of the Vershyhora raid did not go through the UPA-North-held territory, but along its flank, where only patrols and reconnaissance groups of the UPA operated.

On the Buh River the Soviet partisans dispersed an UPA detachment con-

<sup>87</sup> Gen. Honcharenko, on orders of the UPA, was trying, along with his son Yuriy, to make his way to the Carpathians, where he was to establish a network of Ukrainian military schools.

sisting mostly of the local population, "mobilized by the Ukrainian nationalists," as he reports. But as we have noted elsewhere, the UPA did not "mobilize" its army, relying exclusively on volunteers. The political character of the UPA could not brook any system of mobilization of any and all elements from the Ukrainian population.

Vershyhora also displays ignorance as to the military nomenclature of the UPA, saying that a *kurin* was a regiment, and not a battalion, which is simply not true.

"Among the documents found after a victorious battle with the Ukrainian partisans," writes Vershyhora, "an instruction was found to the effect that they (the UPA) should not engage the Soviet frontline troops, but to wage an implacable war against the Soviet partisans."

As regards the UPA, Vershyhora notes:

The enemy is sly and dangerous with his trickery and treachery, and, above all, is apt to use against us all sorts of partisan wiles and ruses. . . .

On the route of their raid Vershyhora's partisans bypassed the larger towns and cities and marched through the woods. Here they encountered "a dense network of bandit units."

—Shall we fight?

—Why should we engage them?

—We should not waste our men and combat equipment!

Spending a night in a village where, according to Soviet intelligence, a strong UPA group was supposed to be operating, Vershyhora writes, "We saw no people with arms . . . either on the streets or in backyards. . . ."

The Soviet partisan commanders, who up to that time had operated on the Russian territory, were completely ignorant (or made believe they were) of the national problems of Ukraine. The ideal of the independence of Ukraine was to them incomprehensible (or maybe the author merely says that this was so), and they tried to explain everything by a social approach. The explanation: the independence of Ukraine, for which the UPA fights, calls for the return of rich farmers and capitalists, who had been removed by the Communist revolution.

According to Vershyhora, when they learned that Armenian detachments were with the UPA, as well as elements of other non-Russian nations, the Russian commanders inquired:

—What Armenia?

Vershyhora apparently would have the reader believe that for them there was nothing within the borders of the USSR but Russia, and nothing except the "Russian" or "Soviet" people. This could be taken seriously only in the Western world, for every man and woman in the USSR knew that the USSR consists of "Union Republics."

Vershyhora in a number of places reports about the "collaboration" of the UPA with the German police units, even hinting that he had official documents to substantiate his charges. Not a single document, however, is reproduced to this effect.<sup>88</sup>

In confronting the UPA units the Soviet partisan commanders were faced with the problem of defining their principal objective. And they came up with a definite answer:

1. To destroy the Ukrainian nationalist "bands;"
2. To isolate them from the people and thus deprive them of support and reserves.

Yet Vershyhora fails to answer whether his mission accomplished these objectives. He writes he had a principal problem to solve:

"What is this political barley soup prepared by the Gestapo and Stepan Bandera?"

Vershyhora evidently knew what the Ukrainian nationalist insurgents were fighting for, but in his book had to follow the official Communist party line, which tied the anti-Soviet Ukrainian nationalist forces with the Gestapo and the German occupation forces in Ukraine (thereby ignoring the three fierce years of struggle of the UPA against the Germans in Ukraine in 1942-1945).

Vershyhora finally reports a major encounter with the Ukrainian partisans. This is the battle with the UPA training group "Lisovi Chorty" (The Forest Devils), reported on elsewhere in this book.

The effect UPA had upon the partisans is described candidly:

Suddenly near the forest appeared a group of cavalry in the strength of a few dozen riders. At first the staff thought they were our own people returning from reconnaissance. But suddenly over the group of the riders there appeared a two-colored rag,<sup>89</sup> the sight of which sent a chill down my spine! This is a band of cavalrymen!

Apparently the "band" caused some commotion, for afterwards "our battalions were on the alert. . . . Because of overzealous vigilance, toward evening, Lenkin, who was returning from across the Buh River, seemed to us to be Bandera himself. The second battalion, in panic, opened fire upon the squadron of Sashko Usach. . . ."

Space has been devoted to Vershyhora's book because it is one of the few

<sup>88</sup> In one place Vershyhora reports that at the 6th Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR it was reported that UPA Commander Antoniuk and 1st Lt. Osten, commander of a German unit, allegedly made an "agreement" with a deputy commissioner (*Gebitskommissar*) of the city of Volodymyr Volynsky to the end that the Germans would supply the UPA with weapons and arms for its help in "pillaging" the Ukrainian population.

<sup>89</sup> The "two-colored rag" may have been the blue and yellow Ukrainian national flag, symbol of the national statehood of Ukraine. But the Ukrainian partisans almost never carried their national flag into battle.

Russian documents dealing with the struggle of the UPA. As such it has merited some salutary comments. Finally, we may call attention to the concern the Ukrainian nationalist partisans generated in general. The communist center in Moscow saw fit to send into Ukraine extensive propaganda literature, from which Vershyhora quotes an instruction from the works of Lenin:

If, because of the centuries-long oppression, nationalist tendencies among the less progressive masses of the Ukrainian people may be observed, members of the Russian Communist Party should exhibit to them the most understanding and careful attitude based on the identity of interests of Ukraine and Russia. . . .

### **German Operations Against the UPA in the Carpathians (October 4 to December 4, 1943)**

By the end of 1943 the German armies were suffering heavy reverses on the Eastern front and were retreating to defense lines on the Dnieper near Kiev. Being contested were individual strategic points only; the lack of reserves and effective communication had contributed to the loss of initiative and had prevented implementation of any strategy based on the long run. The German armies in the East tried to obey Hitler's behest: "Keep the occupied territories at all costs," but the overwhelmingly superior Soviet troops would not allow the stabilization of the front.

It became vital for the Germans to secure their supply routes, which meant clearing the *hinterland* of Ukrainian and Soviet partisans. The situation grew more pressing from day to day, for it was known that the Soviet High Command was preparing a general offensive for February-March, 1944, with the objective of taking the western part of Ukraine.

The UPA, on the other hand, was adjusting itself to the new situation, created by the approaching front and the appearance of the Soviet partisans. The raid of Kovpak's Soviet partisans from the north into the Carpathians attempted to establish a new base for large Soviet contingents to come. This the UPA sought to prevent. The Carpathians were an ideal terrain for partisan warfare and possessed great military significance besides. Through it ran the communication routes to Rumania, Hungary, and Slovakia, and to the west through Southern Poland. Predominating here was a Ukrainian population, which willingly sided with the Ukrainian fighters for the liberation of Ukraine. For all these reasons the Germans, too, tried to establish military control over these woody and mountainous areas.

The Ukrainian armed forces at that time were known as the Ukrainian National Self-Defense;<sup>90</sup> only after the German military operations were they incorporated into the structure of the UPA. Operating there was the excellently organized network of the OUN, and established in the mountains were

<sup>90</sup> Mirchuk, *op. cit.*; Shankowsky, *op. cit.*

four military training camps. The organization in that terrain was headed by UPA Col. Vasyl Sydor (Shelest, Conrad, Zov), the commander of UPA-West, who implemented the integration of the Ukrainian National Self-Defense units into the UPA.

The training camps speeded up their military training in order to release trained fighters to clear the Carpathians of the Kovpak partisans, in accordance with the plans of UPA-West. The exact number of these young fighters cannot be ascertained today. In training were many units which later became famous in battle: the "Bulava," "Lvy," "Zhuravli" and "Chornolistsi." Each unit contained at least two companies. The officers and noncommissioned officers who served as instructors were all experienced partisans and members of the UPA and OUN.

On the other hand, the fighters had no combat experience in partisan warfare, acquiring their "baptism by fire" during the German operations.

The aforementioned training camps were located either in the mountains or in the secure areas in the following localities:

Kolomeya: near the village of Nedilna;

Chorny Lis (Black Forest): near the village of Kosmach;

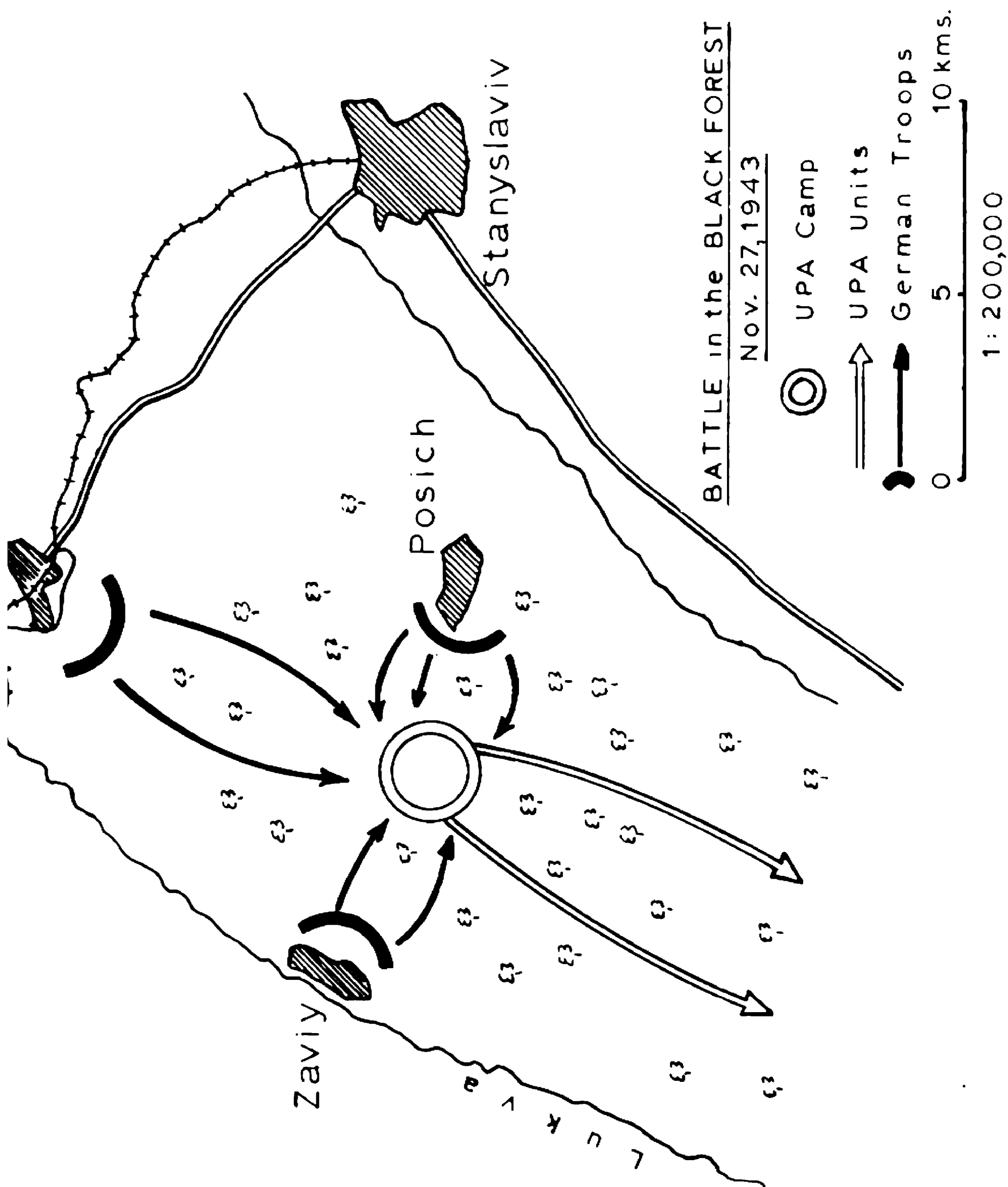
Dolyna: between the villages of Luh and Sukhodil;

Sambir: near the village of Nedilna.

The German operational command instituted its actions with the use of ruthless police methods. Martial law was declared with military tribunals set in motion, while the populace was terrorized by public executions. The cruel terror in Western Ukraine was maintained by the Gestapo until the last days of the German occupation. In public and secret executions some 15,000 Ukrainian lives were taken in a short period of time, regardless of whether they had taken part in the Ukrainian underground movement or not. The purpose of the terror was to immobilize the population of the submountainous areas, and subsequently that of all Western Ukraine, to cut up the OUN network and the liaison between UPA-North and UPA-West, and to liquidate the movement of the partisans and their training centers in the Carpathians.

The Germans divided the terrain of operations into four sectors corresponding to the four training camps of the partisans. The time of operations was scheduled for late autumn and early winter. To the Germans the timing seemed appropriate because there was no foliage in the forests and because the snow would facilitate tracking of the insurgents.

Strong reconnaissance activity by the Germans provoked several armed skirmishes with UPA liaison groups. As a result, the Germans fortified their exit routes in order to secure protection against raids and ambushes and concentrated a great quantity of light and heavy weapons and artillery. They also obtained the support of the *Luftwaffe*. The German infantry force then operating in these areas is estimated at eight to ten police regiments.



The Germans did not conduct their operations simultaneously against all four partisan centers, probably because the configuration of the terrain did not make this particularly advantageous.

The first serious fighting took place in the Kolomeya sector on October 15, 1943. The German attack began from two departing positions, the villages of Bereziv and Kosmach, with the objective of capturing the training camp on Mount Tarnytsia.

First occupying tactically advantageous positions on the hills and in the underbush, the Germans moved in the direction of the UPA camp without much caution and security. Strong fire greeted them as they approached the camp. Undaunted, the Germans attempted to force the attack several times. The battle was fierce and bloody with heavy losses on both sides. Failing to take the camp, the Germans fell back to the villages.

On November 12-16, 1943, the Germans attacked the second training camp, first subjecting it to heavy artillery and mortar fire. This time the German units surrounded the camp despite the heavy terrain. But the UPA fighters succeeded in breaking through the ring and reached the Black Forest, as prearranged, after a ten-day march. The Germans did not pursue them, contenting themselves by burning the barracks. It was reported that the Germans admired the camp's facilities, including running water brought in from a mountainous stream.

In the second sector at the Black Forest the Germans began an attack early in the morning of November 27, 1943. After a bombardment by the *Luftwaffe* and an artillery barrage, the German infantry advanced from the villages of Maidan, Posich and Zaviy, surrounding the camp about noon. Unfamiliar with the terrain, they lost a great number of men as they narrowed their ring around the camp. In the course of the battle the UPA insurgents captured the headquarters of the German units and its radio station. Deprived of the requisite liaison, the Germans began losing themselves in the dense woods. The fighting broke down into a series of skirmishes in which the UPA insurgents had a clear advantage, knowing as they did the terrain and the secret lanes and paths for effective ambushes and sudden raids. Finally the UPA insurgents attacked the German units in two places, penetrated through the encirclement and attacked the Germans from the rear. Not having any possibility of regaining the upper hand, the German command ordered retreat. The Ukrainian insurgents were waiting: they opened fire from all sides, throwing the well-disciplined German police units into a complete rout.

The Black Forest remained in Ukrainian hands.

The German attack in the third sector began with their units closing in from five villages: Kropyvnyk, Kalna, Sloboda Bolekhivska, Lypa and Mizun. As they proceeded to encircle the camp the insurgents quickly evacuated it and moved into the wooded terrain south. Here they were joined by two other

detachments of insurgents, alerted by OUN intelligence and dispatched as support reserves from the city of Skole.

The German troops, finally discovering they had encircled an empty camp, began a pursuit of the partisans. They were received by heavy fire from the awaiting partisans and suffered heavy losses, stopping them in their tracks. The insurgents soon had behind them several kilometers of hilly and woody terrain. Fearing encirclement in the difficult terrain, the Germans burned down the camp and returned to the villages.

In the fourth sector near Sambir the Germans advanced on December 4, 1943, with two police regiments. Their frontal attack near the village of Nedilna failed, principally because the insurgents were well situated in the hilly terrain and were able to rake the attacking Germans with the fire of several machine guns. The Germans then began to encircle the camp, harassed at every step. The skirmishes lasted the whole day, the toll of casualties high on both sides. There was much hand-to-hand combat with bayonet and knife. Toward evening the partisans resorted to classical partisan tactics: by a concentrated assault they broke the ring and attacked the Germans from the rear. The Germans ordered general retreat.

The Ukrainian insurgents suffered 34 killed, while the Germans, according to Capt. Brandenburg of the German *Gendarmerie*, sustained 316 dead. Such a ratio is normal in encounters of the regular army with insurgents, especially when regulars are not acquainted either with the terrain or with partisan warfare tactics.

With this the German command terminated the campaign. The terrain of the Carpathian Mountains remained in the hands of the Ukrainian insurgents and soon became a bastion for training, raids and the struggle against the Russian occupants. An appraisal of the battles between November 27 and December 4, 1943, proves positive for the Ukrainians. Operating against overwhelming German forces, the Ukrainian partisans, despite heavy losses, inferior numbers and lack of training, sustained the campaign of a well-trained foe to destroy them.

### **Another German Attack on A Partisan Camp**

An attack by two UPA battalions on the town of Mizoch on the night of August 19-20, 1943, was interrupted by an urgent order to return immediately to their camps. At staff the battalion commander found out that General von dem Bach was preparing to attack the camps with an SS Division. Since dawn was near, it was important to reach the forest and help defend the camps as quickly as possible. One of the participants reported as follows:

When we reached the border of the forest in which our camps were located, the sun was already high and clear, presaging beautiful weather. But, suddenly, a German fighter plane swooped over our



heads, strafing us. Everyone of us ran as fast as he could to the forest. Soon another German plane came over us, and now both strafed mercilessly as we tried to push on.

At the border of the forest our vehicles were burning. Not having anti-aircraft weapons, we were helpless. Tired by the action in Mizoch and by the long march, we could hardly keep battle order during the march. Finally, with our last efforts we succeeded in reaching at 8:00 A.M. the camp of the noncommissioned officers' training school. The battalion of Kropyva made off for its own camp. Our Dubno camp was in the hands of the Germans. The garrison of our camp had barely escaped, leaving behind all the equipment.

We hardly appreciated the situation. We knew that, in addition to our camp, the Germans had taken also the villages of Antonivka, Bushcha and Tartak. We did not know their strength, save that Germans were putting down a heavy fire of artillery and machine guns throughout the forest. Refugees told us of a German armored car in Antonivka.

Commander Chernyk ordered preparation for the defense. As scouts were sent out in various directions, our battalion and the school of noncommissioned officers occupied positions in the trenches surrounding the camp and the school.

We expected the German attack any minute. The forest howled with mortar and machine gun fire and the bursting of bombs from the German planes. We watched the planes silently. . . . All of us were hungry and thirsty. About 10:00 A.M. the first plane came and dropped bombs in the center of the camp, causing panic and chaos. Some of the fighters leaped up from the trenches and fled behind the thick trees. After a few minutes two other German planes came and dumped bombs, setting afire the barn and other structures. We could hear the civilians escaping from the villages—their cattle lowing, the women and children crying. . . .

We expected that as soon as the planes returned the Germans would attack. There was no place to escape; we girded ourselves for defense. But no attack materialized. The planes kept returning and bombing the area until evening. We all clung to the trees, the trenches were pounded level with the ground. Surprisingly, we suffered only two dead and three wounded. The German pilots had received orders to bombard the camp, and this they fully accomplished, but the camp was empty, all the personnel having taken cover some 200-300 meters away in the woods.

The Germans apparently had a plan of the camp and the trenches, for their bombing was accurate. We could imagine what would have happened to us had we remained in the trenches.

After sunset we began to reassemble. The order came to move to the camp of Kruk. It was clear that we would have to break through the ring that night. We could not take our small cannon; therefore, Commander Chernyk ordered it buried. In a long snaking single-file formation our battalion and the school, after burying the dead, moved toward Zaluska Hora. My company was detailed to lead the march and make the breakthrough. We decided to take along only weapons and ammunition, leaving all other equipment behind. The wounded

were carried at the end of the column. The commanders marched behind my company, the rest of the detachments following them. We succeeded in passing through the Kamianna Hora and the village of Dubensky Maidan, thus escaping from the encirclement without firing a single shot.

Early that morning as the German planes went into action again we selected a secluded place to camp in the forest of Baliarnia. In an hour's time the wounded joined us. They had not been allowed to follow us closely because the squeaking of the wheels would have betrayed our whereabouts to the Germans.

It was Sunday, August 22. Only in Baliarnia did I find out that Kruk's company had been attacked by the Germans in the village of Antonivka and that Kruk had destroyed 40 Germans, while his own unit had only 3 dead and one wounded. The camp in the woods presented a pitiful sight. Some 2,000 souls, both insurgents and civilians, filled a small forest. All were hungry, since the scanty food supplies had been given to the wounded and children. The number of wounded had been swelled by those brought in from the neighboring villages. We had not completely escaped the encirclement; in the villages were German troops and there was the food as well.

German planes flew over the forest the entire day. The Germans stormed the camps, but found no one there. The German attack on the forest had exposed both our people and our defense system to a test that showed up a great number of positive and negative elements. Above all, it had become evident that among both the officers and the men were a number who were totally unprepared or unfit for this kind of warfare. They soon were either dismissed or transferred to non-combatant assignments. But also revealed was that among the new elements there were a great many promising and dedicated soldiers, many of whom later became outstanding officers and leaders of the UPA. Also, a new light had been cast on the problem of wounded personnel. It was evident that this problem had not been given adequate attention by the UPA. Henceforth several provisions were made for the care of the wounded, including establishment of provisional field hospitals which had to be secreted from both the German and the Soviet partisans.

Another shortcoming revealed during this operation was the inadequacy of our combat reconnaissance. The UPA command, it was ascertained, had been quite remiss. UPA intelligence knew something about the Germans in their respective areas, but had not known about the impending large-scale operation. Even when we were still in Dubno, the Germans had brought in a great number of fresh troops, but the UPA staff had failed to foresee the significance of the concentration of troops in the area. Moreover, the Germans had first blocked off the complex of forests, occupied a number of villages and sent a number of detachments into forests that were not occupied by us. And bombing German planes had spread chaos and demoralization in our ranks to prepare the way for attack by their ground troops.

Our decision to move out the first night had been completely correct: the time we gained proved to be our salvation. The regular army

cannot develop their operations as quickly, which cannot be ascribed to them as a fault.

### **Raid on German SD Police Between Villages of Yapolut and Vilka (July 18, 1943)**

On July 17, 1943, the UPA training group under the command of Tsyhan received the information that a German police company was moving from the city of Rivne to the village of Yapolut.

Commander Tsyhan decided to ambush the Germans with his group. It was the first combat action of the recruits, who were still in training. It was decided to spring the ambush where the woods merged with the highway, not far from the Horyn River. At night the UPA detachment moved close to the highway and took positions. The forces were more or less equally matched, although the Germans were veterans and had better weapons and equipment. On the other hand, Commander Tsyhan counted on partisan tactics to offset any material disadvantage.

The UPA training company occupied both sides of the highway, two platoons so placed that they could attack the Germans from both front and rear. The terrain was covered by underbrush and marshy vegetation.

On July 18 toward noon the German column entered the ambush zone. When the column was amid the UPA ambushers, Commander Tsyhan gave the order to fire. The initial rain of lead was enough. Thrown into confusion and panic, the Germans ceased to be a fighting body. Attempts by individual German soldiers to resist were unavailing. The enemy fled leaving behind 19 men dead. The new UPA company, without the loss of a single man, disappeared in the forest.

### **Attack on German Military Train Near the Village of Nemovychi (June 23-24, 1943)**

On the night of June 23-24, 1943, UPA companies led by Commanders Dorosh and Yarema lay in wait for a German military train on the Rivne-Sarny railway. The train was carrying a combat contingent of SD German security police. The group, about 150 strong, had been dispatched to conduct combat operations against the UPA in the villages surrounding the city of Sarny.

The ambush had been set up in a spot where the forest closed in on both sides of the railway. The rails had been smeared with soap up to a spot where mines had been placed. The UPA companies extended in groups along a length of some 500 meters, the front and rear units strengthened with heavy machine guns.

When the train wheels hit the soaped tracks the train began losing speed. Then it finally hit the mines. The explosion evoked panic among the half-

awake Germans, who began jumping out of the cars only to run into the heavy fire of the UPA. Some of the Germans made the ditches and woods, opening up a weak and uncoordinated fire. These few dozen were soon overwhelmed and destroyed.

Almost all the Germans perished. The military loot was impressive: heavy weapons, ammunition, military field equipment and a great quantity of food supplies.

In this action both Commanders Dorosh and Yarema were slightly wounded.

# Chapter Nineteen

## THE POLISH FRONT

After the defeat of Poland in 1939 Polish patriotic elements organized a powerful Polish underground organization directed against the Nazi occupant.

Dreaming, however, of the restoration of Poland within the frontiers of 1939 and having the backing of the Western allies, the Polish leaders and statesmen initially did not concern themselves with the Ukrainian population of Western Ukraine. The Ukrainians were still their subjects, their land remained an indisputable part of Poland. There were even those among the Polish leaders who coveted for Poland after the war the Ukrainian territory extending up to the Black Sea.

As far back as 1941, however, leading members of the Polish underground both in Poland and among the exiles in London foresaw that “in Vilnius and Lviv strong military formations would be necessary,” since these historic cities were alien and hostile (containing Ukrainians, Lithuanians and Byelorussians). Thus, instructions for the Polish underground envisioned “military operations in the area of Lviv—Little Poland (*Wschodnia Malopolska*)<sup>91</sup>—and around the area of Vilnius.”

With World War II dragging on, the Polish military leaders became preoccupied with the Ukrainian problem, as evidenced by Polish underground

<sup>91</sup> *Wschodnia Malopolska* (“Eastern Little Poland”) was the artificial name given by the Warsaw government to Galicia as one of the many steps in Polonizing that part of Western Ukraine.

documents. In the so-called "Report 154" of 1942 the Polish leaders spoke openly about the necessity of opposing the Ukrainian armed aspirations toward the creation of an independent Ukrainian state:

As additional adversaries we see the Ukrainians primarily, the Lithuanians, secondarily. The possibility of battles with the Ukrainians on the territory of operations exists from the very first day of the uprising. From the beginning, then, we will be forced to fight also the Ukrainians for Lviv. . . .<sup>92</sup>

In preparation for the uprising the Poles formed a group known as *Wachliarz* (Fan). It was charged with the staging of underground military action, featuring sabotage, and the creation of a diversionary cover and protection in the event the German Eastern front collapsed. The aforementioned "basis of operations" in "Report 154" was designated as the western part of Polisia near Brest, extending to the Buh River.

The plans of the uprising were constantly changed, but eventually implementation of a plan began in January of 1944, and lasted until July. It was directed not only against the Germans but the Ukrainians as well. As far as the Soviet partisans were concerned, the Poles leaned to cooperation with them, insisting only on "good will" on both sides. The Polish partisans, as directed by their headquarters in Warsaw, as a rule avoided any armed encounters with the Soviet partisans.

As regards the Ukrainians, especially the OUN and the UPA, it is a matter of historic fact that at the Second Conference of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists, held in April, 1943, a far-sighted declaration was adopted calling for liquidation of all fronts save the Soviet and the German. Collaboration against the common enemies was the keynote. On the basis of this action of the OUN, an understanding was reached with the Hungarians and the Rumanians, and a closer collaboration among the non-Russian nations of the USSR was effected. But the Poles refused to engage in any parleys. To the contrary, they demanded the capitulation of the UPA and its subordination under the Polish command. In addition, they demanded that the Ukrainians recognize all Western Ukrainian lands as rightly belonging to a future Polish state. Some Polish leaders went so far as to insist on the inclusion of other Ukrainian territories, including the capital of Ukraine, Kiev.<sup>93</sup>

In support of their postulates regarding the Ukrainian territories, the Poles cited their alleged approval by the Western allies. They also suffered delusions as regards the Soviet Union; the Polish leaders believed that the Western allies would wrest from Moscow a "concession," a general agreement for the establishment of a "great and historical Poland" which would include a

<sup>92</sup> Tereshchuk, Petro, "Narysy z nainovishchoyi istorii" (Outlines from the Newest History), *Vyzvolny Shliakh*, Nos. 9-12, 1948, London.

<sup>93</sup> Shankowsky, *op. cit.*

great part of the Ukrainian ethnic territories. And what was altogether weird—considering its relations with the Ukrainians in the past—the Polish leadership simply did not begin to appreciate the Ukrainian problem in terms of its potentiality and dynamism.

Establishing their base in ethnic Ukrainian territory bordering on the lands on the Buh River, now populated mainly by Poles, the Polish partisans began a ruthless “liquidation” of the Ukrainians there and also in Volhynia. Individual Ukrainian leaders were assassinated; ordinary people were killed at random. Whereas the Ukrainians in the cities under the German administration were completely defenseless, the Ukrainians in the villages spontaneously formed armed groups to fight back against the Polish terrorist groups. This state of affairs eventually involved the UPA. There erupted a war between the Polish and the Ukrainian undergrounds which lasted for a year and which needlessly tied up both undergrounds, hindering them from waging the essential war against the Germans and the Russians.

The Poles were able to amass about a thousand partisans on their operational base, a number which was augmented by other Polish partisans later on. In February, 1944, a time when the German-Soviet front already was near the city of Sarny, the Poles organized the “27th Infantry Division,” mustering 6,000 partisans.

The Polish partisan base encompassed the following:

- West of the Buh River;
- North: the Holoby-Kovel-Dorohuisk railroad;
- South: the Torchyn-Volodymyr Volynsky-Ustyhul highway;
- East: Holoby-Torchyn.

The Poles succeeded in clearing their base of operations of the Ukrainian population and German police detachments. The principal forces of the Poles were located in such localities as Zamlynia, Stavky, Puziv, Bielen, Marianivka, Kureniv, Lityn and Zasmyky.

The UPA units concentrated north and northeast of Volodymyr Volynsky. In addition, the UPA Command, knowing the designs of the Poles on the areas of Polisia and Volhynia, took steps to prevent the Poles from extending their base of operations. Within the terrain of its operations the UPA cleared the villages and woods of Poles. The Polish settlers in these territories had been brought in by the Polish government prior to 1939 in order to “dilute” the Ukrainian ethnic territory; they were not indigenous to these lands. During the war these chauvinistic Polish elements were actively engaged in combatting the native Ukrainians. On the one hand, these Poles provided ready recruits for the Nazi-sponsored Polish auxiliary police to replace the Ukrainian auxiliary police that had deserted *en masse* to the UPA. On the other hand, many Poles had registered as *Volksdeutsche*, and thus could conduct anti-Ukrainian activities even more effectively. Also, in those areas where the Soviet partisans operated, the Poles furnished their own “Red”

groups in support of the Russians, hoping that such collaboration would help the Polish cause. Soviet sources reveal that in these areas the Poles constituted from 40 to 90 percent of their Red partisan groups. At a meeting organized by General Kovpak, the Soviet partisan leader, the Polish representatives declared that "in the struggle against Hitlerism and Ukrainian nationalism their (the Poles') road is that of the Red Army and the Soviet Union. . . ." <sup>94</sup>

This was one of the reasons why the UPA, after its first warnings went unheeded, formally demanded that all the Poles quit the Ukrainian territory voluntarily, setting a deadline for their departure. When the Poles ignored the warning, they were set upon by the UPA.

The German forces at that time consisted primarily of police units garrisoned in such cities as Kovel, Holoby, Ustyhul and Luboml; they seldom operated in the terrain. Thus, outside of the cities the territory was completely free of Germans, the Polish and Ukrainian partisans operating unchallenged.

The Poles had entertained a plan which called for the occupation of Polisia and Volhynia by their underground forces as a base of the uprising. Later on, once the German-Soviet front had come near, their operations would have extended to the south, reaching Lviv, thereby preventing the Ukrainians from broadening their military operations and establishing bases in the ethnic Ukrainian territory which had been part of Poland prior to 1939.

Consequently, the UPA had to block the Poles in their base on the Buh River and prevent them from collaborating with the Russians.

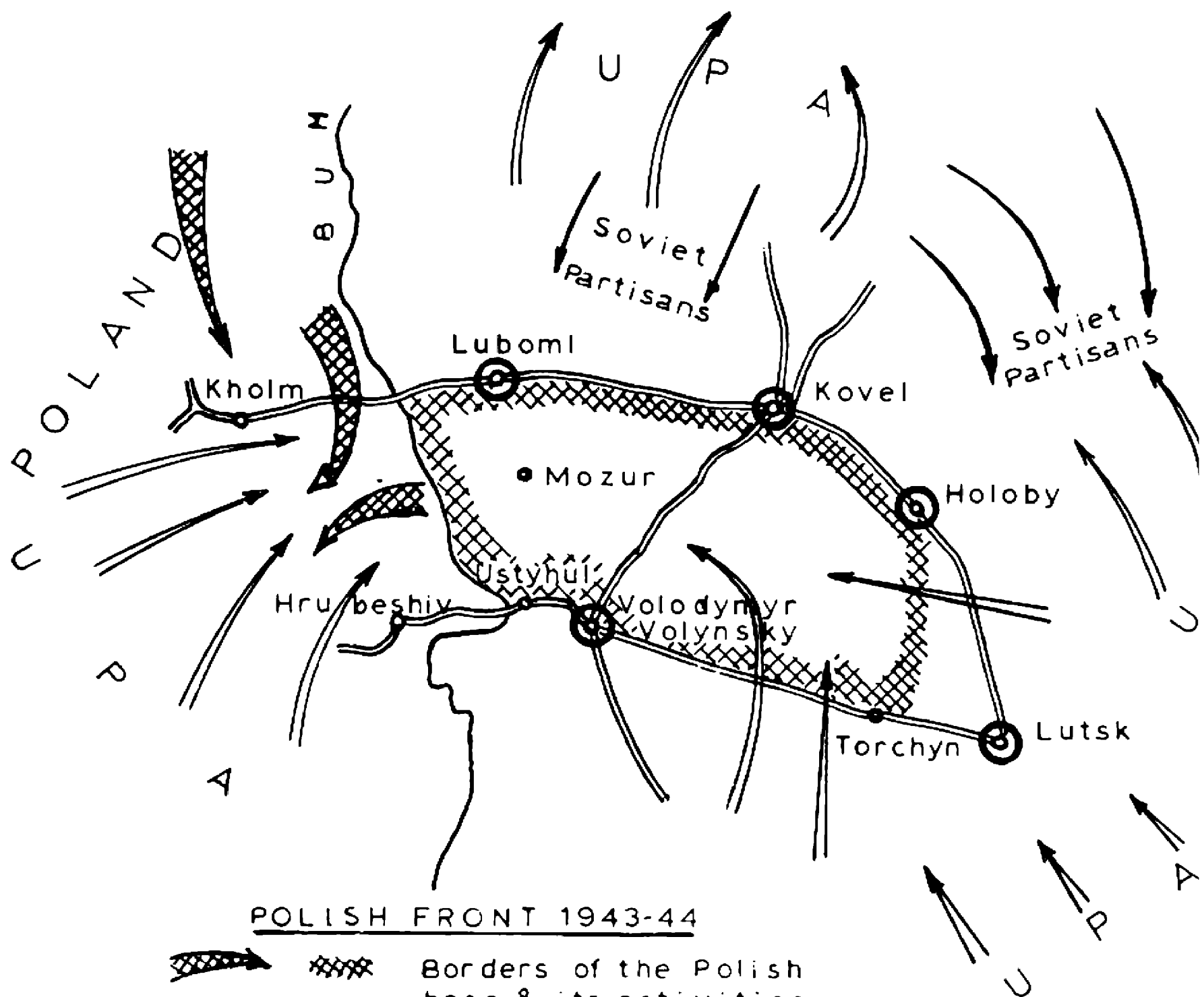
The German command considered the Ukrainians to be a far more important enemy than the Poles, if only because they viewed Ukraine as a future prize colony. For instance, the German commander of the city of Kovel proposed to Col. Kiverski, commander of the Polish partisans, the institution of a common action against the Russians, but left him a "free hand" against the Ukrainians.

The Poles failed to respond to the German commander. Instead, they appealed to the Soviet partisans, suggesting a common front against the Germans. As was to happen with the Warsaw uprising, the Russians "negotiated" and promised their help. But when the Polish 27th Infantry Division moved against the Germans, the Soviet partisans failed to emerge from their hide-outs in the forest. The Germans encircled the Polish unit and, after three weeks, annihilated it. In other places in Polisia the Russians, posing as allies of the Poles, disarmed the Polish partisans wherever they could get hold of them.


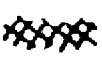

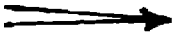

When the Soviet troops entered Lviv, the Polish segment of the city's population proceeded to organize the municipal government under the code

<sup>94</sup> Cf. article by V. Klovov, *Vitchyzna* (Fatherland), April, 1954, Kiev, Ukraine.





POLISH FRONT 1943-44

-   Borders of the Polish base & its activities
-  German garrison
-  UPA
-  Soviet Partisans

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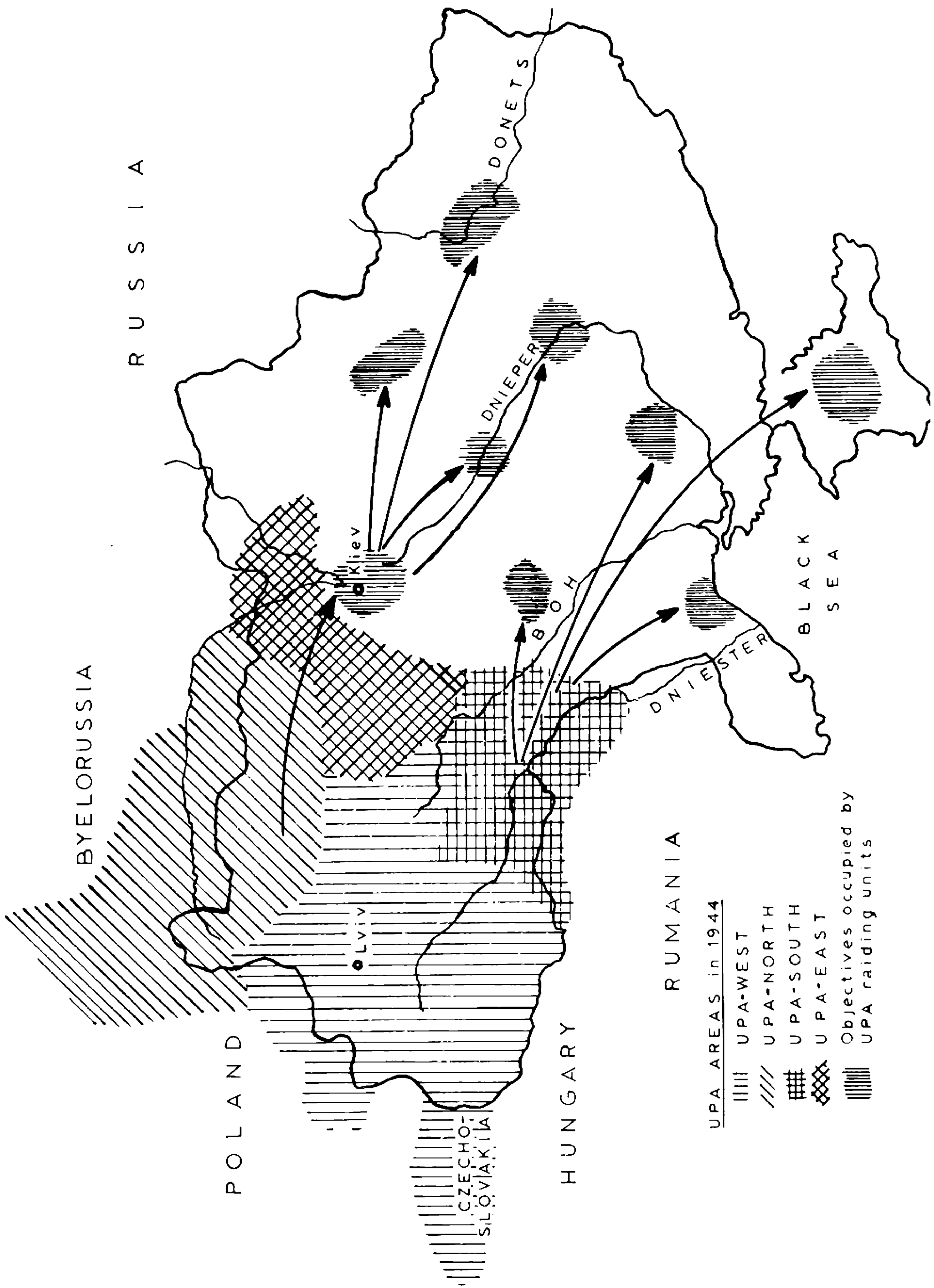
name of *Burza* (Storm). It was promptly liquidated by the Russians; when Polish officers who were members of the Polish underground went to negotiate with the Soviet command, they were disarmed and arrested, while their units were imprisoned. All appeals by the Polish underground leaders to the Western allies for intervention remained unanswered.

As regards the actions of the UPA against the Polish underground, the blockade begun in 1943 was fully successful. Outstanding in this operation were the companies "Halaida," "Tyhry," "Bohun," "Tury," "Vovky" and "Nalyvaiko." In support arrived substantial reserves of UPA units, known as the "Siromantsi" from the Carpathians. In general the UPA defended a line on the Huchva Stream. At that time the Germans began their actions against the UPA by attacking it from the rear. Numerous battles with the Germans in May, 1943, in areas far distant from the terrain of battles with the Poles, and some reverses of the UPA suffered in combatting the Germans, did not distract the UPA Command from its task of blockading the Polish base. The constant fighting was costly to both sides. In some 201 battles with the UPA the Poles lost 5,100 combatants and civilian personnel.

With the arrival of the Soviet troops this unnecessary front disappeared. Some Poles were allowed to fight with the Soviet partisans. Some joined the Polish Red army under the command of General Berling. The others were disarmed or destroyed by the Russians.

It is our view that the failure of the Poles lay in the fact that they devoted themselves not to the defense of Poland as such, but to designs upon the Ukrainian, Byelorussian, and Lithuanian territory. Moreover, the Polish partisans were oriented on the Western allies, and consequently on the USSR, who also were "allies" of the West. Finally, they were regarded by the native Ukrainians as "occupants" and "oppressors." It is nothing short of astounding that the Polish *Wachliarz* plan should have been approved by the English military and political leaders; obviously they were ill-informed about Polish-Ukrainian, Polish-Russian, and Ukrainian-Russian relationships.

Only after the end of World War II, when the UPA concentrated its activities west of the Curzon Line, could the UPA reach a workable understanding and cooperation with a now much weaker Polish underground against the Russians.





# Chapter Twenty

## THE RUSSIAN FACTOR IN THE UPA STRUGGLE

The average Western man today cannot properly understand the problem of Communist Russia if his knowledge is based exclusively on Soviet propaganda and if he is unacquainted with the history of Czarist Russia. Because much of, if not all of, what is going on today in the USSR has its precedent in Russian history.

The unceasing attempt of Russia to conquer first Europe and Asia and then the whole world did not originate with the appearance of Communism in Russia. It has been the basic political objective, elevated to a sacred ideology, of every Russian state. Moscow cannot be understood without seeing its need to dominate the world, or at least to subject as many countries as possible to its dominance and influence, direct or indirect. This drive—this compulsion—to dominate the whole world is part of the Mongolian heritage of the Russian people. The great Mongolian conqueror, Genghis Khan, adopted the title of “Emperor of Humanity.” One of the Russian czars, Ivan III, put himself on a par with the Byzantine emperor, although in his time the Muscovite principality was still a small, semi-barbarous state.

“God is in the sky, and the Czar on earth” is not only an old Russian saying; it is, in slightly different terms, also a Mongolian slogan. Over the centuries it has taken different forms in Russia but the meaning has remained the same. In a letter written by Monk Teofilus of Pskov, we find an adaptation: “Two Romes have fallen, but the Third stands firmly. And there will never be a Fourth one!” The two Romes referred to are Rome and Byzantium; the “Third,” of course is Moscow.

In the 13th and 14th centuries Muscovy was under Mongolian domination, a severe totalitarian rule that recognized neither private property nor individual liberty, with the church a docile instrument of the rulers. There were individual Mongols who possessed great riches and wide privilege, just as today the Communist chieftains in the USSR dispose of great material wealth and unlimited privileges as the pretorians, the pillars of the Russian Communist and totalitarian regime.

This totalitarian system suited Moscow for centuries. The Russian rulers adapted it to the times and to varying circumstances. Czar Ivan IV, who was blindly imitated by Stalin, visited in 1577 the monastery in Pskov, and slew the abbot of the institution with his imperial scepter. He ordered there be written on the monk's tombstone: "The earthly Czar sends him to the Czar in Heaven."

It is now the consensus of many historians that the Russians adopted many methods, especially those used in propaganda, from Genghis Khan. This is especially true of the propaganda accompanying their conquest of other nations. The Mongols invaded foreign lands with slogans of "tolerance and liberty"; similar slogans were used by Russian Czars. Their drive against Turkey was conducted under the slogans of "defending the Orthodox faith" and "liberation of Christians" from the infidels. Their march against Eastern Europe was to "protect brother-Slavs"; in their expansion into Asia they were bringing "culture and welfare." Once they succeeded in establishing themselves in the new areas with their new peoples, Moscow swiftly proceeded to destroy the individuality of these peoples and their ethnic cultures and to subordinate them to its tyrannical rule. Historian Toynbee, for instance, says that Russia has been building its military power at the expense of the personal liberty of its subjects for the past 600 years.<sup>95</sup> This process has gone on, points out the British historian, regardless of whether the emblem of the Russian empire is the Byzantine eagle or the sickle and hammer.

It is not given to a nation to reject its cultural heritage; it may only modify it. Moscow not only did not reject its own political heritage, but to the contrary, it exploited it towards expansion of power and domination. Latterly, it has used it as the basis of its Communist ideology. For instance, the *Russian* peasant never actually resisted Communism, if only because he had never possessed his own land. Up to 1861 serfdom and military resettlement had failed to give the peasant any assurance of becoming the owner of his land. Today the collective farm system has left unchanged the status and the feelings of the peasant.

The constant conquests of foreign lands and states demanded a radical limitation of freedom, entailing a strong police force and augmented military power. A policy of aggression against the vanquished countries in Europe

<sup>95</sup> Toynbee, A. J., *Civilization on Trial*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1948, p. 2.

and Asia would not allow for any group or ethnic separateness, still less for political independence. Thus a total terror was imposed from the Russian center, first Petrograd and later Moscow, as the only method by which the Russian empire could be maintained. Today the same methods of unbridled terror compose the instrument of policy of the Russian communist government.

It is no accident that the Russian Communist ideologists and historians should eulogize Peter I, especially for his defeat of Charles XII of Sweden and *Hetman* Ivan Mazepa of Ukraine at the Battle of Poltava in 1709, which opened the way for the conquest of Ukraine. The Muscovite state, known as *Ducatus Moscoviensis*, for centuries had lived behind its self-imposed iron curtain. After its conquest of Ukraine, a country with a highly-developed European civilization, Russia was compelled to "open a window upon Europe," especially during the reign of Peter I, who became convinced that for its further imperialist development Russia could no longer ignore the cultural and industrial achievements of Europe. This Muscovite state then usurped the historical name of Ukraine, that of *Rus*, and proclaimed itself the Russian empire. Simultaneously, the Russian historians incorporated *in toto* the history of the Kievan Ukrainian State as well as that of the Galician-Volhynian State into the history of "Russia." Regrettably, Europe and the rest of the world accepted unquestioningly this Russian version of history as a true one.

In the Russian historical and literary output all the conquered non-Russian nations have been played down as "tribes" or "ethnic minorities," while the Russian people have been extolled as a great cultural factor in the empire. Today, the Soviet ideologists are working busily on the fabrication of a "Soviet man" and a "Soviet people," terms which in essence would still denote the Russian man and the Russian people.

In studying the methods of aggressive nations, no matter what the origins of their aggressiveness, we can see a similarity of methods employed. The Russians had usurped the name of *Rus* in order to incorporate the early history of Ukraine (*Rus*) into its own history. Similarly, when the Germans occupied Ukraine in 1941, they introduced "historic theories" to the effect that some Germanic or Gothic tribes had once lived in Ukraine, thus giving the Germans the right to occupy and hold Ukraine.

The Soviet Union, for propaganda purposes abroad, had to condemn Russian Czarist history. After all, it was against Czarist tyranny that the Bolsheviks supposedly had made their revolution. They never went so far, however, as to destroy historic monuments erected in honor of Russian Czarist conquerors and absolutist rulers.

It was World War II with its exigencies that made Stalin reveal the true image of Russian imperialism, though dressed in Communist garb. On May 24, 1945, he raised a grateful "toast" at a Kremlin reception to the Russian

people (not the "Soviet people," to be sure), as the mainstay of the USSR and the heroes in the "patriotic war" against the Nazi invaders. (Unknown to the world at large, the Russians were then also busy fighting the UPA.)

Soviet Russian diplomacy surpassed by far the old Czarist diplomacy when it wrested from the Western statesmen huge territorial concessions, lands and peoples that the Czars had only dreamed of dominating.

Today all and everything Russian is officially glorified in the Soviet Union. In schools, theaters and films, such tyrannical Russian rulers, Ivan the Terrible and Peter the Great, Marshals Suvorov and Kutuzov—the military conquerors of Poland, the Baltic lands, and the like—are depicted as great national heroes. Official Communist propaganda hammers away incessantly at the theme that the Russian people are "generous" and "talented." It is they who have invented the flying machine and the sewing machine. The invention of the steam engine is credited to a Russian, S. Litvinov, in 1815, while the galvanic battery was invented by V. Petrov (1802), the electric light by Lodychin (1873), and so on.<sup>96</sup>

In military history, too, the Russians eulogize their armed forces as "heroes," while the armies of other nations are described as "mercenaries" or "imperialist." A modern Russian author is able to write about the Russian army abroad thus:

. . . The army of our fatherland marched more and more often into foreign lands. . . . The Russian army appeared in Germany, in Berlin, within the borders of Bavaria, in Italy, Holland, in Portugal, and even landed on the shores of allied America. . . .<sup>97</sup>

In order to keep the conquered nations in enslavement, Moscow minimizes their history, underplays their economic importance and disseminates "theories" to the effect that these nations would be helpless without the assistance of the "older Russian brother."

Most national heroes, writers and historians of the non-Russian nations are also downgraded, made out to have worked against the interests of their respective peoples. Some, impossible to derogate, are absorbed by being described as having performed under the influence of the "benign" Russian cultural leaders.

Thus, to be heard everywhere and read in all Russian history books is that "Georgia always wanted to be united with Russia," or that Ukraine has been "united for centuries" with Russia, or that the greatest Ukrainian national poet, Taras Shevchenko, wrote under the influence of great Russian liberal writers (Shevchenko was arrested and sent into exile for 10 years for writing about freedom for the Ukrainian people).

<sup>96</sup> *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, No. 159, 1946, Moscow.

<sup>97</sup> Kryvitsky, A., *Russky oficer za rubezhom* (The Russian Officer Abroad), Voenizdat NKO, 1946.



Inasmuch as the Russians could not eradicate the national characteristics of the non-Russian nations in the USSR, they had to grant some concessions and to show to the world at the same time that they were "liberal" and not "imperialist." Thus, Moscow allowed the establishment of the "Union Republics," which, however, are independent in name only and which are controlled and run by Russian puppets. Meanwhile the Russians pursue the policy of Russification of the non-Russian cultures, and exploit their economies. The USSR is depicted as a "natural political complex," a sort of Hitlerian *Grosswirtschaftsraum* (Great Economic Complex). The Russian propaganda directed to the free world depicts the "Union Republics" as "free and independent nations," ridiculing any suggestion that these nations are captive. At the U.N. Soviet diplomats fiercely fight off any inquiries or attacks on the part of Western statesmen regarding the status of the captive nations in the USSR. In order to direct attention elsewhere, they openly propagate "wars of national liberation" in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Moscow provides substantial aid to such movements simply because they are directed against the United States, France, England, or any other European power.

Throughout the centuries the imperialist conquests of the Russian state were planned very carefully and comprehensively. They were conducted not only in the military field, but also in the religious cultural, social and psychological spheres.

Historically, Russian aggression has assumed many aspects and various forms:

1. Sudden armed attack;
2. Armed attack preceded by diplomatic action;
3. Aggression, preceded by ideological infiltration and internal disorders—religious, social, political—through intrigue and instigation;
4. Aggression in conjunction with another nation, aimed at dividing the victim state;
5. Preparation of internal revolutions and creation of puppet governments.

### **Table of Russian Aggressive Conquests**

Here is a compilation of Russian aggressive conquests which have made the USSR what it is today:

- 1472—Enslavement of the peoples on the Kama and Pechora;
- 1465-1500—Wars and enslavement of the Ural;
- 1471-1487—Novgorod, Karelia and Kolia;
- 1487—The Khanate of Kazan;
- 1514—Occupation of Smolensk and Eastern Byelorussia;
- 1581-1582—Conquest of the peoples of the Middle Volga;
- 1630—Conquest of the peoples of Central and Eastern Siberia;

1654-1667—Annexation of parts of Byelorussia, Ukraine and the Baltic lands;

1700-1721—Conquests of Estonia, Lithuania and a part of Ukraine;

1711—The Kurile Islands;

1717-1718—Kazakhs and Altaïs;

1722-1723—The Caspian Sea;

1731—Kazakhstan;

1783—The Crimean Tartars;

1784—A part of Georgia;

1787-1791—Peoples of the Caucasus;

1792-1793—Parts of Byelorussia and Ukraine;

1785—Kurland, Lithuania, parts of Ukraine;

1801-1803—Georgia;

1806-1812—Azerbaijan, Bessarabia and Finland;

1815—Poland;

1824-1846—Remainder of the Caucasus;

1826-1828—Armenia;

1846—Incorporation of Kazakhstan;

1854—Aggression against Kirghizia;

1856—Occupation of Altai;

1868—Annexation of Bukhara;

1874—Annexation of part of Sakhalin;

1876—Annexation of a part of the Khanate of Kokand;

1877-1884—Annexation of Turkmenistan;

1881—Infiltration of Mongolia and Chinese Turkestan;

1900—Occupation of Manchuria;

1922—Occupation of the independent state of Ukraine; incorporation of Outer Mongolia;

1939-1940—On the basis of an agreement with Hitler, annexation of Western Ukraine, Byelorussia, Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia; part of Finland after an unprovoked Soviet Russian aggression;

1944—Annexation of Tannu Tuva in Asia;

1945—Annexation of East Prussia, Carpatho-Ukraine, Manchuria, Southern Sakhalin and the Kurile Islands;

1944-1948—Establishment of puppet Communist regimes in Poland, Rumania, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Rumania and East Germany;

1959—Communism in Cuba; spread of Communist influence in the world.

These Russian conquests were abetted in no small degree by the appalling Western ignorance of the imperialist designs of Russia, whether Czarist or Communist in form. For centuries, an effective Russian propaganda disseminated lies, half-truths, distortions. Moreover, Moscow exerted not an insignificant influence through Russian literature, music, ballet—art forms which were placed at the service of the imperial idea.

The famous Russian writer, F. Dostoyevsky, was able to write fondly and hopefully:

When the Russian national idea has become a universal, all-human unity, it certainly means that all should become . . . Russians and Russian nationalists. . . .<sup>98</sup>

The motivating force behind the Russian empire is Russian nationalism, nurtured and exploited by Czars in the past and by commissars in the present. In the times of Ivan the Terrible, Russian society was divided into *oprichniks*, or the privileged elite (their counterpart today: members of the Communist Party of the USSR), and the vast majority of people, lacking any basic human or political rights. Then, as today, existed an iron curtain, man-made famines (as in Ukraine in 1932-33), enforced deportations and resettlement of the population, state-controlled trade, official control of the Russian Orthodox Church, official glorification of the Czars (matched by the personality cults of our era: Lenin, Stalin, Khrushchev, et al.), window dressing for foreign visitors (the "Potemkin villages" of Czarist times, the "Intourist" guides of today). "Soviet patriotism" is, for all intents and purposes, "Russian patriotism." On November 7, 1941, in his appeal to the Red Army, Stalin stated: "Be inspired by brave images of the great ancestors—Alexander Nevsky, Dimitri Donsky, Kuzma Minin, Alexander Suvorov and Mikhail Kutuzov!" Stalin was not appealing to Communist feelings, but to the nationalist feelings of the Russians.

### UPA vs. the Russians

In 1943 as the Eastern front approached Western Ukraine the first Soviet partisans appeared on the territory of that historic Ukrainian land. These were Soviet paratroopers, commanded by highly trained Soviet officers who were fanatical members of the Communist Party.

Because of its unique character and the particular circumstances in Western Ukraine, the assignment of the Soviet partisans was different from that which had been given them in other areas occupied by the Germans.

In the northern Russian areas the partisans had been ordered to harass the enemy hinterland. In Western Ukraine this assignment had a secondary importance. The prime task of the Soviet partisans was to fight against the Ukrainian Insurgent Army. Moscow understood very well the significance of partisan warfare, especially that of the Ukrainian insurgency. It feared the strength of the Ukrainian underground, for in the uncertainty of war it could assume a decisive significance for the continued existence of the Soviet Russian empire. The Ukrainian underground movement threatened to spread throughout the whole of Ukraine. The youth of Ukraine by the thousands

<sup>98</sup> Dostoyevsky, F., *Full Collections of Works*, St. Petersburg, 1895, Vol. II, pp. 22-23.

made their way to the forests, escaping forcible conscription into slave labor contingents being sent to Germany and from the terroristic actions of the German police and security troops. They joined the UPA, if units were there, or organized themselves into armed groups, thus creating additional partisan forces. These subsequently were integrated into the UPA or acted independently under the control of the OUN. When on occasion they were captured by the Red Army or the Soviet partisans, these refugees were compelled to join them or be executed as "collaborators with the enemy." The particular case depended on the local situation, the national awareness of the local populace and the qualitative caliber of the youth themselves.

Moscow began to react not when the UPA had begun growing by leaps and bounds, but when it was still in its budding stage. The first detachments of the Red Army, dropped in the areas described by Soviet partisan leaders Kovpak, Vershyhora, Fedorov, and others, had as their purpose not the engagement of the UPA, but rather the blocking off of its expansion toward the east and southeast, that is, in the direction of the central Ukrainian lands. When the Germans retreated, opening up the hinterland, General Kovpak received orders to recapture the Carpathians, where the UPA had begun establishing its training bases. General Kovpak succeeded, without meeting much opposition on the part of the Germans, in reaching the Carpathian foothills. In the mountains, however, he encountered a powerful resistance on the part of the UPA, which proceeded to destroy the Soviet forces completely. Kovpak himself was able to escape with a small staff and succeeded in making his way back to the Soviet lines.

In these early encounters both sides gained considerable combat experience and a measure of efficiency under various geographic and climatic conditions: the marshes of Polisia and Volhynia, the woods and sandy underbrush, the mountains. The partisan warfare tactics on both sides had to be expanded, corrected and adapted to new exigencies. These encounters served as forerunners of the large-scale battles which were waged in 1945 and the postwar years.

In 1946, after World War II, the Supreme Council of the OUN decided that under the new conditions it was necessary to change the methods of struggle for the liberation of Ukraine. Hundreds of UPA fighters were recalled from combat units and placed in other positions. This reorganization lasted for several years. Nevertheless, large-scale armed encounters with the Soviet security and police forces lasted until 1952.

The Ukrainian nationalist underground exists to this very day and constitutes a considerable threat to the Soviet Russian occupants of Ukraine. It manifests itself in a number of forms and expressions. Eventually this present phase of the struggle will become the subject of serious study by future historians.

As far back as November 9, 1941, the first poorly organized units of the

Soviet partisans received orders from Moscow to begin a campaign against the Ukrainians. Their orders were to ruthlessly combat and destroy the Ukrainian nationalists. One of these orders was issued by the territorial staff of the Chernihiv *oblast*, signed by Soviet Commander Orlov (the cover name of Soviet partisan commander Fedorov).

The principles of the Bolshevik partisan tactics differed little from those of the UPA. Both sides tried to improve their methods; one learned from the other.

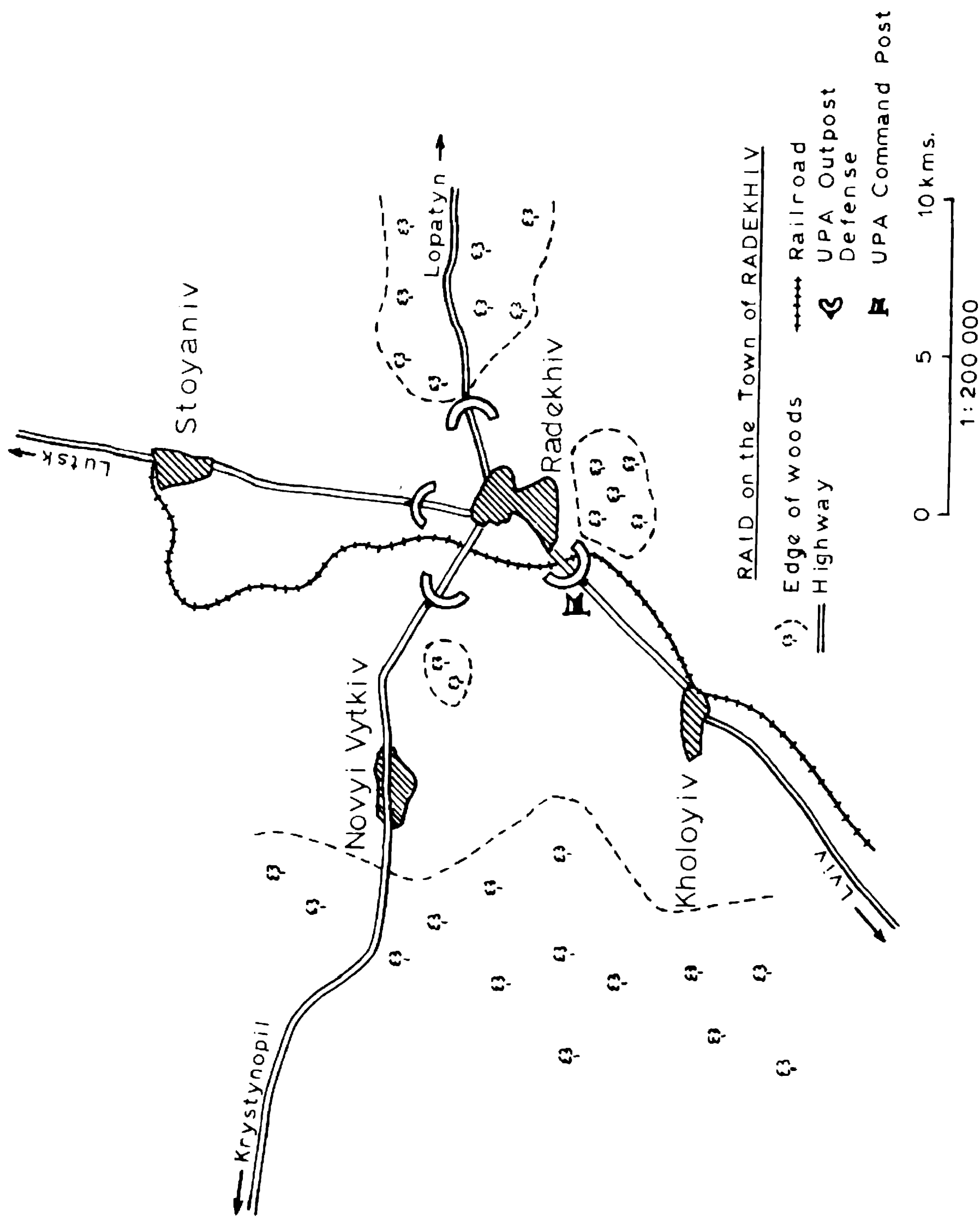
The principal tenets of this kind of fighting, which was to be brought to perfection in the years ahead, evolved from the various aspects of fundamental tactics, modified and extended by the combat initiative and talent of the commanders. Nonetheless, the Russians employed techniques of propaganda different from those of the UPA. In addition, the Russians displayed unbridled terrorism and brutality toward the enemy and the civilian population alike.

The appearance of the Soviet partisans had a theoretical political backdrop, formulated by Lenin and expanded by his pupil, Stalin:

We Communists would instigate one country against another . . .  
(Lenin). In order to be victorious in war, it is not enough to triumph  
at the front. The territory of the enemy must be revolutionized . . .  
(Stalin).

To "revolutionize" means to divide the nation from within, to play one group against the other, to exacerbate social, ethnic and religious differences—and then to defeat the adversary piecemeal. To accomplish such revolutionizing Communist propaganda is used extensively. Once they occupy the foreign territory, the Russian Communists use the local Communists to liquidate all the opposition groups within the country. Finally, they proceed to liquidate the local Communists themselves on the suspicion that they do not and cannot understand the precepts of Communism. In fact, they are serious obstacles in the way of the Russian imperialists, who use the Communist ideology to advance traditional Russian imperialism and the peculiarly Russian brand of Communism. In any event, many of the local Communists, believers in the revolutionary dogma of classical Communism, are taken aback by the display of Russian chauvinism. They become disillusioned and "unreliable." For one reason or other, then, they all eventually end up before the firing squad as "spies," "fascists" or "capitalist collaborators. . . ."

The Bolsheviks attempted to weaken the ranks of the UPA with propaganda as well. The principal reason for their failure lay in the fact that the UPA insurgents were a highly patriotic and conscious Ukrainian nationalist element. Moreover, they knew the value of Russian Soviet propaganda only too well. Nevertheless, the Russians never ceased to propagandize the UPA ranks, calling on them to come over in exchange for a complete pardon.



Very often these appeals were aimed individually. For instance, the Soviet agents would use the families of UPA insurgents, producing beseeching letters and messages from wives, parents and children, sisters. They also published various appeals and depositions of UPA fighters who had been captured and who under torture were forced to denounce the UPA and the ideals for which it stood. Very often, too, UPA prisoners were brought to the various villages and cities and were made to speak out publicly against the UPA. Of course, despite their cunning the Soviet agents made embarrassing errors by publishing appeals from UPA leaders who were known to be dead or abroad.

The identical error was committed by the Russians in their action against the Ukrainian Catholic Church. The Russians pursued a policy of forcible conversion of the Ukrainian Catholics to Russian Orthodoxy; those who refused to comply were deported to Siberia. In 1946, a pamphlet advertising the "voluntary" conversion to Orthodoxy contained a number of names of "converts," one of which was that of a Ukrainian Catholic priest who was not in Ukraine at all at the time. This and similar mistakes made the Soviet propaganda backfire. On the whole, the UPA was all but immune to the methods devised by the Soviet propagandists.

At the outbreak of World War II, or, more specifically, the outbreak of the German-Soviet war in June, 1941, Stalin set forth a set of principles, which, in his mind, were decisive in war:

1. Certainty of the *hinterland*;
2. Morale of the armed forces;
3. Quantity and quality of army divisions;
4. Weaponry;
5. Organization of the command cadres.

The order of these priorities at once points up the importance for the Soviet command of its *hinterland*. Sureness of the hinterland is undoubtedly a prime problem of guerrilla warfare in the Soviet Russian empire or in the occupied territories. For the *hinterland* to be secure and quiet, the front should be as remote as possible from the uncertain territories. Involved here is the principle of so-called "defense in depth," including the necessity of bringing the territories of independent nations into the Soviet system. These "theses" are presented by the Russians in the West in such an innocent form that many in the West may overlook their underlying significance. In their presentation we see again that Soviet strategy and tactics make use of a principle which is also common to Soviet diplomacy (the cold war and other aspects of Soviet policy are but different aspects of the same war for the victory and expansion of Russian Communism). This principle is simply aggressiveness and dynamism, that is, the holding of the initiative in one's own hands. It also means to be ready for any eventuality, and it precludes

surprise. One proceeds according to Lenin's dictum: "two steps forward, one step backward," the formula of "permanent revolution."

Among the methods used by the Russians in their strategy and tactics is satanical cruelty. The sowing of panic in the ranks of the enemy explains at least half the success of the Russians. Thus the mass killings of the population and the mass trials—which go on successively depending on political expediency and which are either public or secret, and at which severe verdicts are meted out. Thus the "revolutionary" and police courts, in which no judicial authority has any voice; thus the mass arrests and deportations, the charges extreme and, at the same time, unsettling to the populace, as for instance, collaboration with foreign intelligence services. Many if not most of those arrested are tried as "German" or "American" spies. Up to 1945 many UPA fighters were accused of being in the service of the German intelligence. After 1945 it was the "American intelligence" service that served as the convenient ogre.

In the same category falls the Russian charge that all opponents of the Russian empire are "fascists." The Ukrainian nationalists, of course, had little in common with Fascism or National-Communism; moreover, the totalitarian nature of the Russian imperialistic regime places it far closer to these political movements than the unalloyed Ukrainian nationalism. The Russians shrewdly counted on the naivete and ignorance of the West in charging that the fighters for Ukrainian freedom and independence were "fascists," fairly certain that this would provoke suspicion if not revulsion in the West against the Ukrainian freedom movement. Their own crimes the Russians ascribed to the Ukrainians, and moreover they held the Ukrainians responsible for the crimes committed by the Germans.

Dissemination of false rumors and "facts" about the strength of its empire, its army, or even about a small detachment of partisans is part and parcel of the small and great strategy of Moscow. Therefore, all published reports about the Soviet partisans, their weapons, strategy and tactics were scrupulously investigated by the UPA.

The infiltration of Communist elements in the enemy's ranks, known as the "fifth column," had and continues to have a high priority in Soviet Russian strategy. The Russians insinuate their "fifth columns" years ahead of an aggression or a war. These "fifth columns" penetrate every institution of society, including the military.

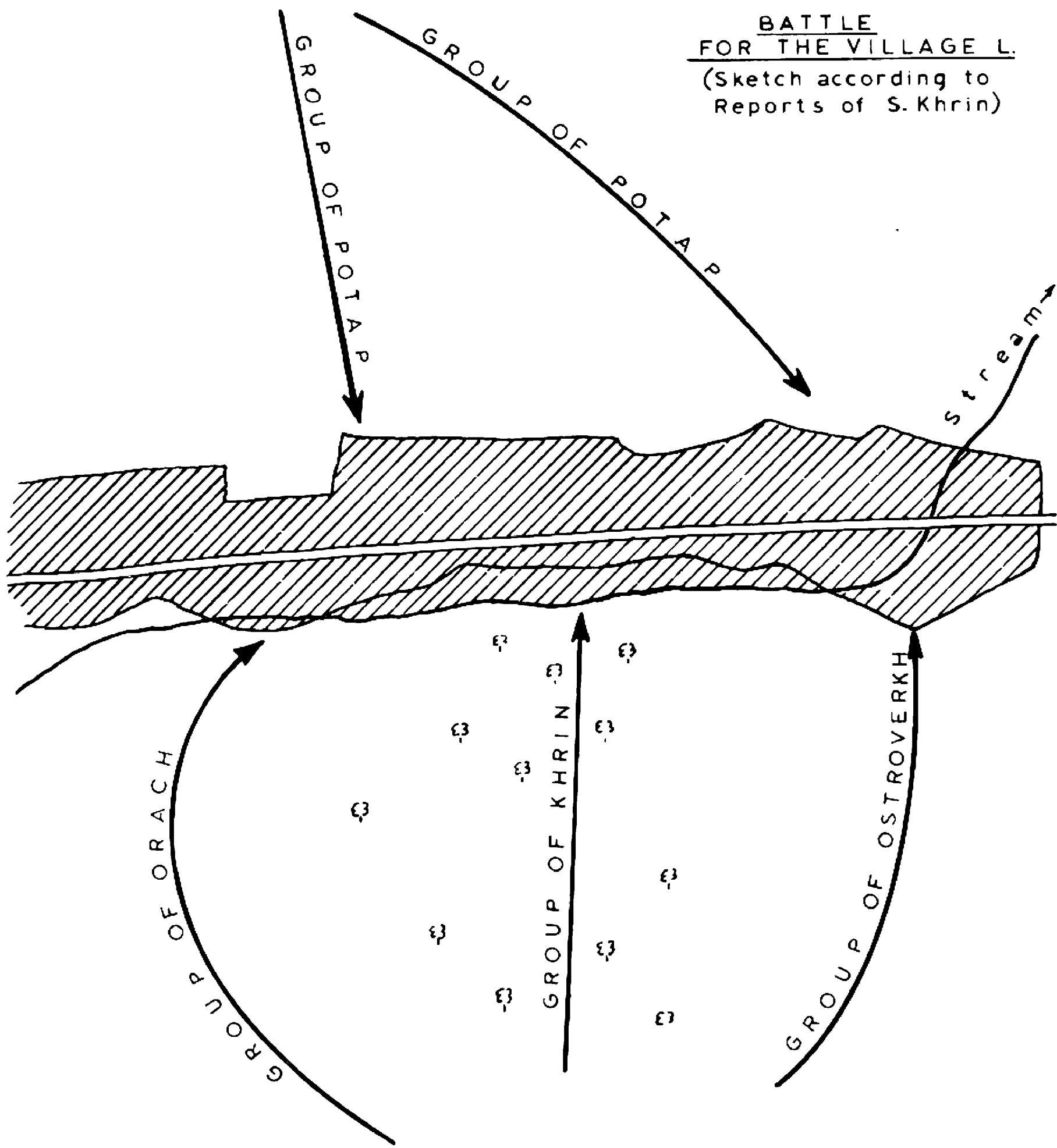
During their campaign against the UPA the Bolsheviks began establishing in the villages the so-called *istrebitel* battalions (extermination battalions), a sort of militia. They forcibly mobilized the Ukrainian youth under the threat of arrest and deportation, in the hope that a fratricidal struggle be provoked among the Ukrainians. The effort was fruitless, and these battalions were soon disbanded.

The "iron curtain" was another aspect of the general system of the Russian



VILLAGE YA.

BATTLE  
FOR THE VILLAGE L.  
(Sketch according to  
Reports of S. Khrin)



government. No mention was made either in the Soviet press or over the radio about the UPA and its struggle against the USSR, save for some appeals by Khrushchev to the UPA fighters to surrender. Not a word, for example, appeared in the Soviet press when the Ukrainian Division "Galicia" in 1944 cleared Slovakia of Soviet partisans, chiefly by killing them.

Another method of infiltration and spying was the effort involving the setting up of the so-called *stribki* units. The NKVD, which maintained its posts in the villages, sought to induce young people to inform and collaborate against the UPA. Those who agreed were given training and, when they seemed to be reliable, also were given weapons and a limited quantity of ammunition for which they were held strictly accountable. This system, too, proved unsuccessful; many OUN members enlisted in the system for the purpose of spying for their organization.

Still another use of the "iron curtain" was the Soviet blockade of the entire countryside. Soviet army garrisons proclaimed "martial law," and no one was allowed to leave his village. As a result no one knew what was going on in the villages, save the inhabitants of a particular village themselves. It was difficult for the UPA to pierce the blockade, renew the OUN network and re-establish contact and collaboration with the populace. Having no confidence in their own Red fighters, the Soviet command often changed the garrison personnel and tried to prevent them from fraternizing with the local population.

The Russians also infiltrated agents into the ranks of the UPA. Trained in special courses, they performed their tasks well, but in many cases they fell into the hands of the Security Service of the UPA (SB). An incident concerning a *sek-sot* (secret collaborator) is given in a report by a UPA commander.

In 1945 a Soviet soldier who said he was a Ukrainian came up to us and volunteered. We accepted him into our unit. Remaining with us for the whole year, he proved to be a good soldier and an ardent enemy of the Bolsheviks. With his machine gun he mowed down the Soviet troops in many encounters. Because of his superior courage, he was assigned in 1946 to an assault unit led by Commander Karmeliuk. And here, too, he proved an excellent fighter.

One day he suggested to Commander Karmeliuk that we raid the office of a collective farm in Birky Yanivski, near Lviv. His plan was approved by the commander. He called on noncommissioned officer Kruk, and all three headed for the collective farm. First to enter the office was Commander Karmeliuk, second was the former Red Army soldier, and last was Kruk. Suddenly, the Red Army soldier hit Commander Karmeliuk on the head from behind with his pistol, yelling: "Grab them!" The NKVD men who were waiting in the office jumped on the commander, who had fallen down after being hit. Kruk grasped the situation in a flash. Before the Red Army man could turn to him, Kruk shot him. The NKVD men fired as Kruk dove behind some

furniture. Commander Karmeliuk, who was hurt, tried to rise, but seeing no possibility of escape, shot himself. The diversion enabled Kruk to get outside and escape, although he was severely wounded.

We were alerted in time. Kruk thought that he had only wounded the Red Army man and that he would recover fast and tell the NKVD about our hide-out. Indeed, in a few hours a detachment of the NKVD appeared in the forest, led by the Soviet agent. Fortunately, the hide-out was already empty. The Soviet police threw in hand grenades and blew up the bunker, but returned empty-handed. . . .<sup>99</sup>

Soviet penetration and spying within the German administration in Ukraine was effective, especially as regards the Gestapo. The infiltrating Soviet agents performed successful sabotage and, winning the full confidence of the Nazis, conducted an effective anti-Ukrainian policy. The Russians recruited to this service not only trained and faithful Communists, but also all sorts of criminal elements by promising them prestigious positions and money, and also by blackmailing them.

The external Soviet spies, the *sek-sots*, were active not only within the UPA, but among the populace as well, in factories, collective farms, schools, public institutions, and the like. The people dreaded these secret informers; no one could tell whom the Russians had compelled to serve as an informer. There also were cases of the Russians using children to spy on their parents. The *sek-sots* also included sick people, whom the Russians promised to cure if they would spy for them.

Soviet agents disseminated such false information that would undermine confidence in the UPA and compromise the Ukrainian insurgents by having criminal actions imputed to them that had been committed by the Soviet troops themselves. Often, too, these agents would disguise themselves as beggars or hungry refugees travelling from village to village; they would listen to all casual conversations, follow suspected UPA couriers, and report back to the NKVD.

They also disguised themselves as UPA fighters and sought contact with the civilian OUN network, representing themselves as remnants of broken-up UPA units. If they brought it off, they posed a menace to the UPA members and its sympathizers. But such provocations were effective mostly at the beginning of the Soviet Russian occupation; later on the OUN and UPA got to know and detect all these ploys of the NKVD.

For example, in the spring of 1946 a group of the NKVD disguised as UPA fighters became active in an area occupied by Soviet troops. They went so far as to make raids on Soviet transports, ambush Soviet convoys and take Soviet officers prisoner, in their attempt to contact the civilian network of the OUN and achieve a "closer cooperation." Nonetheless, they were not convincing enough, and their provocation failed.

<sup>99</sup> *V riadakh UPA, op. cit.*

In the Rivne *oblast* in Volhynia the Bolsheviks organized a false OUN civilian network after the same pattern as the real one. But even here they enjoyed only a brief success.

Further tasks of the Soviet spying apparatus included the spreading of false information about alleged encounters with the UPA, especially the destruction of UPA units and deaths of known UPA commanders, in order to sow defeatism among the population and discourage young people from joining the UPA and the OUN. They fabricated false photographs of "mass surrenders" of UPA units, and the like. Rumors also were spread to the effect that some known UPA commanders were actually Soviet spies, thereby to discredit them in the eyes of the Ukrainian populace.

When all these efforts generally proved ineffectual, the NKVD staged mass manhunts, tortured innocent men and women and, as did the Germans, introduced the concept of "collective responsibility" and took hostages. While hunting down UPA members, the NKVD often herded women and children in front as human shields against the bullets of the insurgents.

Other methods of the Soviet spying system included:

1. Sending young girls into the insurgent areas to gain influence through their sex over UPA commanders or OUN leaders with the purpose of helping apprehend or kill them.

2. Ukrainian farmers, arrested for participation in the Ukrainian national organizations, would be released on the condition that they would invite to their homes leading members of the Ukrainian underground and inform the NKVD of any invitations accepted. In some cases the NKVD asked that after the "reception" the farmer shoot the guests. An alternative was that the food be poisoned.

3. Captured recruits were released and sent back to the UPA on the understanding they would spy for and report to the NKVD.

4. Fabricated were appeals and letters from important UPA commanders allegedly in the hands of the Soviet police. In these the UPA commanders called on the UPA fighters to cease their resistance and to surrender to the Soviet police, since continued struggle was fruitless. Often it transpired that the UPA officers who allegedly signed these appeals had been killed in battle.

5. The nude bodies of killed UPA commanders were displayed for public viewing and left to decompose. (Ukrainians are known to be particularly reverential as regards burial of the dead.) Funerals of killed UPA fighters were a special target for the NKVD. The UPA corpses often were booby-trapped, killing those in the act of burying them.

6. Underground fighters captured by the Russians were grilled thoroughly and severely. They were interrogated as to their recruitment, including whether they had served in other armies before coming to the UPA, their armaments and training, their field operations, and above all, UPA morale

and the relationship between officers and noncommissioned officers of the UPA.

For example, a captured UPA deserter was queried as to Commander Khrin's appearance, his age and his dental fixtures (the commander's teeth had been knocked out by the Polish police during his imprisonment by the Poles), how he dressed and how proficient he was with the rifle and pistol. Furthermore, they wanted to know in what platoon Commander Khrin marched during UPA attacks and where he stationed himself during a retreat. They also went into the food and equipment of UPA troops.

7. Because all these methods failed to produce any tangible results the Russians began to burn villages and deport their inhabitants to the interior of the USSR. They also burned forests by dropping incendiaries from planes or through their secret agents (*sek-sots*). For instance, in the area of Kovel the Russians burned the forest of Tsuman, and the woods of Sokal, Rava, Radekhiv and Brody.

8. The NKVD troops and their informers poisoned wells and stored food, and had their agents poison food supplies being purchased by the UPA insurgents. These practices were uncovered in 1946 in Volhynia. In the spring of 1946 in the Stanyslaviv *oblast* the NKVD found out that the UPA soldiers were buying anti-typhoid serum on the black market. The NKVD thereupon flooded the black market with poisoned serum, resulting in the deaths of several dozen UPA fighters before the UPA doctors were able to uncover the reason. Russian agents, disguised as beggars and refugees, travelled from village to village disseminating typhus-carrying lice. When these criminal methods of the Soviet police came to light, the OUN underground network ordered mass vaccination of the populace in several areas.

To be noted here is that bacteriological warfare has been outlawed by international convention. No belligerent in World War II dared to resort to it, save the Russians in combatting the Ukrainian freedom fighters.

9. Starvation had long been used by the Russians in their repression of the Ukrainians. In 1932 Moscow employed man-made famine on a mass scale in Ukraine in order to break the resistance of Ukrainians to the collectivization of agriculture. According to conservative estimates about 6 million Ukrainian peasants starved to death at a time when the Russian ethnographical territory did not suffer for lack of food in the slightest degree. The Russians sought to bring about starvation in the struggle against the UPA by choking off the flow of supplies in the submountainous and wooded areas, which were relatively easy to blockade.

10. Some captured UPA prisoners would be subjected to a thorough and rigid "brainwashing" (devised by Moscow long before the Korean war). In order to avoid capture and possible torture before execution, UPA fighters avoided being taken alive. In their struggle against the UPA the Russian Communists violated the international convention, which held that partisans

fighting for the liberation of their country enjoyed the same rights as soldiers of any regular army.

The Soviet Russian units fighting the UPA were a formidable and dedicated enemy. They included hundreds of specialists in partisan warfare and fighters who were fanatical not about the ideal of Communism but rather the ideology of Russian imperialism. In the instructions on the UPA issued by the supreme command in Moscow, it was clearly stated that the UPA was more dangerous for the USSR than the Germans.<sup>100</sup> Moscow tried hard to demoralize the rank and file of the UPA through the thousands of propagandistic leaflets and posters distributed on both sides of the front. The effort was to no avail. In one such leaflet, we read:

Has the OUN band killed at least one Hitlerite hangman? Has there been at least one UPA attack against the Hitlerites?

The leaflet was laughable to the UPA, it having fought the Germans for several years.

Another sample:

Since when has the OUN—whose leaders are now in Berlin, eating German food and publishing their newspapers with German money—since when has it become the defender of the people? In our possession are documents, soon to be published, which show that the directing leadership of the OUN is in contact with the Gestapo and receives money from it. For 30 pieces of silver it is selling out its people. They are doing this in order to distract the people from the armed struggle against the Germans and to separate the masses from the Soviet partisans. . . .

It is edifying to compare the text from a German leaflet that was disseminated during the operations against the UPA conducted by General von dem Bach:

Moscow gives orders to the OUN!

From secret orders and instructions which have fallen into our hands, it is clear that the Kremlin Jews are in contact with the OUN. In these secret orders, which soon will be published, the OUN is defined as a camouflaged national Bolshevik force. . . .

Thus both dictatorships appealed to the patriotism of the Ukrainians, both dangled documents “soon to be published” (they never appeared), both accused the OUN of collaborating with the aggressor and occupier of Ukraine. Not only was this propaganda primitive, but the opposing charges canceled each other. During the actual fighting with the UPA, the Russians admitted (and admit today) that the UPA fought against the Germans, although these admissions were printed at the time only in local newspapers serving the areas in which the populace could not but know the truth.

<sup>100</sup> Lebed, *op. cit.*

Often when the Soviet partisans committed sabotage or worse, "documents" or objects were left behind that tended to implicate the UPA in the eyes of the Germans. (Thus the incident in the city of Rivne in Volhynia, mentioned earlier in this book, wherein the Soviet assassination of a high German official in the Koch regime led to German reprisals against the Ukrainian intelligentsia.)

Captured by the UPA was Alexander Chkheidze-Chapayev, chief of intelligence of the Soviet partisans. He admitted that the Soviet partisans had undertaken several "actions" against the Polish civilian population in which "proof" had been left behind pointing to the UPA as the perpetrators. In one instance, he deposed, "a detachment violated the norms of warfare and destroyed Poles herded into a church. . . ." <sup>101</sup> In such actions the Soviet units wore the uniforms and insignia of the UPA.

The Hungarian troops which were used by the Germans against the UPA were made to guard bridges, railroads and communication centers. At the beginning they were very severe with the Ukrainian populace, but after a few costly skirmishes with the UPA, they reached an agreement of "neutrality" with the UPA. Both sides lived up to the terms of this agreement until the end of the German occupation of Ukraine.

Soviet infiltration is illustrated in an episode reported by Max:

During a combat campaign one of the liaison men was handed a message by Major Holubenko (chief of staff of the Group South) to deliver to a Red Army officer who had succeeded in becoming an instructor in an UPA school for noncommissioned officers. A sudden attack of the Germans and constant air raids in the area prevented the young liaison soldier from executing his order immediately. When after a few days everything had quieted down, the soldier grew fearful about not having fulfilled the order. He decided to read the message to gauge its importance. The message was revelatory. In it Major Holubenko had imprudently written to his acquaintance, a lieutenant, telling him to fulfill his task. Literally, he had written: "The time has come to take your boys and put an end to the scum. Those who surrender without a fight, you may take prisoner. The remainder should be shot, and their arms either taken with you or destroyed."

The soldier immediately took the letter to the command. An investigation revealed that a few officers of the Red Army had been planted in key positions for the purpose of neutralizing the UPA by destroying the staffs and their commanders. A Soviet spy in the ranks of the UPA gave the signal for striking, synchronizing it with a major action of the Germans against the UPA. Standing before the training company, Major Batko delivered a fiery and patriotic speech and then shot Major Holubenko with his own pistol. A week later the Security Service of the UPA (SB) uncovered the fact that Major Batko himself had been in league with Major Holubenko and that he had shot

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*

Holubenko only to secure his standing with the UPA and to continue his diversionary work. . . .

This example illustrates the fanatical dedication of the Communists. Major Holubenko allowed himself to be shot without betraying that Major Batko was a confederate.

The SB, after these and similar cases, strengthened its vigilance, but it could not conduct thorough investigations in the midst of partisan warfare. In many instances, suspicion alone meant execution. Undoubtedly, some innocent persons were executed as well.

Enemy propaganda played up all these executions, charging that the UPA was engaged in the "killing of innocent people," in an attempt to undermine the popularity of the Ukrainian insurgent movement and the cause for which it fought.

The Soviet partisans in Ukraine also included those formed from the remnants of the regular Soviet armies that had been defeated by the Germans and who had hidden in the woods of the northwestern part of Ukraine since 1941. Because the German armies refrained from entering areas remote from the highways, especially woods and marshes, these Soviet partisans were able to sit by quietly, scavenging food from the countryside as they waited. Once they established contact with Moscow, they were subject to the military orders of the Soviet army command.

In 1942 Moscow sent in trained party officers to organize the Soviet partisans and to give them additional military training. The partisans were augmented by other elements of the Ukrainian population in flight from the German terror in Ukraine<sup>102</sup> and by fresh Soviet troops from the interior of the USSR. The latter crossed the German-Soviet front in places where the Germans were scarce or absent; some were parachuted directly into the area.

These partisans were not an organic body, made up as they were of diverse elements. Hence the Soviet command decided to weld them together by providing stiff party training, to this end sending a great number of political party commissars to join them.

For some time the Soviet partisans continued to stay quietly in the forests without engaging the German troops in battle. This, too, reflected Soviet strategy, for the partisan movement constituted the second front (Stalin). Its activities were to be strictly coordinated with the operations of the Soviet regular armies. The partisans were to help the Soviet troops only at a given time, either by direct support of the advancing Soviet troops or by sabotage against the Germans in the rear.

Thus, in 1941-42 the Soviet partisans were a sedentary force; only in cases of extreme emergency did they act militarily. They were commanded by

<sup>102</sup> *Military Review*, No. 1, 1958, Kansas City, Kan.



highly trained Soviet officers sent from Moscow, such as Kovpak, Fedorov, and others of that stamp.

Liaison with Moscow was continual through radio and the air. Food and other sustenance supplies were dropped from the sky, as were ammunition, arms, printing presses and other equipment. The Soviet partisan bases were visited regularly by Soviet correspondents and film cameramen, thus giving the Soviet partisans international publicity.

The memoirs of Soviet partisan commanders are now known in the West. But these works, especially those of Kovpak and Vershyhora, have propagandistic rather than military value. Only here and there in the memoirs do we find episodes of military significance.

As an example of propaganda, we may cite part of a speech by General Kovpak:

Every partisan man and woman knows that we are fighting for the truth. We have to teach people to live according to the truth, to speak the truth and to fight for the truth. . . .

These are the words of a Soviet general, a general of a system that teaches its citizens to lie, to distort fact, to betray fundamental human values.

The organization of the Soviet partisans differed greatly from that of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army. The UPA, for instance, designated its units by the names of their commanders or by the names of historical Ukrainian figures. On the other hand, the Soviet partisan units frequently identified themselves by the names of territorial areas, or *oblasts*. Later on, for conspiratorial reasons, they used numbers instead of names. A Soviet partisan battalion had a varying number of companies, from three to nine, depending on the situation. At the beginning, the partisans had a great number of small units; subsequently, these were grouped into serious military formations. The reason for this change was the fact that they actually did constitute a "second front." With the approach of the German-Soviet front they operated as regular army divisions. The number of men in a battalion ranged from 250 to 800 fighters, at times even higher. At the head of the first company of the battalion was the commander of the entire group himself, as for instance, General Kovpak. A battalion comprised, in addition to line companies, reconnaissance units, engineers, supply and technical detachments.

For propaganda reasons, the memoirs of the Soviet and Polish commanders depicted the Ukrainian partisans as small groups, naive and without any ideology, lacking experience and guidance. UPA soldiers were "confused," the dupes of "fascists" and other anti-communist elements. The arms and the food supplies of the Ukrainian partisans, so the communist propaganda said, were provided by the Germans; after the war, by the Americans and British.

Vershyhora wrote of the Ukrainian nationalist partisans:

The Ukrainian nationalists did not dare appear here not only because the rear system of the Germans had been different, but also because their root, the *kulaks*, had long been destroyed in the area. The Soviet *kolkhoznik* (collective farmer) cannot be easily duped by tales about an independent Ukraine. . . .<sup>103</sup>

The *kulaks* had been the wealthier peasants. In the areas of the Soviet partisans, i.e. areas of impenetrable undergrowth and marshes and mud, the villages were sparse and had contained few, if any *kulaks*. There were therefore few collective farms in this marshy area, and the few thousand collective farmers to be found were wholly unfriendly to the new Soviet Russian masters.

To counteract the Polish and Ukrainian nationalist partisans the Russians had to create their own counterparts—the Polish “red” partisans, non-existent among the Poles, and the group of General Kovpak, named “Ukrainian” in order to confuse the West and the Ukrainian people themselves.

It was the practice during the training of Soviet partisans to send mass letters to Stalin signed by the trainees and also by the villagers—under the prompting of Soviet commissars at mass meetings.

The source of strength of any partisan movement is the friendly community. In all the memoirs of Soviet partisan commanders the civilian population is mentioned only casually. The reason: the Ukrainian population, as a rule, was hostile to the Soviet partisans. The partisans of Kovpak survived because they maintained their bases in the woods and obtained their supplies from Moscow. In times of need they confiscated cattle and food from the villages against the will of the people. They behaved as in a foreign land, and Moscow demanded that the “Ukrainian bourgeois nationalists” be eliminated at the roots. Stalin’s instruction to General Kovpak to develop “strong relations with the population” was a hollow one as far as Ukraine was concerned. Not only were the people of Ukraine wholly hostile to the Soviet regime, but the Soviet partisans themselves were kept isolated from the population lest they be contaminated by the Ukrainian nationalist ideology. Only when the German-Soviet front neared did the Soviet partisans dare mingle with the Ukrainian population, the danger of Ukrainian “separatism” having been substantially reduced.

For these and other reasons there are few Soviet writings about the partisan movement; even the Chinese Communist partisans are documented more than the Russian. In China the Communist partisans were a nucleus around which grew the communist party cadres. In the Soviet reality the partisans behind the German lines had one objective above all: to combat the Ukrainian nationalist partisan movement and the hundreds of thousands who deserted the Soviet armies and joined the Germans.

<sup>103</sup> Veshyhora, *op. cit.* (*Ludie z chystoy soviestiu*).

The Soviet partisans spent the winter in their bases deep in the forests. They lived in warm shelters and were fully supplied from Moscow with clothing, food and military equipment (General Kovpak sported a general's uniform made in Moscow). On the other hand, the Ukrainian Insurgent Army, unrecognized and unaided by any one save the Ukrainian people, relied solely on the supplies provided by the civilian network of the OUN. In constant danger of manhunts and blockades, in winter the flow of supplies dwindled to a trickle. The UPA usually obtained its weapons and clothing from the enemy, a source which dried up in winter, for in that season the enemy did not venture into the deep forests. These were the essential differences between the Ukrainian nationalist and the Soviet partisans.

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Discipline in partisan ranks is much stricter than in the regular army. All that which has been devised in this regard for the regular army applies to partisan troops with redoubled severity and rigor.

We have already spoken about the bid of the Soviet partisans for the Carpathian Mountains. For the Germans this raid was insignificant; it mattered little whether the Soviet partisans were located in Volhynia or in the Carpathians. Both areas were the flanks of great strategical stretches in which decisive battles were waged by the regular armies of the Axis powers and the USSR.

The raid of General Kovpak's partisans into Galicia met, *en route*, with no particular difficulties. There were but few German garrisons, nor were there any substantial UPA forces. Gen. Kovpak himself deliberately avoided armed encounters and situations which could develop into serious fighting. Only the German administration was perturbed by the Kovpak raid; the office workers sought shelter in the larger cities under the protection of the German armies.

The march of the Kovpak troops on June 12 around the city of Rivne, which was the seat of the *Reichskommissariat Ukraine*, headed by Erich Koch, was a veritable Sunday parade. The Germans failed to let go a single shot against the Soviet partisans. The Ukrainian population suspected that some secret agreement existed between Koch and General Kovpak which gave the latter an unhindered passage into the Carpathians. The Kovpak force crossed Podilia, avoiding any contact with the Ukrainian population. Only very near the Carpathians was his force attacked by the German air force and German army units. Under the impact of these blows General Kovpak was forced to break up his force into small units, which had to beat off the enemy without effective liaison with one another. Eventually, the Soviet partisans reached the Black Forest, only to be decimated by the UPA. As mentioned earlier, only General Kovpak and a few men succeeded in escaping.

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The German propaganda against the Soviet partisans was as poor and ineffectual as that directed against the UPA.

Although Soviet propaganda has never been particularly effective, its foundations were elaborated in every detail and minutely applied in the struggle against the UPA. These basic principles can be summarized as follows:

1. The Russian people (not to be confused with the other peoples of the USSR) are the most talented and the bravest in the world.

2. The empire of the Russian people, which has lasted for a thousand years, is indestructible.

3. All other peoples in the USSR, and outside it, owe their culture and their very existence to the benevolent influence and protection of the Russian people.

4. Any resistance against the USSR is always directed against the Russian people; that resistance is always generated by the capitalist forces, i.e. the fascists. This resistance will never meet with success.

5. The Russian people will dominate the world, because only they are the true heirs of the world, inasmuch as they encompass in themselves the virtues of all the nations (the thesis of Belinsky).

6. The aspirations for the domination of the world indicate the brotherhood of the Russian people felt toward the other peoples. If, in order to conquer a foreign land, force must be used, this is in no way the fault of the Russian people (cf. the work of A. Blok, *The Scythians*).

7. When the empire and the center of communism is threatened, Moscow then appeals to the deeper and inner forces and emotions of the Russian people—the nationalist sentiments of the Russian people. Thus Stalin the Georgian became a Russian nationalist; Lenin also was called a “terrible” nationalist by his wife, Krupskaya.<sup>104</sup>

Insofar as the conquest of Ukraine is concerned, Russian historiography has treated it as a “voluntary union,” a “dream of Ukrainian patriots,” and the like. Mass murders, wholesale massacres in the cities and their destruction are either not mentioned at all (for instance, the destruction of Kiev by Bogolubsky, the destruction of Baturyn by Peter I, the mass executions of Ukrainian patriots in Vynnytsia and Lviv during World War II) or are ascribed to others (for example, the mass murders of Ukrainians in Lviv in 1941 are attributed to the Germans). Mention of the murder of some 10,000 Polish officers by Russian Communists at Katyn is taboo in the USSR and in the whole Soviet Russian slave empire.

In the conquered lands Moscow is trying to divide the people horizontally, that is, to sow seeds of discord between the various strata of society. Against all those who oppose the Russian communist regime a policy of mass terror

<sup>104</sup> Krupskaya, N., *Vospominaniya o Lenine* (Reminiscences on Lenin), Moscow, 1931.

is applied, including illegal police courts, executions, deportations and trials *in camera*. Among the populace the belief is being created that the secret police is omniscient, knowing even the innermost thoughts of people. Informers are planted everywhere, found even among the members of a family.

But these extreme measures have proved to be inadequate. The young generation reared in the USSR cannot be suppressed by terror, and Moscow is compelled to make some concessions.

One of the weakest aspects of the psychological methods of the USSR is its unlimited dependence on mendacity. According to the Marxist precepts truth depends on social factors. For instance, in condemning a man, the individual and his guilt is not important, but the arguments which underlie the verdict are all important. Thus, a man may be depicted in police records as a Japanese or an American spy. This would be sufficient without any proof and evidence to hold him for trial. It is enough that the interests of the state are served.

Propaganda characterized by such mendacity has little impact upon the rank and file of Soviet citizenry. The Soviet Russian leaders are known by the citizenry to be unmitigated liars in all their official statements and pronouncements.

Curiously enough, the Nazi propaganda methods were very primitive and, on their surface, similar to those of the Russian Communists. German officials who came to Ukraine and acquainted themselves with the Bolshevik system were delighted because they felt themselves to be so close to it. Of Soviet commissars they said: "They are just like our own *parteigenossen!*" (Members of the Nazi party).

The German leaflets against the UPA revealed naivete:

1. They called on the UPA fighters to come out of the woods and take part in the building of a "new order in Europe";
2. The UPA are disguised Communists;
3. Announcements that such and such commanders of the UPA had received high Soviet decorations;
4. Threats of complete physical destruction of UPA units, their families and the inhabitants of the neighboring villages.

Here are some actual samples:

Away with the OUN! . . . The Germans have warned you, and since many of you have helped the rebels and bandits in shameful acts, weapons must now speak. You all are guilty. Death to the OUN!

. . . Germany and its allies will attain the final victory for the happiness and blessing of all humanity and, understandably, for the welfare of Ukraine!

. . . Our patience has reached its limit. We joke no longer. We are beginning to act determinedly. Anyone who opposes us will be destroyed! He who helps us to capture and destroy the bandits will save his life! Choose! . . .

The style of the Russian leaflets differed little from the German, except for the use of vulgarity; their contents were equally shallow and superficial:

. . . Come over to the honest and dedicated fighters of the USSR!  
. . . Come out of the woods and surrender your arms to the Red Army!  
. . . Return to honest and peaceful work!  
. . . You will gain all the rights of a free citizen of the USSR!  
Most of the Soviet leaflets concluded:  
"Glory to the Great Friend of the Ukrainian People, Marshal Comrade Stalin!" (Some were signed by Nikita S. Khrushchev.)

As we can see, both imperialists, Nazi Germany and Communist Russia, sang of joining the "happy life" and working for a "glorious" future. To identify Stalin as "the great friend of the Ukrainian people" was to touch the acme of cynicism; to call the citizen of the USSR a "free man" was beneath contempt.

Therefore, neither the German nor the Soviet leaflets had any success. The antidote for the Soviet Russian propaganda was the reality that confronted the Ukrainian daily.

But the Soviet propagandists were by no means discouraged by the meager or total absence of results. They indefatigably issued leaflets in which they vilified the Ukrainian nationalists as "servants of capitalism," "fascists," "German lackeys," and the like.

This propaganda by Germany and the USSR showed a complete lack of any ideological sense and depended on the naked lie. But perhaps the gravest weakness of both propaganda machines was that it reflected their view of Ukraine as a prize colony; both aggressive empires completely neglected or ignored the aspirations of the Ukrainian people to freedom and national independence.

# Chapter Twenty-One

## MOSCOW AGAINST THE UPA

One of the first military acts of the Soviet government after re-occupying the entire Ukrainian ethnic territory was the proclamation of general mobilization of all able-bodied men into the Red Army. All men regardless of whether they had had any military training or experience were sent to the front. Most arrived in civilian clothing and without proper weapons. Whoever expressed any criticism or unwillingness was immediately drafted into the so-called "punitive battalions."

Understandably, in many areas of Ukraine the youth escaped to the woods and joined the UPA rather than serve as cannon fodder for the detested Soviet armies. The problem became a dangerous one for the Soviet government. For the UPA it was an embarrassing one. The hundreds of thousands of youths who appeared were not a partisan element either from a moral or a political viewpoint. The majority of them could not be accepted by the UPA, and many of those who were, soon were revealed to be politically unreliable. Responding to the first appeals of the Soviet government, they quit the woods and surrendered to the Soviet police forces.

Another action in occupied Ukraine was carried out by the Soviet security organs: mass executions, arrests and deportations to the interior of the USSR.

In connection with the changed front-line situation UPA-South and some UPA-East units received orders to concentrate in Volhynia. The orders specified in detail the routes of march and the places of assembly. During this operation the UPA units were ordered to abstain from any active engagements with the Soviet army or police units. On the other hand, if possible, these

units were to propagate the Ukrainian cause among the Soviet troops. This was a fruitful idea because it had been proved that those units of the Red Army in which there were Ukrainians were sympathetically inclined toward the UPA (Soviet units composed of Russians were not).

The so-called "punitive units" of the NKVD that followed the German-Soviet front, essayed to capture all UPA soldiers and members of the OUN. For this reason the UPA retaliated with combat activities against the NKVD. The first armed encounters developed swiftly into large-scale operations, during the course of which the NKVD strengthened its forces.

Consequently, the UPA began an active partisan activity, marked by numerous attacks against Soviet garrisons and ambushes of Soviet security troops. Where the small skirmishes with the NKVD forces were successful, the large-scale operations were not. Especially heavy were the losses suffered by UPA-South units during their march through the treeless areas to the place of assembly.

In the battles involving large UPA units and Soviet divisions a great number of UPA officers fell, although the bulk of UPA troops succeeded in detaching themselves from the Soviet pursuers and reaching their destination. Regardless of the fact that the UPA had triumphed in many encounters, the Supreme Command of the UPA ordered the battalions to break down into companies.

For some months, beginning in January, 1944, the Russians did not mount large-scale operations against the UPA. The armed encounters of this period were generally limited in scope and uncoordinated on the part of the Soviet command. The fighting between the NKVD and UPA featured ambushes and raids. Active on the Soviet side were the NKVD punitive units; on the Ukrainian side the combat was conducted by such UPA Commanders as Kora, Laidaka, Yarema, Shavula, Dubovy, Enei and Yasen.

In April, 1944, the Soviet government opened up a large-scale campaign against the UPA under the propagandistic code name of "Cheka-Military Operations for the Liquidation of the German-Ukrainian Nationalist Bands." The campaign was precipitated by the successful UPA ambush of the Soviet commander of the First Ukrainian Front, Marshal Vatutin.

As soon as it was learned that Marshal Vatutin had made his headquarters in Volhynia, the UPA made plans to raid his staff and, if possible, capture him alive. UPA intelligence reported that Marshal Vatutin's headquarters was located in the village of Karpylivka. On March 6, 1944, an UPA company, commanded by Voron, attacked the headquarters, located in a large brick-walled house. The UPA attack was repelled, and Commander Voron was wounded.

Meanwhile, the UPA unit under the command of Enei was setting up ambushes frequently along the Hoshcha-Rivne railroad because high-ranking Soviet officers often traveled that way. On March 19, 1944, OUN intelligence



reported that Marshal Vatutin was to travel to the city of Rivne. The ambush was totally successful; the convoy of Marshal Vatutin was destroyed and the Marshal himself severely wounded. He was taken to a military hospital in Kiev where he died a few days later of his wounds. True to their tactics, the Russians never acknowledged that Marshal Vatutin had been killed by the Ukrainian insurgents. They did not for the same reason the Germans never admitted that Gen. Victor Lutze had been assassinated by the UPA: to play down the importance of the UPA.

The Soviet operations against the UPA began with mass appeals to the Ukrainian insurgents to put down their arms and to report to the Soviet authorities, promising pardon in the name of a common struggle against the Germans. At the same time, they built up a heavy concentration of military and police forces under the command of Nikita S. Khrushchev.

The point of departure of the Soviet forces ran along the Kovel-Rivne Shepetivka line. Here the Soviet command began organizing operations in depth against the terrain occupied by the UPA, which decided to set up their defenses at the Sluch River.

The Soviet forces consisted of two infantry divisions, two NKVD brigades, an armored brigade, two NKVD frontier police regiments and a few thousand militia and Soviet partisans.

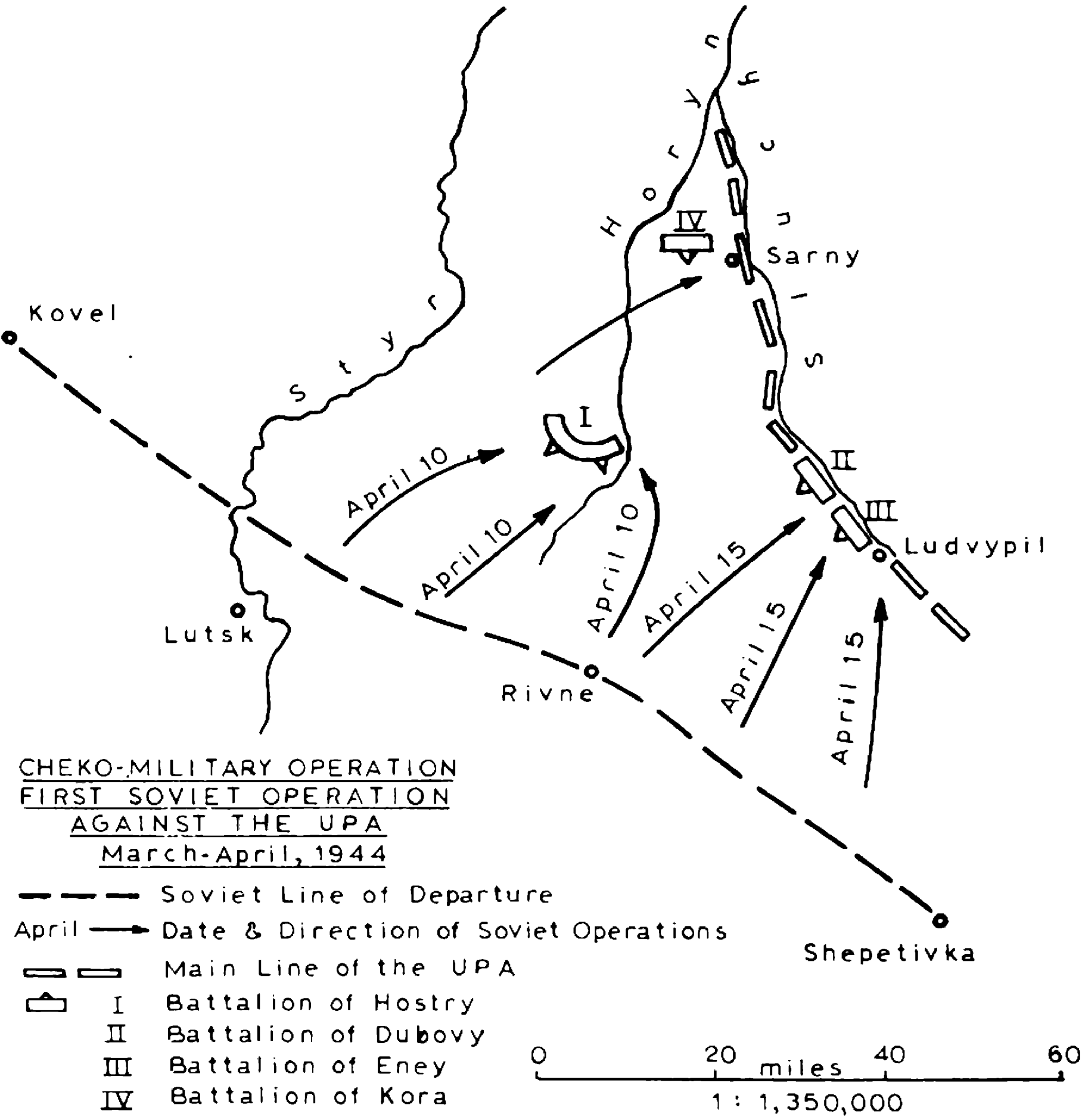
The first offensive of the Soviet forces began on March 26, an NKVD battalion setting out from Kostopol to clear the woods on the Horyn River. It was met here by the UPA unit commanded by Hostry and was annihilated.

The Soviet command now dispatched the Soviet partisans into the terrain to terrorize the villages. The terrorism was intended to demoralize the villagers and to break the morale of the UPA. The Red partisans also conducted an energetic intelligence activity against the UPA. They tried to evade any armed encounters with the UPA, but the UPA insurgents sought them out and tried to destroy them. In these operations the UPA forces revealed their positions and their strength.

On April 10, the Russians launched an attack on the Horyn River and the surrounding woods. Under overwhelming pressure, the UPA units retreated into the woods, farther to the north and east.

On April 15 a heavy concentration of Soviet troops moved against the UPA units commanded by Dubovy and Enei. All villages and roads west of the Sluch River were blocked by the strong Soviet forces. In their attack through the forest the Russians used armor and the air force, and the fighting was heavy and bloody. The Russians suffered heavy casualties and losses of war equipment, including the great majority of their tanks. Nonetheless, the UPA units were forced to withdraw across the river, opposing the crossing of the enemy until April 25 when hostilities ceased.

At the time the units commanded by Dubovy and Enei were engaged, the unit of Commander Kora was encircled by a cordon thrown around the city



of Sarny. Eventually, his UPA unit broke the ring and forced the enemy into a forest on fire, where the Russians suffered heavy losses. During this operation the Soviet command failed to cross the Sluch River, which for some time remained a border of the UPA operations.

Toward the end of April the "Cheka-Military" operation came to an end, the Soviet troops retreating from Volhynia. The UPA units thereupon moved in. The last stage of this operation was marked by the battle at Hurby, which had an important effect on the warfare waged thereafter by the Ukrainian nationalist underground.

In May, 1944, the UPA had a short respite, which was utilized in preparation for raids to the east. The overall purposes of these raids were:

1. To relieve the territory of Volhynia of large concentrations of UPA troops;
2. To implement the dispersion of UPA troops in accordance with the orders of the Supreme Command of the UPA, leaving in Volhynia numerous but small UPA units;
3. To investigate the possibilities of operations deep into Ukraine, especially in the forests of Chernihiv province;
4. To ascertain the political situation in the interior of Ukraine.

The raiding units were under order to return to their bases, while at the same time the reorganization of other units remaining in Volhynia was supposed to be completed.

In Galicia the population *en masse* resisted the Soviet mobilization of youth into the Soviet army. The UPA reinforced this movement by demoralizing and destroying the NKVD posts. It engaged in skirmishes, made ambushes and committed acts of sabotage. Because the base of the UPA were the great massives of the Carpathian and sub-Carpathian forests, the Russians began a systematic siege and manhunts of these areas. On the whole, however, the Carpathian forests at that time were left in comparative tranquility. It may be noted that UPA units also were active in Bukovina.

The second operation against the UPA began in July, 1944, marked by an awesome increase in terrorism: entire villages were burned down, and all persons suspected of cooperating with or supporting the UPA were either summarily executed or deported to the interior of the USSR. In Volhynia the Russians began burning down the forests. In that summer of 1944 the Russians also began raiding the villages and taking the Ukrainian women away "for work in the Donbas." A great number of Soviet *agent-provocateurs* appeared in the Ukrainian villages, often disguised as Ukrainian insurgents.

Again, however, the effort of the Soviet army command proved unavailing. The order of Stalin, "to suppress the insurrection in Western Ukraine at all costs," issued at the end of May, 1944, elicited no results whatsoever. All appeals to UPA insurgents to surrender by promising them full amnesty were equally ineffective.

Stalin thereupon entrusted the direction of all operations against the UPA to Nikita S. Khrushchev, providing him with an unlimited number of men and military equipment. The Soviet command set up a target date for the destruction of the UPA as a fighting force: March 15, 1945.<sup>105</sup>

### **The First Operation of Khrushchev Against the UPA**

Whereas the first two operations of the Soviet army against the UPA were local in character, the first operation of Khrushchev against the Ukrainian nationalist underground was a great and powerful undertaking. The future dictator of the Soviet Union mobilized at least 20 combat divisions, especially trained to wage partisan warfare. In the main they were NKVD divisions, supplemented by heavy weapons and armored units.

The UPA strength at that time, swelled by the Ukrainian youth who had volunteered as well as by those who had fled from arrest and mobilization, numbered about 200,000. These troops were dispersed throughout Galicia and Volhynia. The Russians, who would have liked nothing better than to destroy the UPA by concentrated attacks in a short time, were compelled to disperse their forces against the nuclei of the UPA and to start offensive operations in many sectors.

In every sector, it is to be stressed, the Soviet forces outnumbered the UPA fighters. The Russians nevertheless failed to saturate the terrain and achieve a real superiority over the UPA units because the latter operated by the hit-and-run partisan strategy.

The battles, which were waged in the late fall and winter, a time most inappropriate for the UPA, were fierce and stubborn in the extreme.

The Russian tactics were based on a full blockade of the surrounded terrain. Villages were choked with NKVD troops in order to prevent the UPA units from procuring food and medical supplies. Effective roadblocks were set up on all the roads, for weeks barring the Ukrainian insurgents from outside contact, escape and reconnaissance.

This operation, which resulted in heavy casualties on both sides, claimed the lives of many prominent UPA commanders.

On November 1 the Russians unleashed a great offensive against the Black Forest and the county seat of Pidhaitsi. In the Black Forest were units of the UPA under Commander Rizun, along with the UPA units "Lysonia" near Pidhaitsi. The latter units were encircled more than once, but eventually succeeded in breaking through the Soviet ring and reaching Volhynia. In the Black Forest the Soviet forces, mustering two combat divisions, failed to overrun the UPA positions. All their attacks were repelled, and the Black Forest remained the base of the UPA for some time. The defeated NKVD divisions were withdrawn from the area.

<sup>105</sup> Shankowsky, *op. cit.*

A similar operation staged by the Russians on November 15 against the *raion* city of Bolekhiv also was inconclusive.

A great siege of the city of Kremianets resulted in the encirclement of an UPA battalion by two NKVD divisions. The battalion broke out of the encirclement in the direction of Zaliztsi, only to fall into another trap near the village of Panasivka. Here the companies commanded by Dunai, Mech and Sokil were defeated; some 60 UPA men were killed, the rest escaping in small groups.

The siege of an area located between the Sluch and Horyn Rivers lasted two months (November 15, 1944 to January 15, 1945). The Soviet attacks came from every side, and the fighting was intense and bloody. Some UPA units succeeded in escaping in the directions of Dubno and Volodymyr Volynsky, but there, too, they ran into strong Soviet roadblocks. Many UPA men, including some of the most experienced commanders, were killed. The Soviet casualties were extremely heavy.

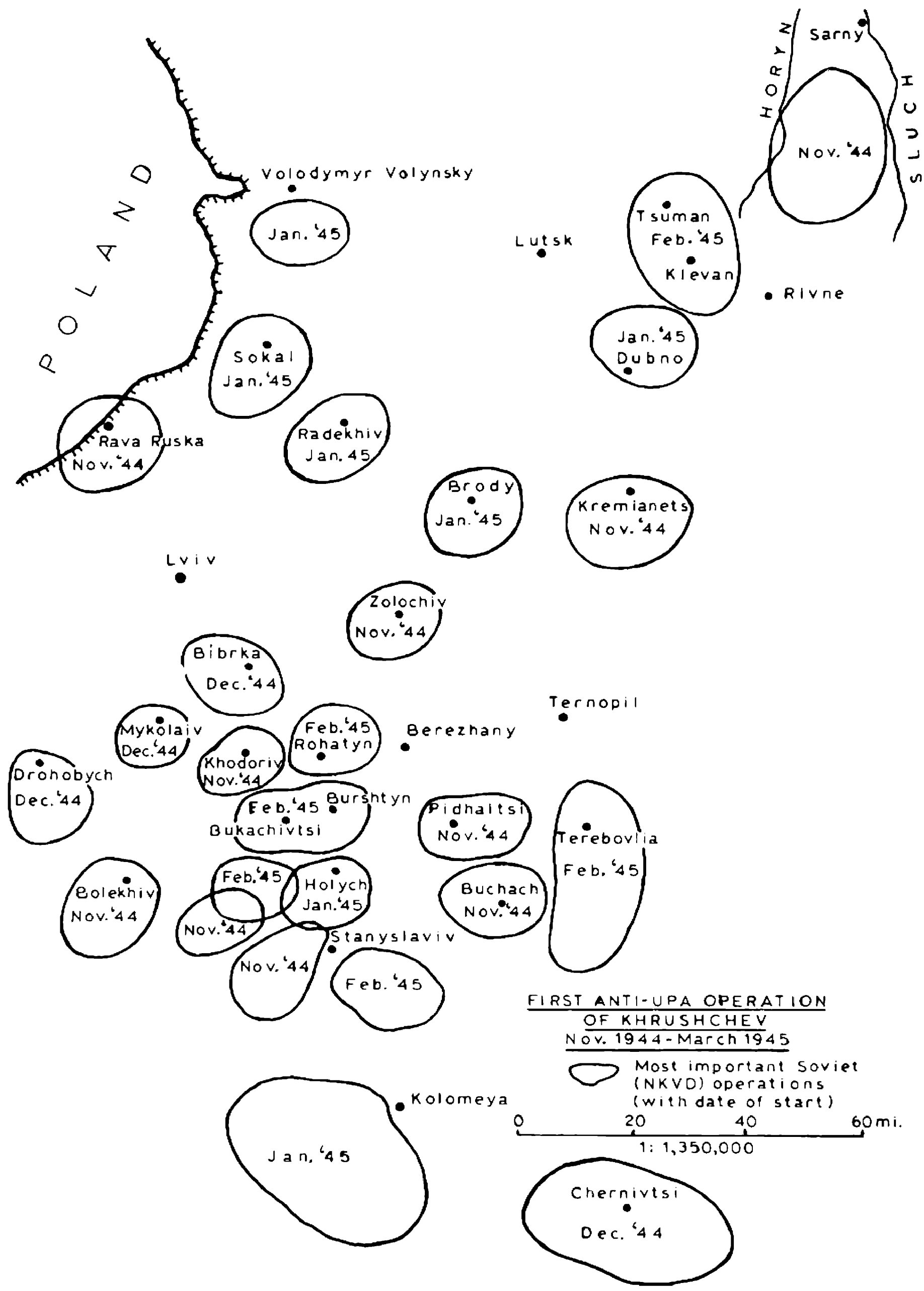
In the second half of November, 1944, the Soviet troops encircled the "Siromantsi" Battalion near Khodoriv. After a long and desperate battle, the battalion broke itself up into small units which succeeded in escaping toward Lubachiv.

At the beginning of December, 1944, other Soviet operations against the UPA took place in the areas of Khodoriv-Strilyska, Bibrka and Mykolaiv. The Soviet command threw 20,000 men into the offensive. All the villages were blocked while the area was combed by special security troops in a search for UPA bunkers and supply stores. An entire group fell into a trap set by the UPA unit "Poltavtsi" and was completely destroyed. The Soviet roadblocks sealed off the terrain with the exception of the road near Mykolaiv, where the Russians prepared an ambush for those UPA troops that were in the woods. The ensuing fighting took a heavy toll of casualties on both sides, including the motorized NKVD troops stationed in Medynychi under the command of Gen. Saburov. During the ambush a high-ranking Soviet officer was killed—General Fedorov. It has never been satisfactorily established how he was killed. An UPA version holds that he was assassinated during the ambush<sup>106</sup> by an UPA agent in the uniform of an NKVD officer.

To be understood is that at this time the UPA units did not limit themselves to defensive actions only. On the contrary, they executed raids and attacks, committed sabotage, and set up ambushes by the hundreds—in the course of which the Russians suffered severe losses.

On January 5, 1945, the Soviet troops blocked off the areas of Halych and Voyniliv, exerting heavy pressure until the first days of February. A captured UPA officer and a few men revealed under torture the locations of the UPA hide-outs, which were then attacked by the NKVD troops. A number

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*



of prominent UPA and OUN leaders perished, but the majority of the UPA troops broke out of the ring and departed for the mountains.

At the end of January a large-scale Soviet offensive against the areas of Zhuravno and Bukachivtsi ended with heavy losses for the enemy.

Also on January 5, 1945, Soviet troops, with General Saburov in command, began an offensive in the areas of Drohobych, Mykolaiv and Rudky. In the woods near Mykolaiv this force was attacked by several UPA units which, by their sudden and unremitting raids, mercilessly whittled down the enemy. After two weeks Gen. Saburov retreated with less than half of his original force.

In the Carpathian Mountains and in Bukovina the Soviet offensive began in January and lasted to the end of the operations, that is, April, 1945. Here the mountainous terrain prevented the Soviet command from executing its plan smoothly. Defending the terrain were the UPA battalions "Haidamaky" and "Hoverlia" and the Carpathian Battalion. All the Soviet attacks were repelled with heavy losses for the enemy.

In Bukovina, the Soviet command tried to break the resistance of the Ukrainians by spreading the contagious disease of typhus among the populace. A near-epidemic ravaged both the civilians and the UPA ranks. Only through vigorous counteractions on the part of the Ukrainian Red Cross was the typhus stamped out.

On January 20, 1945, Soviet troops encircled the areas of Brody, Radekhiv and Sokal. Near the city of Brody the Soviet command placed garrisons in 70 villages, sealing off the UPA battalion "Druzhynnyky" in the woods. The UPA insurgents made numerous raids against the Soviet garrisons, but because of lack of food were forced to break down into small units and escape north from the beleaguered area. In the second half of February, after the Soviet troops gave up their blockade, the "Druzhynnyky" battalion returned to their old base. Similar actions of an offensive character against the UPA units were conducted in the areas of Radekhiv and Sokal and in Volhynia.

In Volhynia, the Soviet offense began in the second half of February, 1945, in the areas of Tsuman and Klevan. Here the losses of the UPA were serious, and they retreated to the west.

The raids of the UPA in Podilia were designed to relieve the UPA areas under Soviet attack. Small units, not exceeding 100 men, swooped down on the towns and villages, destroying Soviet army and police posts and eradicating the secret informers. These maneuvers prevented the Soviet command from assessing the real strength of the UPA, which made frequent and slashing attacks, disappearing as suddenly as it had appeared.

The first operations of Khrushchev against the UPA resulted in heavy losses for the UPA and the OUN, disorganized UPA units in the field and fractured liaison for some time. But the UPA as such was not destroyed. The Russians suffered ten times as much, not to mention untold losses in war

materiel. What was important was that the operations failed in their objective to destroy the UPA; throughout Ukraine the news spread rapidly that the Soviet army was not, after all, "invincible." Soon the UPA soldiers and OUN members began to recover from the first impact of the offensive; new UPA units were organized under the command of new leaders, captured Soviet arms were stored away, and a new Ukrainian insurgent army prepared to continue the struggle.

### **The Second Operation of Khrushchev Against the UPA**

The second operation of Khrushchev against the UPA was necessitated by the failure of the first. It began almost immediately after the first was terminated, with Khrushchev bringing in new forces commanded by five Soviet generals.<sup>107</sup> Included in the new operations were the Soviet partisan units, the so-called "Stalin's Children,"<sup>108</sup> and *istrebitel* units (punitive units), consisting of human dregs that were at hand. Unfortunately, no data are available today as to the numerical strength of the Soviet forces. Likewise, little is known about the UPA strength inasmuch as most of its documents and archives are as yet inaccessible to researchers. Of necessity, we must limit ourselves to a general description of Khrushchev's operations.

Whereas the attempts to liquidate the UPA prior to November, 1944, were a loose series of battles and actions, unconnected by any operational scheme, the mass operations by Khrushchev were based on thoroughly elaborated plans. In all these operations the tactics were the same: NKVD troops occupied the villages, conducted reconnaissance, and began setting up sieges and ambushes. They scrutinized the behavior of the villagers, sent secret agents and informers to report on their talk, arrested suspected persons and tortured them in order to gain information. They searched the villages for supply stores, anti-Russian printing presses and anti-Communist materials. They also mined the approaches to the villages, especially lanes and paths in the forest.

Once having checked the villages, they moved into the fields, bushes and forests. Here they searched for underground bunkers, using mine-detecting devices and other means.

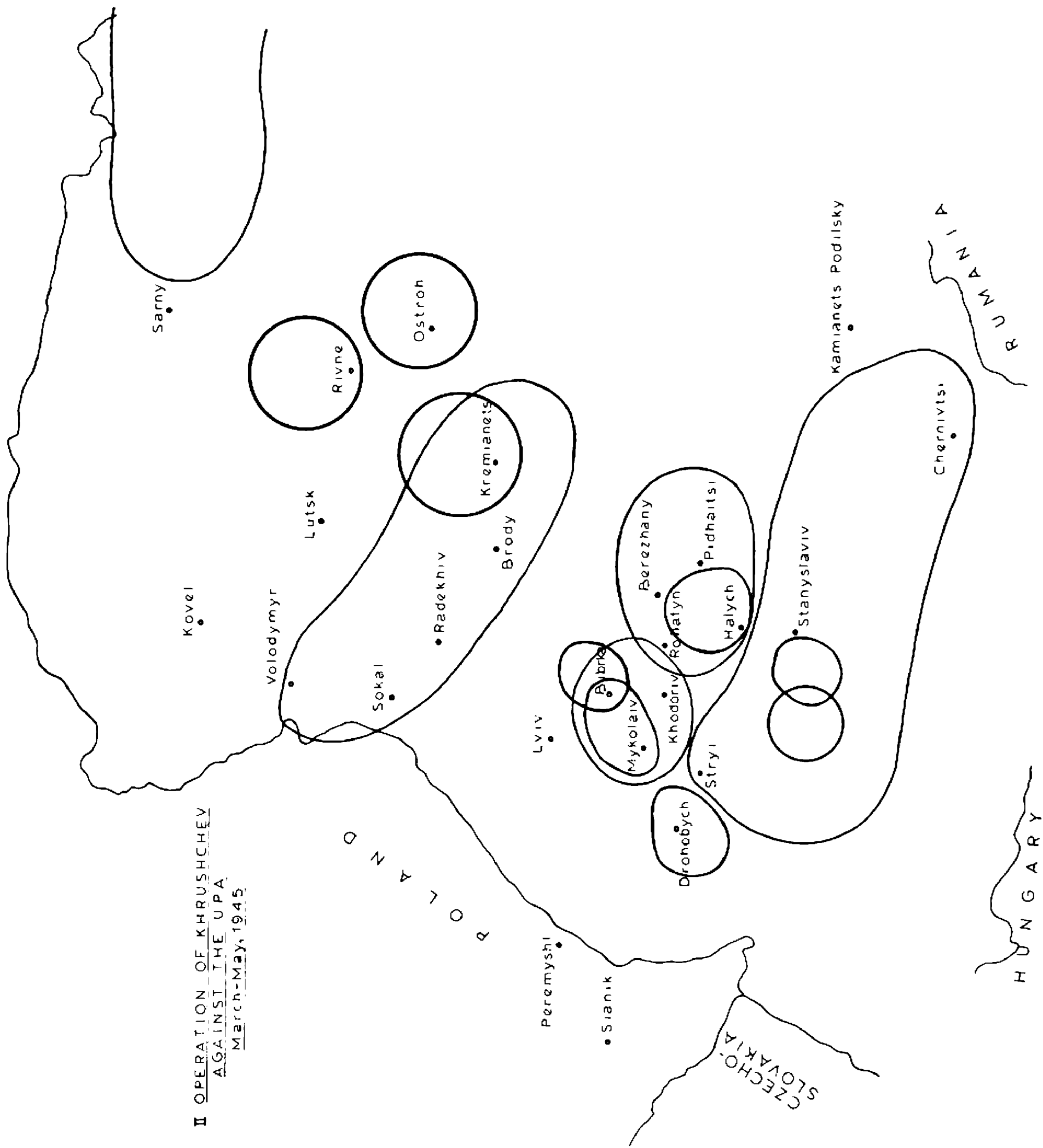
The Russians set up blockades as they had during the first operation by Khrushchev, except that this time larger areas were involved.

With a near saturation of the area with Soviet troops, the UPA refrained from engaging in front-line battles. In accordance with the orders of its Supreme Command, the UPA switched to pure partisan warfare. Battles of

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>108</sup> "Stalin's Children" were Soviet police units, organized similar to the *Hitlerjugend*, consisting of parentless children, educated in Soviet state institutions. They were vicious and merciless.





movement with frequent change of position and maneuver, rapid decisions adapted to the circumstances, proper use of the terrain, night operations, avoidance of encounters with superior units of the enemy, surprise attacks and ambushes and raids—these were the tactical methods used by the UPA.

Khrushchev's second operation against the UPA was launched on March 20, 1945, by several new NKVD units. The first assaults brought some successes for the Soviet command: wiped out were two UPA companies, "Chornomortsi" and "Orly." But the offensive by an NKVD division against the UPA companies "Halaida I" and "Halaida II," which had come in relief of another UPA group in the forest of Zabolotnyshcha, failed, incurring great losses for the Russians. After a whole-day battle the UPA insurgents succeeded in escaping the encirclement.

The Soviet army began a large-scale operation along the line Kremianets-Brody-Radekhiv-Volodymyr, bisecting Western Ukraine, for the purpose of preventing the passage of UPA troops from Volhynia into the Carpathians, and vice versa. The preparations for this operation, which lasted some time, could not escape the detection of UPA intelligence. The objective of the enemy unmistakable, UPA units disappeared from the progressively-combed terrain. Then, in a force of six companies they attacked, on April 26, 1945, the city of Radekhiv, destroyed the headquarters of the NKVD and its garrison and released from the local prison 550 Ukrainian political prisoners awaiting trial and deportation. This smashing strike on one of the major bases of the Soviet military operations immediately drew the great forces of the NKVD. But the UPA units departed into the Radvansky Forest, where they were finally forced to turn and combat the large Soviet units pursuing them. Here, too, the Soviet troops suffered heavy losses, and retreated toward the city.

Mounting a great operation against the UPA in the Carpathian Mountains, the Russians now tried to conceal their preparations as much as possible. Military trains were routed in different directions in order to mask the locality of detrainment. The actual operation itself lasted from April 7 to May 15, 1945. It included the well-established tactics of encirclement, siege, hunt and raid. But in the terrain, difficult and inaccessible for almost any one but the UPA insurgent, UPA breakthroughs and raids were the order of the day. The Ukrainian partisans effectively and successfully raided the Soviet command posts and communication centers, mined railroad tracks, bridges and culverts. Every night the UPA made hundreds of sorties and raids, paralyzing the planned Soviet operations.

In a period of six months in 1945 the UPA unit "Chorny Lis" (Black Forest) executed 110 combat actions, in which the enemy lost 1,852 dead and 919 wounded. The four battalions of the "Hoverlia" group in the same interval executed 181 actions, in which the enemy lost 3,975 dead and 1,383

wounded. On the Ukrainian side, the first group suffered only 101 dead, and the second, 215.<sup>109</sup>

The end of World War II made for confusion and even created a certain crisis in the ranks of the UPA. This situation was exploited by the Soviet government, which officially appealed to the UPA to cease fighting and surrender in exchange for a guarantee of total pardon. It also named a particular deadline. This appeal was not repeated.

On its own behalf the UPA and OUN issued a declaration that was widely disseminated among the populace and the underground system. It called for increased efforts and dedication against the Soviet Russian occupants. At the same time the UPA launched its own offensive against several Soviet army and police garrisons in Western and Northwestern Ukraine. The number of raids on large towns and cities, and especially the local seats of Soviet administration, grew from day to day.

After World War II the Soviet command rerouted the Soviet army transports from Germany to the areas occupied by the UPA for use in the offensive operations against the Ukrainian underground. The Supreme Command of the UPA launched a swift and effective counteraction. Soviet soldiers were flooded with UPA leaflets and appeals explaining why the UPA was fighting against Moscow: the liberation of Ukraine and other captive nations and the establishment of free and independent nations. At numerous secret meetings between UPA insurgents and Soviet soldiers extensive discussions were held dealing with the position of the UPA. Most of the Soviet troops returning through Western Ukraine on their way back from the front were part of the First and Second Ukrainian Fronts, composed mostly of Ukrainians. As a result, the attitude of the Soviet army troops became friendlier by the day. The Soviet command quickly saw that these troops could not be used against the UPA. In fact, many Soviet soldiers joined the UPA in their hatred of the communist regime. There were cases of small Red army units with their officers and noncommissioned officers going over to the UPA. The UPA Supreme Command was reluctant, however, to accept them for various reasons. One was the impossibility of testing their loyalty and screening them to weed out the secret agents. The most important reason was that the UPA was planning its own transformation from a military force into a purely underground one.

### **The Third Operation of Khrushchev Against the UPA**

The second half of 1945 was characterized by continuous blockades of entire districts of Western Ukraine by Soviet troops and security forces. During this period the Soviet government sent its units, attired in UPA uniforms, into the Ukrainian villages to pillage and forage in the name of the UPA;

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*

this was, of course, a bald attempt to discredit the Ukrainian nationalist underground movement. To reinforce the fiction the NKVD sent in troops against their own masquerading bands. But the OUN civilian network waged constant propaganda among the population and unmasked these nefarious actions of the Soviet secret police.

In accordance with special orders and instructions from the Supreme Command, the UPA now began to prepare the people for a transition in the methods of struggle. Gaining importance in the shape of things to come were the Soviet spies and the collaborators of the NKVD, the so-called *sek-sots* (secret informers). These were mercilessly hunted down by the UPA. A similar campaign was waged against the *istrebitel* detachments, largely composed of criminal elements. The heavy losses in the numbers of *sek-sots* and *istrebitel* units resulted in their dissolution by the Soviet government in 1947.

In addition to this activity, the UPA continued to wage an armed struggle, albeit on a limited scale. It raided Soviet police stations and depots, committed sabotage, and in general harassed the enemy. At the end of 1945 its raids on towns were quite frequent, creating consternation and fear among the Soviet occupation forces.

The resourcefulness and tenacity of the UPA had become so evident that the Soviet command desisted from its large-scale blockades of a military character. There was obviously no sense in sending army divisions against the small, mobile groups of the Ukrainian insurgents. Moreover, despite their successful raids, the UPA kept losing experienced men and officers.

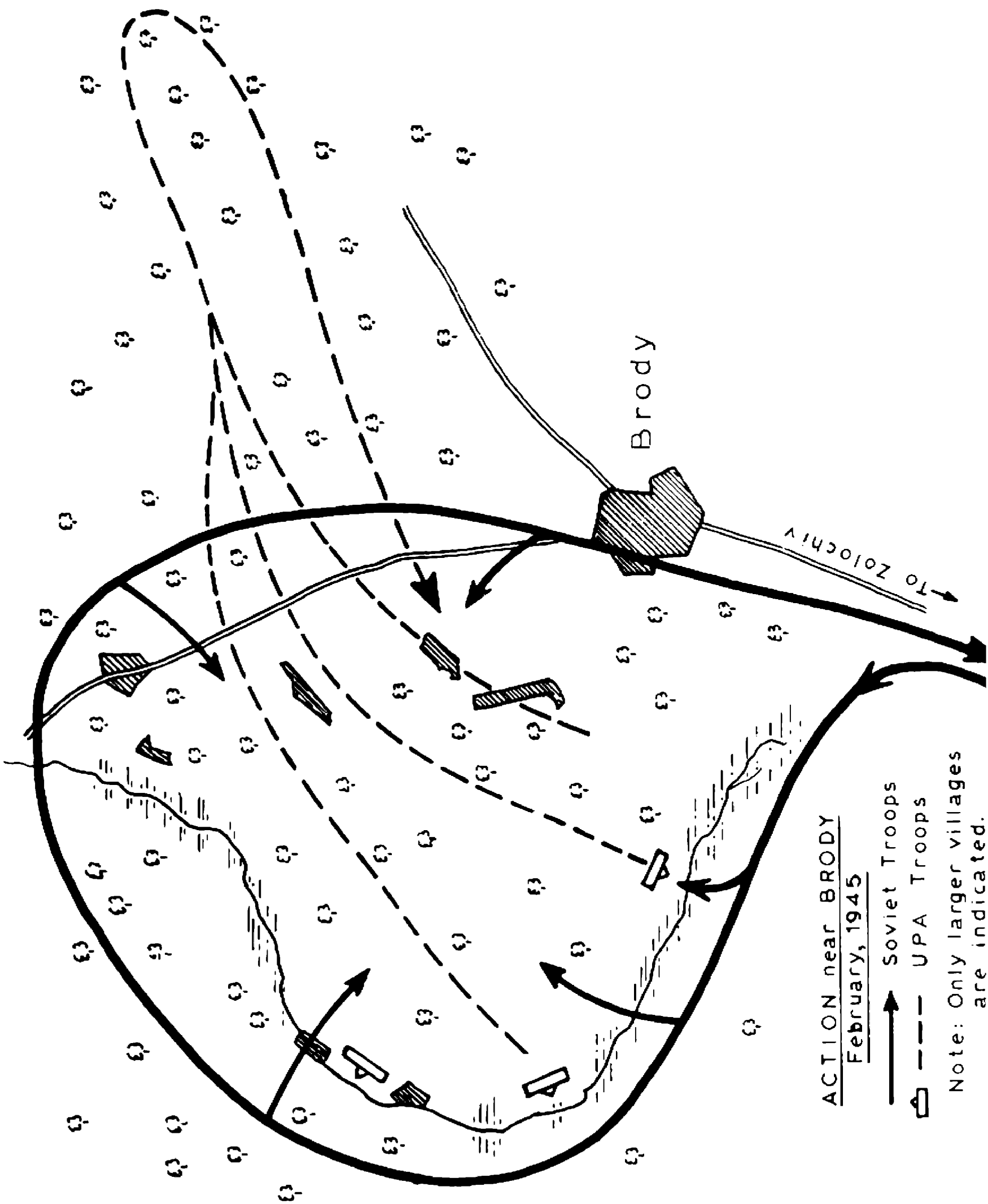
Now Nikita Khrushchev initiated the so-called "Great Blockade of the UPA," linking it with a vast ideological and political campaign against the OUN civilian network. The latter development was a reaction to the overwhelming Ukrainian boycott of the "Soviet elections" in Western Ukraine to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. This boycott had alarmingly demonstrated the power and invincibility of Ukrainian nationalism.

Khrushchev ordered a great concentration of Soviet forces with special NKVD troops predominating:

In the <i>oblast</i> of Volhynia	75,000 men;
Rivne	90,000 men;
Lviv <i>oblast</i>	77,000 men;
Drohobych <i>oblast</i>	81,000 men;
Stanyslaviv <i>oblast</i>	132,000 men;
Ternopil <i>oblast</i>	95,000 men;
Chernivtsi <i>oblast</i>	35,000 men.

Thus Moscow amassed 585,000 of its best NKVD troops for the suppression of the Ukrainian underground.<sup>110</sup> These units consisted almost exclusively of ethnic Russians..

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*



On January 10, 1946, in all the villages of Western Ukraine appeared garrisons of the NKVD during the course of raids by other units of the Soviet army to flush out UPA and OUN members, their supply stores and arms caches. These Soviet troops often employed the ruse of using UPA uniforms and insignia. In certain mountainous country the Soviet authorities were able to cut off all deliveries of food. They also used bacteriological warfare, spreading infectious diseases and poisoning outstanding UPA officers and leaders of the OUN.

In the winter months the Soviet security police combed the woods inch by inch turning up underground bunkers and arms caches. They also made a house to house search in the villages for UPA stores, printing presses and radio equipment. The situation of the UPA gradually became desperate; the vital liaison with the populace became increasingly difficult. To avoid strangulation UPA units began attacking Soviet garrisons wherever possible.

From January to July, 1946, the UPA made 1500 armed raids during which it lost 5,000 men while destroying 15,000 Soviet troops and police. As we can see, the change-over to partisan war tactics on the part of the Russians resulted in a drastic lowering of the casualty rate in favor of UPA from 1:10 to 1:3. In the Ukrainian partisan literature dealing with these times are to be found an impressive number of reports and memoirs relating to the armed encounters, raids, ambushes of outstanding NKVD officers, and so forth.

At the end of June, 1946, the order came from Moscow to terminate the "Great Blockade." Khrushchev officially announced a victory over the "Ukrainian nationalists" and their total destruction. This was typical Soviet propaganda bragging; these blockades of Khrushchev were neither military nor political victories. It is undeniable, however, that the UPA's strength had been sapped by attrition.

At this point, it is to be made clear that despite the great losses in manpower the organizational network of the OUN remained intact. The organization was buried deeper underground, its members experienced fighters who knew now how to deal effectively with the enemy. The central organizations of the UPA and OUN continued to exist, along with their subsidiary subdivisions. Armed detachments of the UPA continued to operate in cooperation with the political leadership of the UHVR (Supreme Ukrainian Liberation Council).

The supreme leadership of the OUN took various decisions regarding the developments in Ukraine; it issued appeals periodically to the Ukrainian populace which defined the situation of Ukraine as a whole.

In July, 1950, the UPA Supreme Command informed all UPA fighters of the necessary transition from an armed phase of the struggle to another. Most UPA units were demobilized and integrated into the civilian network of the OUN. True, some armed units of the UPA still operated in the Carpathian Mountains and in the woods of Polisia. General Taras Chuprynka remained

Commander-in-Chief of the UPA, with Oleksa Hasyn-Lytsar as his chief of staff. Units of the UPA were broken down into small operational groups of ten to fifteen men each. The Information Bureau of the Supreme Ukrainian Liberation Council issued a communique, which, in part, read:

Taking into consideration the present situation in Ukraine and the strength at the disposal of the liberation movement, we must find such forms of struggle as would assure it from being destroyed by the enemy. . . . For these reasons, the UPA and the revolutionary cadres have been transformed from an insurgent form of mass armed struggle into that of a deep underground. Armed units of the UPA continue to operate only in those areas where the natural and geographical conditions permit. The principal task of the underground has now become organizational and political-propagandistic work. Its objective remains the destruction of the Bolshevik domination in Ukraine and the establishment on the Ukrainian ethnic territory of a free, independent and sovereign Ukrainian state. . . .

The UPA transition to an underground system took place over a number of years. In 1948 the UPA and the armed underground conducted 1,422 armed actions, according to the UPA Supreme Command. We now see the dual character of the movement: the UPA and the armed underground. The Ukrainians waged constant sabotage against the collective farm system as well as armed raids (Czechoslovakia and Rumania, 1949, and East Prussia, 1948).

In 1949-1950 the UPA-OUN suffered heavy losses. Among the fallen commanders most prominent were Shelest, Lytsar, Khrin and, above all, the Commander-in-Chief, General Taras Chuprynka, who also was head of the Supreme Council of the OUN. Chuprynka was killed in an NKVD ambush on March 5, 1950, in Western Ukraine.

Killed in a battle in 1952 was Peter Poltava, an outstanding officer and ideologist of the OUN.

But despite these losses, new leaders arose to take their places, and the underground struggle, headed by the OUN, went on.

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# Chapter Twenty-two

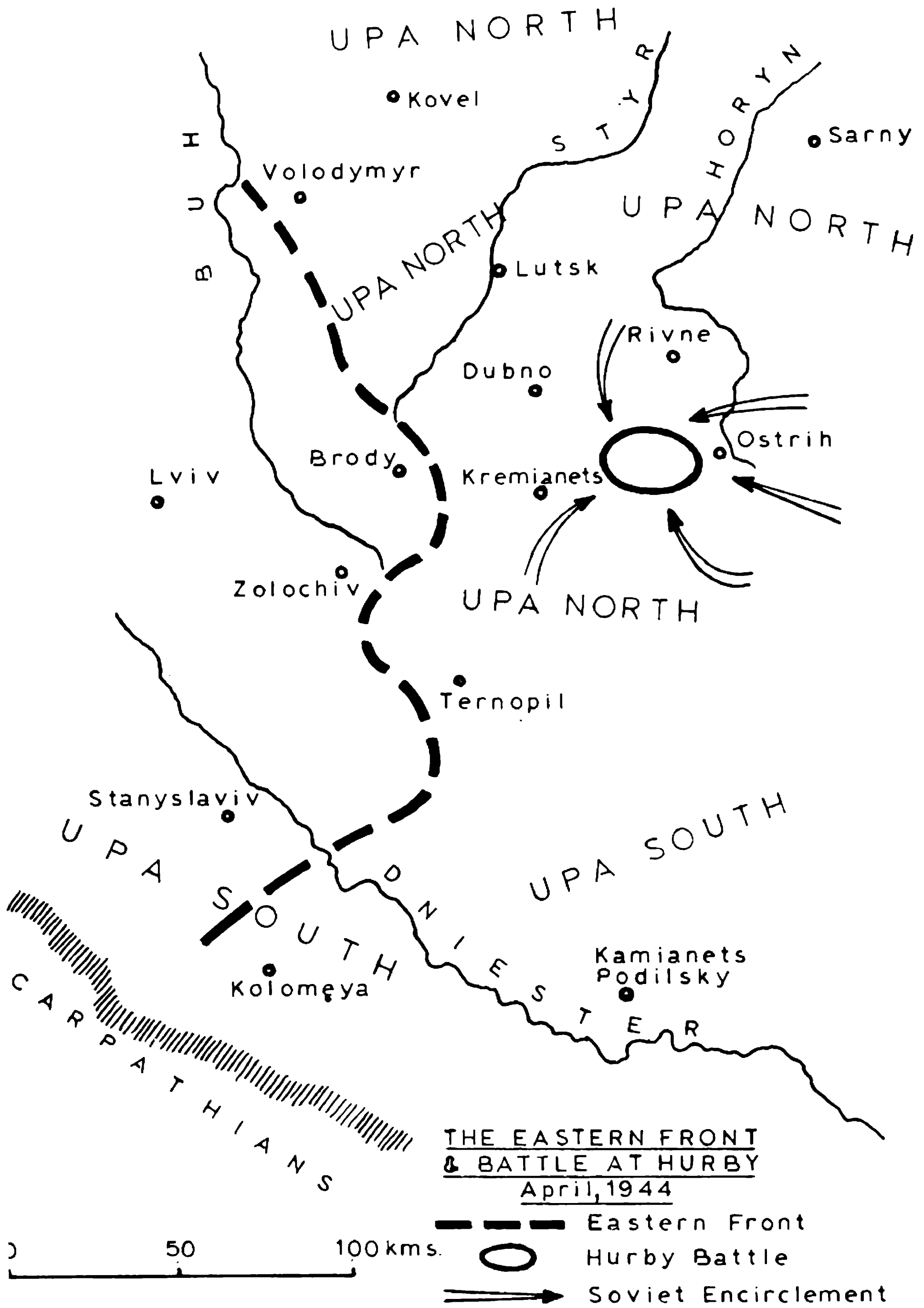
## **UPA'S RELENTLESS STRUGGLE AGAINST THE SOVIET ARMIES**

### **Battle at Hurby (April 22-25, 1944)**

In the early days of April, 1944, the Germans, thrown back by the powerful Soviet armies, halted on the line Volodymyr Volynsky-Brody-Ternopil-Kolomeya. At the same time the German High Command changed the name of the front from *Heeresgruppe Sued* to *Nord Ukraine*, and placed it under the command of Field Marshal Model. The latter succeeded in holding the line, save for some enemy encroachments, until the great Soviet offensive in the summer of 1944, which resulted in the chaotic German retreat and their loss of almost the entire Ukrainian territory.

Thus, in April of 1944 the UPA troops found themselves on territory occupied for the most part by Soviet troops. Only those UPA units operating in Galicia, south of Lviv and in the Carpathian Mountains, were under the German occupation. The UPA units in Volhynia were able to maintain their bases because of the inaccessible forests, even augmenting them with substantial quantities of war materiel and food supplies. Here the UPA was greatly assisted by the populace and the civilian network of the OUN, who collected arms and weapons. The UPA possessed a great quantity of heavy weapons of both German and Soviet make.

# RED PARTISANS



### **The Insurgent Army**

In addition to several small bases, the largest UPA base was located in the village of Antonivka, which also had a training camp, a military hospital and supply stores. In this area, which was remote from the principal arteries of communication and the military operations, there was a comparative lull. The UPA battalions here were ordered for the time being not to engage in battle the advancing Soviet divisions until the front moved farther to the west. From time to time the UPA had to give battle to Soviet reconnaissance units that would enter upon the territory of the "UPA republic."

The area was bordered on the east by the city of Ostroh, on the south by Antonivka, Siurazh and Maidan, on the west by the villages of Obhiv and Mala Moshanytsia, and on the north by the town of Mizoch and the village of Verkhiv. The terrain was woody and marshy and all but impassable for motorized enemy units. Here were the southern units of UPA-North and those parts of units of UPA-South which, unable to remain in their own territory because of the shifting front, had moved into the areas between Kremiannets and Ostroh. The UPA units operating farther to the north constituted a barrier against the Red partisans, raiding from Polisia.

In this delineated area operated eight UPA battalions and an UPA company, all under the overall command of Commander Yasen:

#### **Units of UPA-North**

- 1st Battalion—Commander Storchan;
- 2nd Battalion—Commander Dyk;
- 3rd Battalion—Commander Doks;
- 4th Battalion—Commander Buvaly;
- 5th Battalion—Commander Zalizniak;
- 6th Company—Commander Vanka;

#### **Units of UPA-South**

- 7th Battalion—Commander Dovbenko;
- 8th Battalion—Commander Shum;
- 9th Battalion—Commander Mamai.

The total number of UPA fighters was 5,000 men. In addition, there were units of newly recruited members and refugees, but they were ill-armed and inexperienced. These people were sent deep into the woods to prevent them from getting hurt or killed during the enemy operations.

### **The Soviet Troops**

In April, 1944, UPA reconnaissance reported that NKVD forces were being massed in the area of Shepetivka-Zbarazh-Ostroh and Rivne, compris-

ing 5 motorized brigades, i.e., about 30,000 soldiers with artillery and planes. It also became known that backing up the front-line troops were large units of security forces (NKVD) and the so-called *istrebitel* detachments, which policed the area, arrested deserters and enemy stragglers, and the like. The *istrebitel* units were much like the German SS formations, while the NKVD units were composed of experienced veterans and fanatical Communists.

On April 21, 1944, the Soviet troops that occupied departure positions on the line Ostroh-Shumsk and Kremianets began moving ahead. Shortly, they turned northward and halted not far from the village of Obhiv. The plan of the enemy was now clear; any thoughts about the Soviet troops proceeding to the German front were quickly dissipated. The enemy began a maneuver of encirclement from the east and west. On April 22-23, 1944, sporadic skirmishes took place. The following day the UPA command received reconnaissance information that still another Soviet force had completed the encirclement from the north on the line Ostroh-Verkhiv-Mizoch. Thus the UPA forces were caught in an iron ring.

### The Battle

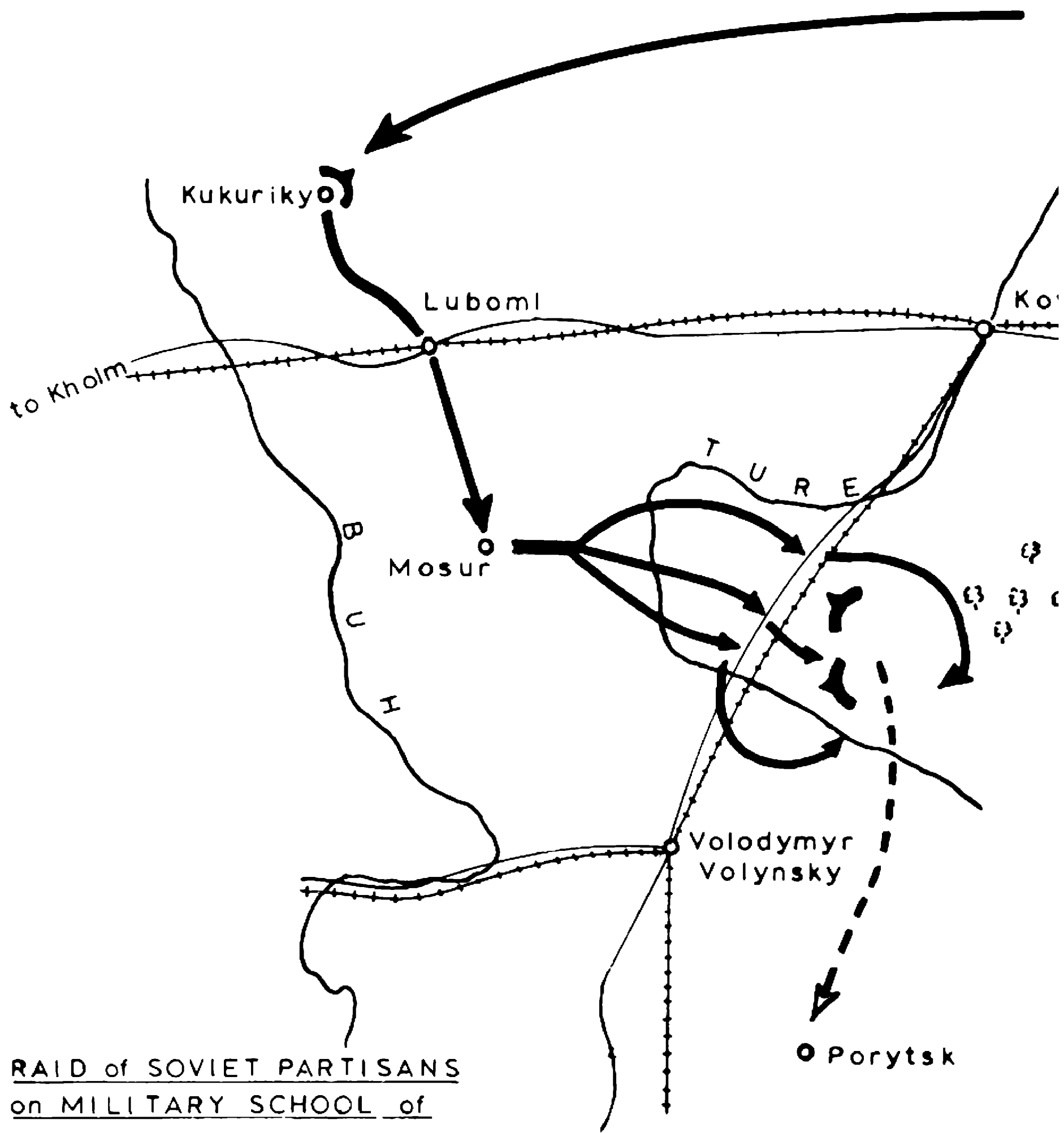
The first fighting began on the line Antonivka-Andrushivka-Obhiv and lasted until sunset, April 22. At dawn of April 23 reconnaissance skirmishes developed into serious engagements in some places, with the Soviet side bringing up armored units. The UPA operated by exposing security and reconnaissance units. The northern sector was relatively quiet.

The character of the fighting and the placement of the enemy forces indicated at once the operational objective of the Soviet command: having drawn from the south a substantial part of its forces, the Soviet command planned to beat the UPA back to the north and pursue it in the woods to the line Verkhiv-Mizoch. The retreating UPA units would then come under the fire of the northern units of the NKVD and be destroyed.

The defensive battle against the advancing NKVD units required herculean efforts. Small tactical successes of the insurgents were almost immediately negated by the material and manpower superiority of the enemy. The UPA command tried at all costs to prevent the enemy from splintering the area into small sectors in which UPA units would have to fight without contact with the command and one other. It was decided to wage defensive battles with a constant changing of the points of resistance, with unrelenting attack and counterattack, with unexpected retreat and counteraction. These tactics prevented the enemy from executing their planned penetration of UPA positions and kept the initiative in the hands of the Ukrainian insurgents.

Toward evening the enemy broke into Antonivka<sup>111</sup> and Andrushivka. As

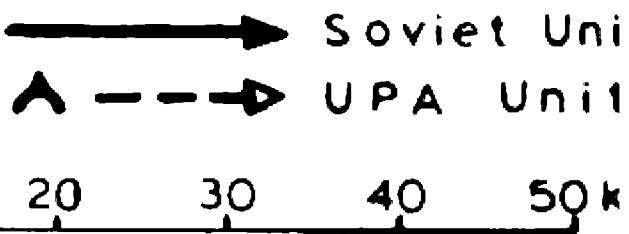
<sup>111</sup> The village of Antonivka remained a base for the UPA until 1948. In that year the Russians razed the village to the ground. Today it no longer exists.



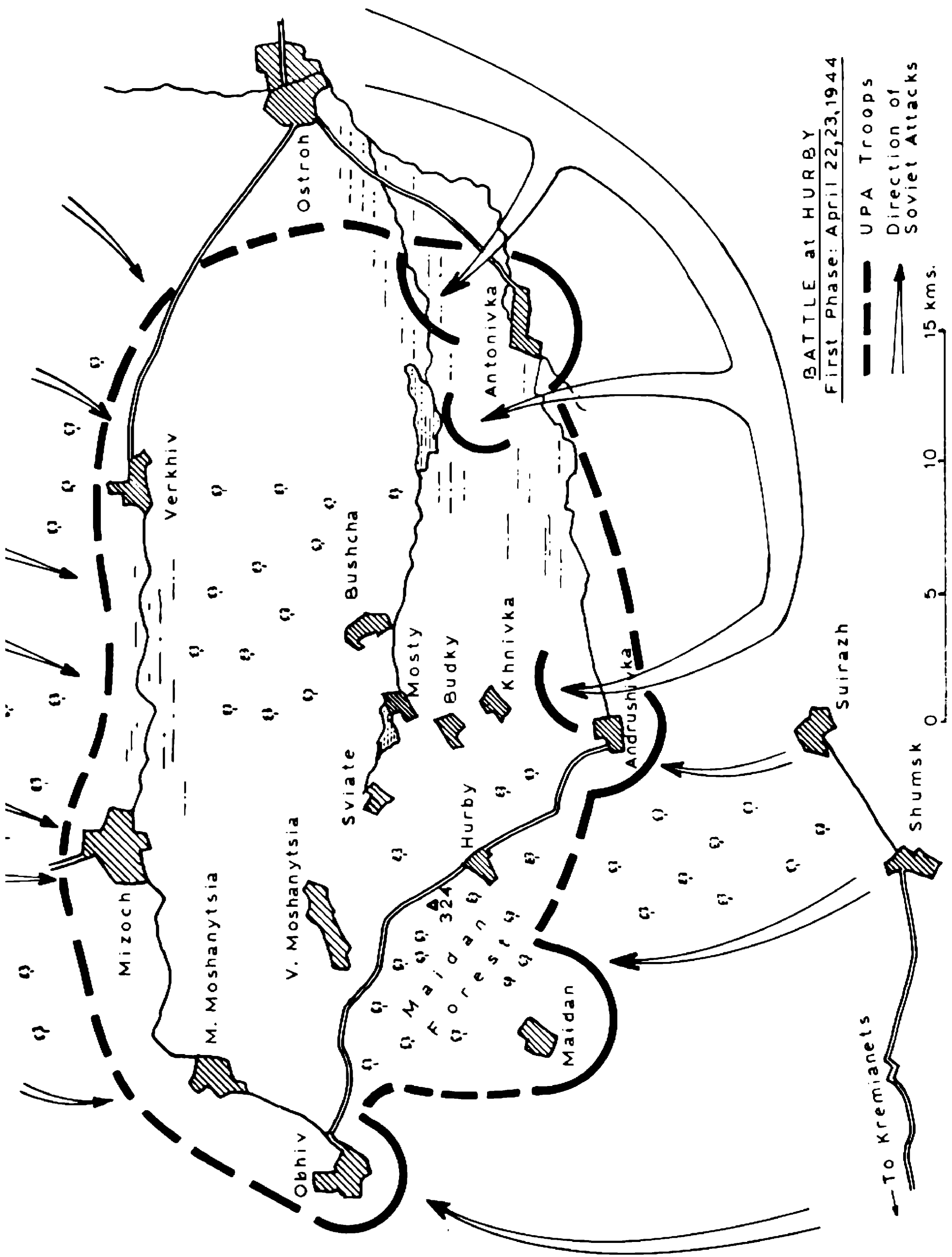
RAID of SOVIET PARTISANS  
on MILITARY SCHOOL of  
UPA-NORTH

January 25-27, 1944

(Reconstruction of report by  
P. Vershyhora in his Raid on San and Vislu)



UPA WARFARE IN UKRAINE



BATTLE at HURBY  
First Phase: April 22, 23, 1944

a result of heavy fighting the UPA units were forced to abandon these localities. They were pursued by Soviet regiments, and defensive battles ensued in this sector without liaison among the individual companies of the UPA. Capitalizing on the woody and marshy terrain the UPA units succeeded in holding a line on the Zbytnka River, to the north of Andrushivka. This area became a temporary haven for those units forced to withdraw from the village of Maidan.

After the first two days of battle, April 22-23, in which the Soviet command employed armor and warplanes, Commander Yasen ordered the UPA units to withdraw in order to avoid encirclement by the enemy.

In the western sector of the battleground the UPA units kept the Maidan Forest and the village of Obhiv. Commander Yasen had brought up the reserves from this sector to relieve the units in the east, but operationally this assistance was of no avail. The only thing that remained to be done in the situation was to regroup the insurgent units in the Maidan and Obhiv Forests, where they would be inaccessible to the Soviet armored units. Defense of the area near the city of Ostroh was precluded by the heavy concentration of enemy forces there. All five Soviet brigades were now on the offensive.

On the night of April 23-24 on Commander Yasen's order all UPA battalions retreated to the line Sviate-Mosty-Hurby-Obhiv-Mala Moshanytsia. But the night brought a worsening of the situation: the Soviet troops at Mizoch and Verkhiv had begun to threaten. Reconnaissance reported that the Russians in this area were stepping up reconnaissance and combat actions all the way to the village of Mala Moshanytsia. It was expected that on the morrow (April 24) the enemy would try to narrow the ring and to split the battle area of the UPA.

Early on April 24 the UPA units already were in new defensive lines. In the morning one battalion made an attempt to break through into the direction of Hurby. It soon learned that it was there that the Soviet command had concentrated his heavy forces, and the attempt failed. Immediately Commander Yasen strengthened the sector of Hurby to forestall an attempt of the enemy to break the defensive line.

At 3:00 A.M. the UPA forces were ready to accept battle with this order:

1. Sector Mosty-Budky-Khnivka-Hurby: Battalion of Commander Storchan, with three field artillery pieces, and a second line with the Battalion of Zalizniak in reserve;

2. Sector Hurby-Maidan: Battalion of Commander Mamai, backed up with a reserve line manned by a company commanded by Vanka and a platoon commanded by Chornohora;

3. Sector Obhiv-Mala Moshanytsia: Battalion of Doks, with a second line manned by the Battalions of Commanders Dovbenko and Buvaly, resting after the previous day's fighting (see map on p. 321);

4. Sector between Sectors 1 and 3: A detachment under Commander Yastrub of Commander Dyk's Battalion.

The operational objective of Commander Yasen was threefold:

- a) To prevent the enemy from entering partisan ground;
- b) To find out the strength of the enemy and his dispositions;
- c) To break out in small groups from the enemy's encirclement.

At 4:00 A.M. the Soviet troops began their attack, using artillery and mortar fire against the positions held by Commander Storchan. After a barrage lasting one hour the infantry, supported by tanks, moved forward. Storchan's battalion let the enemy approach to within close range and then opened fire with machine guns. The enemy turned back, leaving many wounded and dead on the field.

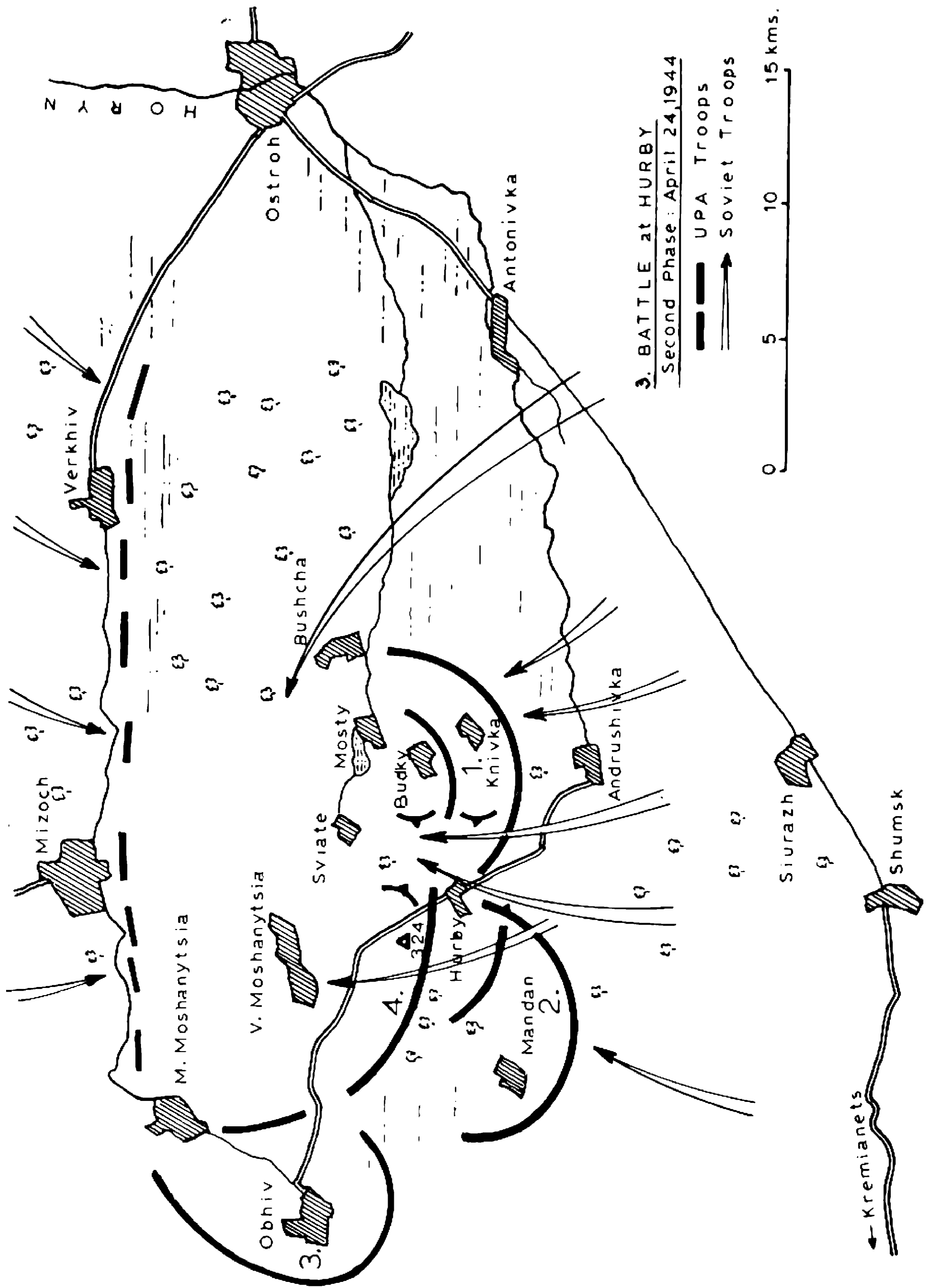
The second and stronger enemy attack was preceded by a heavy bombardment by planes of the positions of the battalion. At the same time the enemy broke through the UPA's right flank into the defense position of Commander Yastrub, who, unable to sustain the attack, retreated. Strong units stormed through the gap, threatening the battalion of Storchan with encirclement (see map on p. 321). Storchan withdrew a part of his forces from the frontal battle and disposed them in support of his right wing. The widening of the breach by the enemy deprived Commander Storchan of direct liaison with the battalions of Mamai and Doks.

Meanwhile a great number of Soviet troops were pouring through the gap made by the Soviet thrust. Commander Storchan now tried to plug the hole with the battalion of Zalizniak, but the latter unit met the pulverizing fire of enemy heavy weapons and was forced to withdraw in the direction of the village of Bushcha. Fearing complete encirclement, Storchan committed his battalion in support of the units commanded by Doks. Breaking their units into platoons, the units knifed through the enemy lines and escaped the encirclement, bringing along their field artillery pieces. Commander Storchan and 60 men, however, were surrounded by a great mass of enemy troops. Their ammunition running out, they counterattacked with bayonets, but were all slain, including Commander Storchan.

Commander Yasen, undaunted by this seemingly hopeless situation, succeeded once more in organizing a defense. The Battalion of Shum was ordered to break through the enemy lines and set up an ambush on Hill 324 (see map on p. 323). He did so brilliantly, crossing the Hurby-Obhiv highway and occupying the hill and holding it until night.

This diversion was designed to harass the transport on the highway, which was delivering arms and reinforcements to the front lines. Another objective of the unit was to deflect the enemy attacks from the main forces of the UPA. This maneuver was wholly successful. The enemy sent his armored units against the position of Shum, but because of the difficult terrain the Ukrainian insurgents were able to hold the hill. Commander Shum kept the highway





under the constant fire of his three companies, and repelled enemy attacks against the hill until nightfall. With night he brought his troops back to the main UPA force, using the partisan "paths" at a time when the Soviet troops were fatigued and less vigilant.

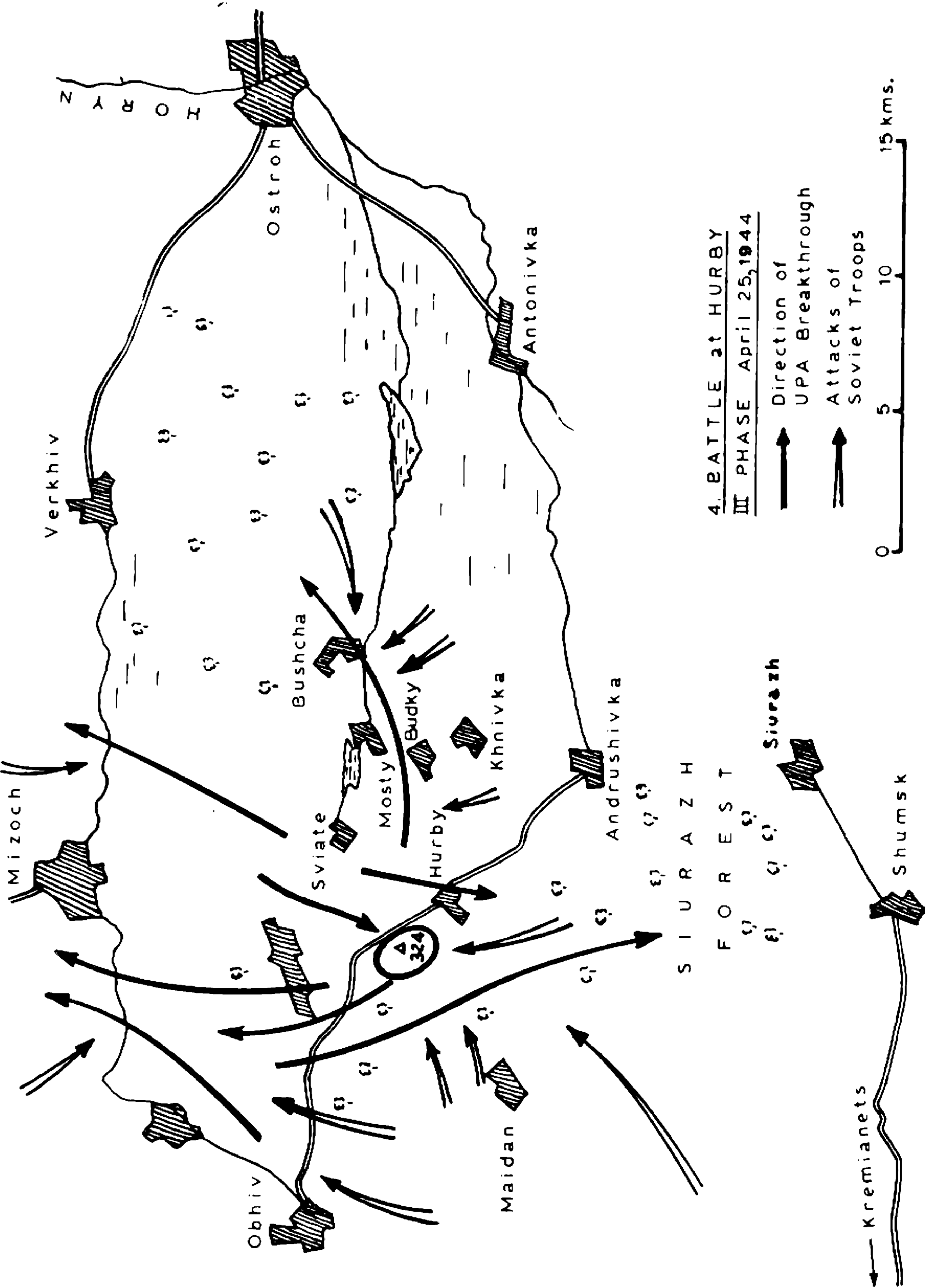
When the enemy fire subsided with nightfall Commander Yasen ordered the whole force to break through the ring. Accordingly, the Battalions of Dovbenko and Buvaly broke through to the south and reached the Forest of Siurazh almost unscathed. The Soviet command, led into thinking that other units would follow them, shifted forces in that direction. This gave the main forces of the UPA the opportunity to disengage themselves from the enemy; on April 25 they moved north toward Polisia. The Battalion of Mamai departed toward the village of Bushcha. There the battalion encountered a small unit of Soviet troops, and in short but intense skirmishes Commander Mamai was killed. His battalion crossed the Rivne-Kiev highway and moved into the partisan forest. The Battalions of Yasen and Doks moved toward Klevan.

The UPA units that succeeded in escaping the encirclement had to wage numerous battles with the enemy. On April 29, 1944, the Battalion of Shum along with other units of UPA-North made an unexpected attack on a large Soviet army unit stationed in the village of Zaliznytsia in the county of Kremianets. The Soviet command was unable to organize an effective defense, and the unit was annihilated: 240 Soviet soldiers were killed.

The battalion of former Commander Mamai, along with other UPA units, attacked a Soviet army column. Killed in the battle was Commander Kropyva, chief of staff of UPA-North and member of the national council of the OUN.

In further battles, despite tactical successes achieved by the insurgents, the losses of the UPA were now disproportionately high. This experience demonstrated that those operations wherein the losses were in a 1:4 ratio in favor of the UPA were not beneficial enough for the UPA. In the battle at Hurby the losses of the UPA were 140, while the losses of the Russians ran over 300 men (the Russians admitted to only 120). Despite the disparity in losses, operations with larger units were seen as ineffective and self-defeating. The UPA Supreme Command ordered the breaking-up of large UPA units into platoons. Only in exceptional cases were larger units allowed to operate, and even these were limited to company size.

In the course of a few weeks this decentralization was carried out effectively. From that time on the successes of the insurgents were outstanding at the same time their losses were negligible. As small units, they were highly mobile and easily could elude the enemy. The battle at Hurby thus was of benefit to the further activities of the UPA.



**Battle of UPA With Soviet Partisans for the Black Forest****(April 23 to June 15, 1944)**

At the German-Soviet front which then ran by the city of Stanyslaviv in Western Ukraine, one Soviet infantry division was encircled by the enemy. Unable to reach the main body of Soviet troops, the division, on orders from Moscow, broke itself down into smaller units for the purpose of waging partisan warfare. One of its units broke away to the west and occupied the Maidan forests between Skole and Turka, while three regiments made their way to the Black Forest.

The Soviet troops occupied the Black Forest on April 23, 1944. Under the command of I. S. Kulagin and political commissar S. P. Artamanov, they were well armed, having taken along their divisional supplies of arms, ammunition and food.

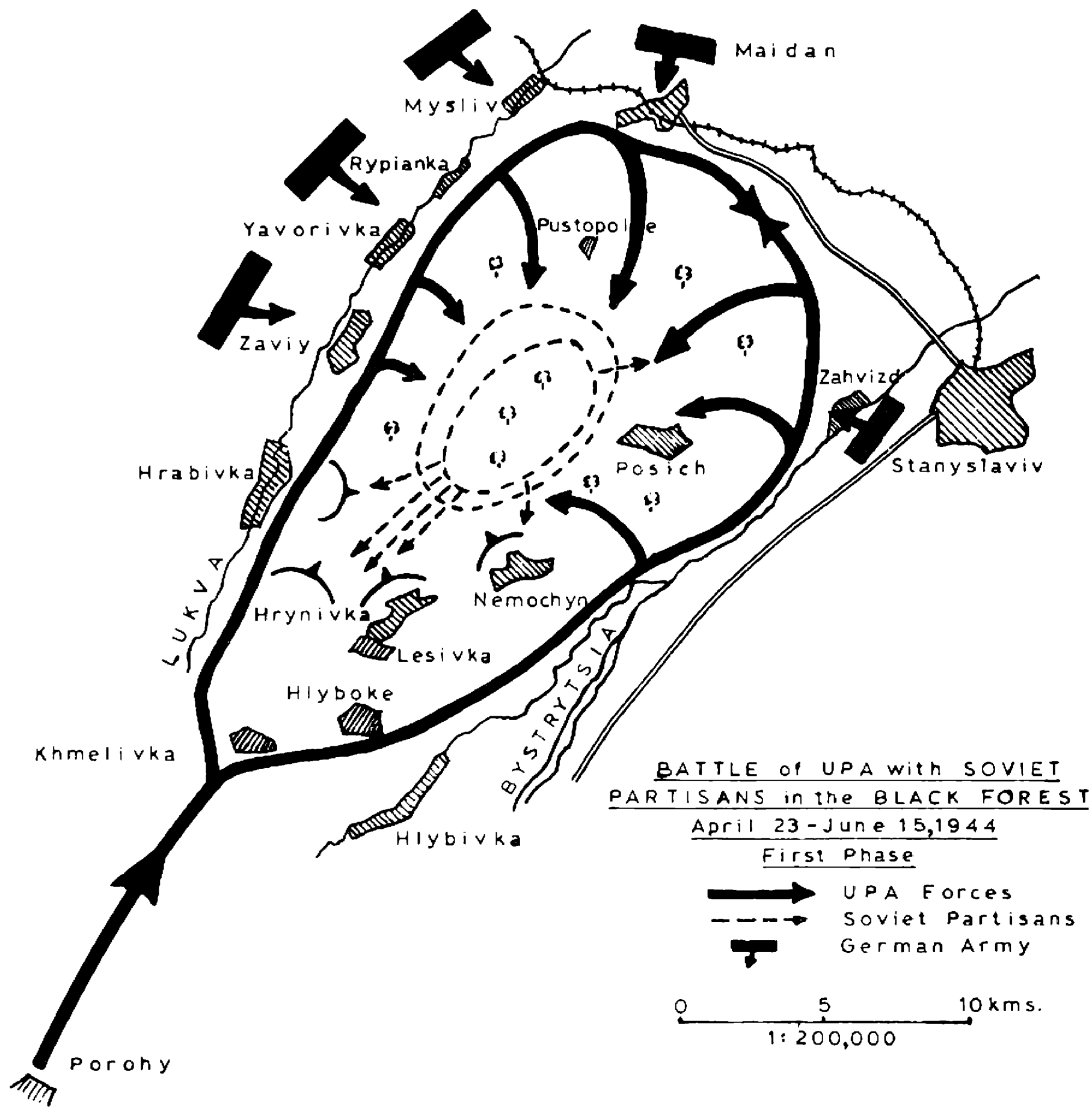
In the middle of April the UPA units stationed in the Black Forest were away in the mountains and on special raids, having left behind small reserve units and training groups in the forest. After a few hours of token resistance, these small units withdrew, entrenching themselves in the village of Hrabivka. From April 27 to April 29, the Soviet troops tried to take the village, launching several attacks. At one point they succeeded in momentarily holding a part of the village, long enough to execute 23 civilians. In the ranks of the UPA was chaplain Rev. Volodymyr Mykytiuk, who was killed in the course of the fighting.

The UPA company, which was defending the village against four Soviet companies of 60 men each, almost succumbed to exhaustion. Fortunately, an UPA company under the command of Commander Moroz, one of the most competent UPA leaders, arrived from the village of Zaviy in aid of the fighting UPA unit. In fierce fighting lasting several hours both UPA Commander Moroz and Iskra, the Soviet commander, fell. Toward night the Soviet troops withdrew to the forest.

Heavy fighting of several days duration also went on for the village of Maidan, which was defended by an UPA reserve company.

In the meantime four battalions of the Black Forest-based UPA returned from their special missions and blocked the Black Forest from all sides, cutting off the Soviet troops from the roads and villages. Several efforts of the Soviet troops to break the ring were beaten back, each effort costing considerable losses. The UPA units, under the command of Rizun, kept up their pressure as they narrowed the ring. The Soviet troops began running short of food supplies.

Then, at the end of May, UPA reconnaissance reported that great masses of the German army were moving along the Stanyslaviv-Maidan and Mysliv-Zaviy lines, with the apparent objective of taking the Black Forest. The German forces included one armored division (the 7th German Armored



Division) and several other combat units. The UPA was threatened with confrontation by two different enemy forces.

In the meantime four battalions of the Black Forest-based UPA returned withdraw from the village, which the Germans were bent on occupying. The UPA carried off the civilian population on their trucks and moved them deep into the forest. UPA fighters meanwhile took up positions before the villages of Hrybivka-Hrynivka-Lesivka-Nemochyn in order to prevent the Russians from moving out of the Black Forest.

Now subjected to a heavy artillery barrage put down by the Germans the Soviet troops decided to break out from the Black Forest—in the direction foreseen by the UPA command. On June 1, 1944, the Soviet troops hurled themselves against the UPA lines, but their attack crumbled under the UPA's heavy fire. Disintegrating, the Soviet troops ran wildly in all directions, falling into several traps and ambushes set up by the UPA. The entire Soviet supply depot fell into UPA hands, and the enemy was systematically destroyed. Even those few small groups that had succeeded in piercing the ring of encirclement were subsequently caught up with and slain.

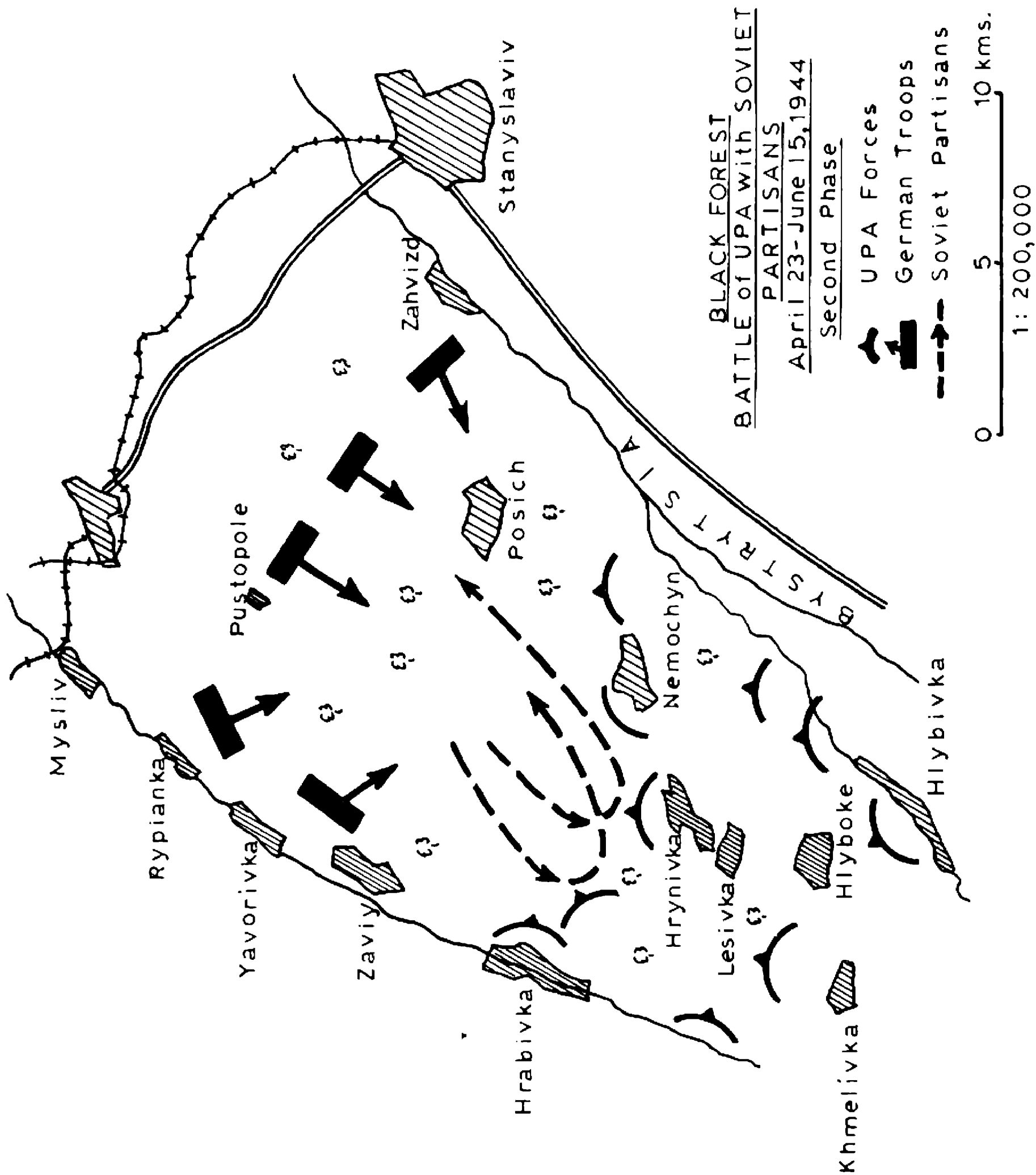
On June 5, 1944, the German force quit the Black Forest after a few armed skirmishes with UPA units out on reconnaissance missions in the terrain. Up to June 15 the UPA cleared the area of Soviet stragglers. On the next day the UPA observed a "holiday of victory" in the Black Forest. On June 24 all UPA units were assembled for a briefing. A part of them already had been dispatched against the Soviet partisan units, commanded by Shukayev, which was moving westward.

### **Battles With Shukayev's Partisans**

On July 10, 1944, two UPA battalions moved out from Lopata Hill and succeeded in darting through the German lines in the mountains. Their assignment: to clear the Maidan forest of the Soviet partisans commanded by Shukayev.<sup>112</sup>

These Soviet troops were the remnants of the Soviet infantry division which had been at the front, near the city of Nadvirna. The UPA command had allowed Hungarian units to move through its base in the Black Forest, leading to the encirclement of the Soviet division. As noted above, the division broke down into partisan groups. Three regiments met their deaths in the Black Forest. Another part of the division—a regiment in size—was ordered to sneak through the mountains between the cities of Skole and Turka and to reach the rear of the German front. These were the partisans commanded by Shukayev.

<sup>112</sup> Although this battle against the Soviet troops took place under the German occupation, its proper place is in this section as part of UPA operations against the Soviet troops.



Their passage was unhampered by the Germans. They occupied the Maidan Forest and rested there, sending out men from time to time only to obtain food supplies in the neighboring villages.

For the UPA, which had to have the Carpathian Mountains in its hands, the presence of the Soviet partisans was intolerable. Ordered to liquidate the group of Shukayev, the UPA unit of Commander Hutsul moved westward from the Black Forest. It was pinned down by the Germans west of the town of Bolekhiv. Leaving its partisan training school on Lopata Hill, two other UPA battalions now moved out to attain the assigned objective. Piercing the ring around Lopata Hill, the battalions of Rizun and Blahy moved without meeting any resistance on the part of the German troops and reached the terrain occupied by the Soviet partisans without incident.

The Soviet units consisted of regular army men without any previous experience in partisan warfare and tactics. They were abetted by a few groups of Soviet paratroopers dropped from planes who had begun to train them in partisan warfare. But the terrain was alien to the Russians and the Ukrainian population in the countryside was wholly hostile to them. In seeking food supplies in the Ukrainian villages the Russians treated the civilians cruelly and violently.

Since the local UPA units, organized in combat groups by the OUN civilian network, were not strong enough to challenge the Shukayev units,<sup>113</sup> the assistance from the experienced UPA fighters was imperative.

The Soviet troops were camped in the woods north of the villages of Rosokhach, Zavadka and Rykiv. The UPA units approached on the highway along the Orava and the Zavadka Rivers, and at dawn of July 15, 1944, occupied all three villages. The Soviet troops were situated between these villages and Hill 1173.

The UPA units struck the enemy a lightning blow, smashing his defense perimeters and penetrating to the heart of the encampment. The battle raged all day. When night fell the Soviet force was destroyed, only a few small groups succeeding in escaping to the northwest towards the city of Turka.

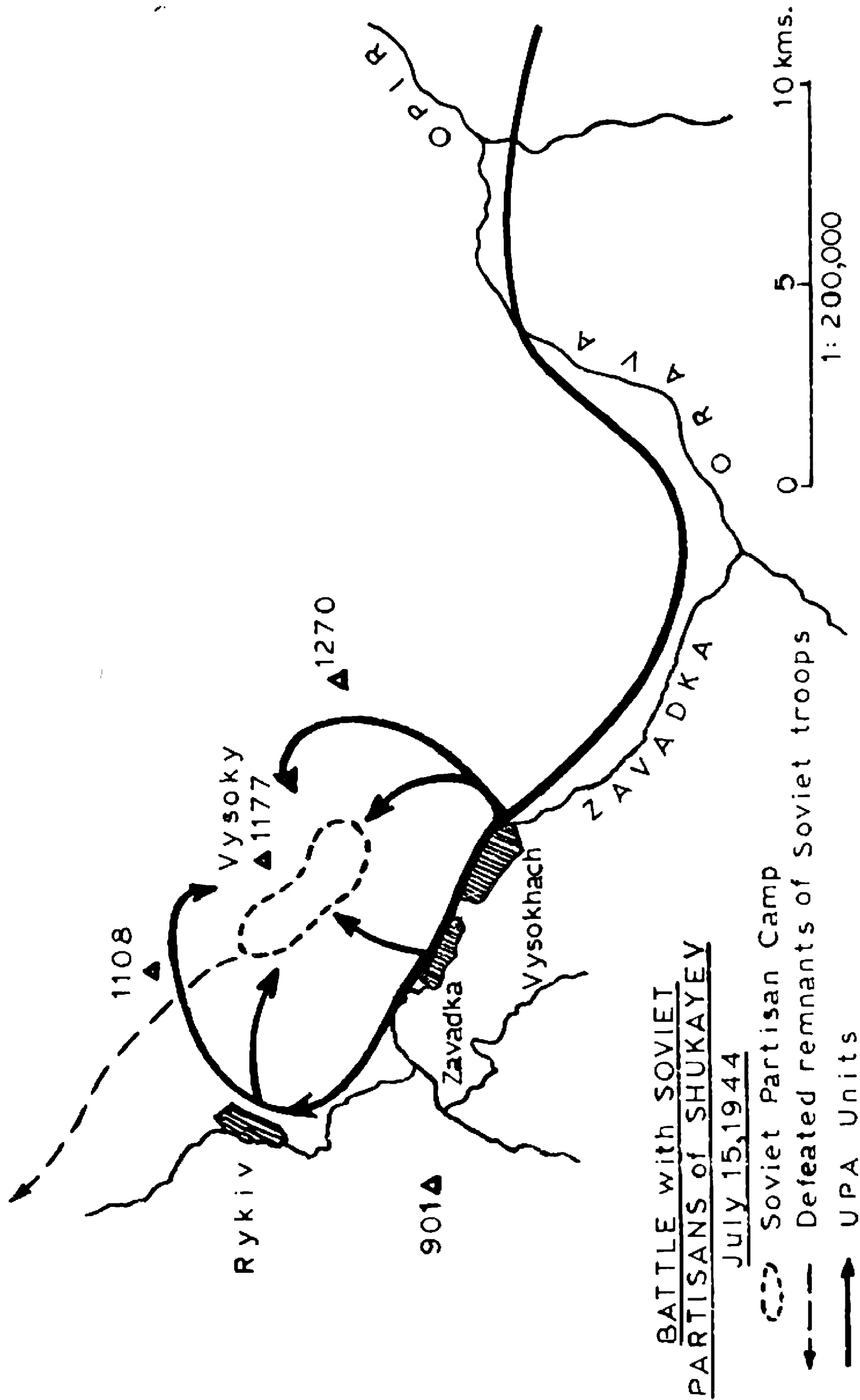
### **Battle With Soviet Partisans in Siurazh Forest (Volhynia)**

An UPA reconnaissance unit reported that a group of Soviet partisans were in concealment near the village of Teremne. The decision was made to attack this force and to clear the terrain of the enemy entirely. On July 22, 1943, two UPA commanders met in the village of Antonivka to work out the battle plan.

It was ascertained that the enemy force consisted of 200 Soviet partisans and of 300 Polish Communists who had escaped from the villages and joined

<sup>113</sup> Shankowsky, *op. cit.*





the Russians. They were well armed with heavy weapons, and their camp, situated on a wooded hill, was well fortified by defensive trenches.

The UPA force consisted of two battalions. Two companies of the battalion under Commander Osyp were to be active, with the third company serving as security back in a camp near Antonivka. The three companies of Commander Kropyva's battalion were to be committed; each company had rifles, submachine guns, three hand machine guns, one heavy machine gun and two 50-mm mortars and one 82-mm mortar.

The plan of battle was as follows: the battalion of Osyp would attack from the east, and Kropyva's from the west, the overall objective an encirclement of the enemy. The attack was set for 3:00 A.M. The night of the attack scouts came in periodically and reported no change in the enemy position.

After leaving the village of Teremne the battalion of Osyp took up positions along the road and settled down. Soon a small Soviet convoy appeared heading for the village for food supplies. Their guards began firing, thereby precipitating the attack. In the forest several of the detachment leaders lost their bearings. In addition, a Soviet cavalry unit emerged from the forest. It was immediately fired upon by the UPA unit, chasing it back into the forest. But the UPA commanders realized that the enemy now knew of the imminent attack upon his camp.

The action was described by one of its participants, deputy company commander Max:

They let us come as close as 50 and even 25 meters and then greeted us with powerful fire. In the first few minutes the company of Borsuk suffered eight killed and seven wounded. Borsuk himself was wounded slightly in the head. When we came closer with the company of Yurko we noticed that the hill on which the Soviet and Polish Reds were hidden was surrounded by a deep ditch through which flowed a small stream. There in the ditch the company of Borsuk was pinned down. Battalion Commander Osyp ordered the company of Yurko to pierce the Soviet resistance and enter the enemy camp. The company moved into the attack. Soviet snipers in the trees began hitting us from all sides; they saw us as clearly as the palms of their hands, while we saw nothing. The fire grew so intense that we were forced to retreat to our jump-off positions and to the hill which was level with the Soviet camp, a ravine separating us from the enemy. The distance across was some 100-150 meters. As the company began to dig in, I was ordered to fetch the Maxim on a cart from the village of Teremne, and mortars as well. It was difficult, without knowing the roads in the wood, to reach the first line of our companies.

The company of Borsuk was still pinned down in the ditch. But soon we were able to open fire with our Maxim against the enemy. The Soviet partisans quieted down; we could hear their swearing. Our

mortarmen began firing, but a few of the shells came down without exploding—no doubt because of faulty firing pins.

After a strong and sustained fire from our Maxim and the entire company, the company of Borsuk was able to scramble out of the ditch, taking a position to our left. The dead and wounded in the ditch could not be carried out before the evening. The battalion of Kropyva was also firing, and one of his companies joined our line on the left flank. On our right was a gap, but we could not extend our thin line to close up the encirclement. Battalion Commander Osyp sent a runner to the command post for reserves.

During the lull in the firing our men exchanged remarks with the Soviet partisans. One of our men called out: "Surrender! We will spare your lives, and only punish your commanders!"

"You will not take us!" the Russians replied. "Better retreat!"

Then the firing resumed. Before evening fell there were trenches and machine gun emplacements along the entire line. We thought that the Soviet partisans would try to break out during the night.

As dusk fell, we sent out a squad to collect our dead and wounded. Hearing their movements, the enemy began firing into the ditch. After a while we succeeded in bringing out the wounded, who had lain all day with their wounds untended, thirsty and hungry. Most of them had feigned death for fear of being shot by the Soviet snipers. Some of the dead were not found. After our expedition, the Russians sought to take advantage of the night by getting a supply of the spring water flowing through the ditch. We then began firing to prevent their access to the water. They tried to reach the stream several times during the night but had no success. Late in the night we were bolstered with the arrival of the company commanded by Ostry. The best scene of the night fighting was the moment when the flashes of our guns during a sustained fire from all our lines clearly showed that we had the Soviet partisans well surrounded.

Our transport carts took the wounded to Antonivka. The carts would also be used to bring back fresh supplies of ammunition, which was running short. We passed the entire night without closing our eyes. At 10:00 A.M. Battalion Commander Osyp called an officers' briefing meeting and distributed the orders of the day. He cautioned us to approach the Soviet camp extremely carefully, for he expected the approaches to have been mined. He also said that we would have to close up the gap.

In talking among ourselves we had left our positions and stepped onto the road. Commander Osyp touched a cord which was half buried in the earth. Jokingly he said: "It's a mine or a rope connected up with an alarm bell. Let me have a knife and I'll cut it!" Someone handed him a knife and he bent down to cut the cord. But as soon as he took the cord in his hands a terrific explosion shattered the air and I was showered with dirt and sand. . . . I looked around and saw the shattered body of Commander Osyp. As we found out later on, buried a few meters away was a powerful mine. Commander Osyp had set it off, receiving the brunt of its detonation, and had perished instantly.

Before noon the fresh supply of ammunition and mortar shells

arrived. Then we resumed our fire, 180 mortar shells being dumped directly into the Soviet camp. We heard the moans and cries of the wounded and dying. Finally, our commander gave the order: Forward! With cries of "Glory" we moved out from our positions. With the final resources at their command the Soviet partisans managed to pin us down, but the ring of encirclement had tightened considerably. At this point we were only some 30 meters from the enemy. Fortunately for us, they had no hand grenades, or we would have caught a terrible beating. We dug in and lofted hand grenades onto the enemy positions. The Soviet fighters were without water for the second day. Those of them who had wanted it badly enough the night before were to be seen lying in the ditch. Our command restrained us from attack, believing that the Soviet partisans would of necessity surrender.

Our mortars sowed death in the enemy camp. The attack lasted the whole day and night. At dawn of the third day the Russians began sneaking out one by one through gaps we had left open for fear of mines. Finally, at sunset we stormed the camp. The entire camp was strewn with corpses; there were only twenty left to take prisoner. With the help of the Poles, a small group of Soviet fighters with their commander, Behma, had escaped at night. Some of them were captured by our fighters near the village of Teremne. One of the carts in the camp, loaded with material, was booby-trapped, killing four of our fighters when they tried to unload it. Nevertheless, the two UPA battalions had suffered only 19 dead and 15 wounded.

### **The Shift of the Eastern Front**

In March, 1944, the German-Soviet front reached the cities of Kovel-Brody-Kolomeya. Four months later almost all Ukrainian ethnic territories were under Soviet control. The Germans retreated with fierce rear actions, but often fell into traps and suffered heavy losses in both men and materiel.

The period of the transition of the front across the territory occupied by the UPA was spent by the UPA commanders in reorganizing and implementing the orders of the Supreme Command.

In March the German-Soviet front divided the Ukrainian insurgent forces. One part—UPA-South—found itself under the Soviet occupation. It later moved toward the west to join with UPA-North, which partially was on terrain still held by the Germans. Also under German occupation was a part of UPA-West. But all UPA fighters were acutely aware of the fact that sooner or later the Germans would be pushed to the west and the UPA would have to face the Soviet Russian enemy.

The Supreme Command of the UPA was faced with a choice of two possible courses of action:

1. Because of the fact that in the woods there was an ever-growing number of people ready to rise against Moscow, one possibility was an all-national uprising, which hopefully would be joined by the other captive non-

Russian nations. The influx of people was a reaction to the Soviet police, who, as soon as the Germans had been pushed back, had begun mass arrests and executions. The youth was unwilling to be conscripted into the Red Army, all the more so because the Soviet government mobilized all men regardless of age or occupation. Thus the woods were teeming with masses of anti-Communists, carrying arms taken from the retreating Germans or collected from the battlefields. These people either had to be accepted into the UPA or be sent home where they would be at the mercy of the vengeful Soviet government.

2. The second course was to maintain only well-trained cadres of insurgents who would defend the population against the Russian violations and oppression, while all others would be sent home. At the same time some members of the OUN would join the civilian underground network.

But circumstances dictated the only choice. It became evident that it would be impossible to wage an underground struggle with large contingents under the Soviet domination.

In areas still occupied by the Germans appeared new Soviet partisan units and paratroopers. As before, the UPA combatted these Soviet groups in the woods of Polisia and Volhynia and in the sub-Carpathian areas near Kosmach and the Black Forest, and later on in the woody mountainous areas west of these territories. In the spring of 1944 new Russian partisan detachments had been thrown in, and one of them, moving from Volhynia in the direction of Sokal-Rava-Yavoriv, was completely destroyed by the UPA unit "Yaroslava," under the command of Bryl.

The swelling of UPA manpower during the shifting of the German-Soviet front required a great quantity of arms and ammunition. Also, the Ukrainian insurgent units that had sprung up in Eastern Ukraine were sending delegates to the UPA Supreme Command, demanding aid, instructions and policies for the future. Generally speaking, people did not believe that the war was coming to an end. All hoped that after the defeat of Nazi Germany the Western Allies would finish off Russian totalitarianism as the other scourge of humanity.

All UPA units and the civilian network of the OUN received urgent orders to amass arms and ammunition and other military equipment.

S. Khrin, one of the best known UPA commanders, described how his unit secured arms from the Germans: <sup>114</sup>

On the second night Commander Hromenko, taking a squad, set up an ambush against two squads of the *Wehrmacht* moving through the village. I took along a few hand grenades and we moved after the Germans. We planned to shower them with grenades if they refused to surrender or would try to escape. The ambush was set in

<sup>114</sup> Khrin, *op. cit.*

a semicircle on the road leading into the forest. As soon as the Germans reached us, we fired a fusillade over their heads and ordered them in German to lay down their arms. The exposed first German squad complied immediately, while the second dispersed into the wheat, followed by our hand grenades. Commander Hromenko gained one machine gun and 12 rifles. We released the Germans without harming them. On the third day a German command car came to the village, the village girls reporting its presence to the UPA commander. In a few moments the car and its occupants were captive. We obtained new weapons. From then on we watched for small groups of German soldiers whom we could disarm easily. Girls, shepherds and women used to watch for the fleeing Germans and would report them to us, and we would get ready for them. . . .

In the summer of 1944, the time the Germans were retreating from the Ukrainian lands, the Russians knew that the Carpathian Mountains were firmly in the hands of the UPA. Also realizing that they could not liquidate the UPA with Soviet partisan units alone, they had to resort to their regular army divisions and security forces, as discussed elsewhere in this book.

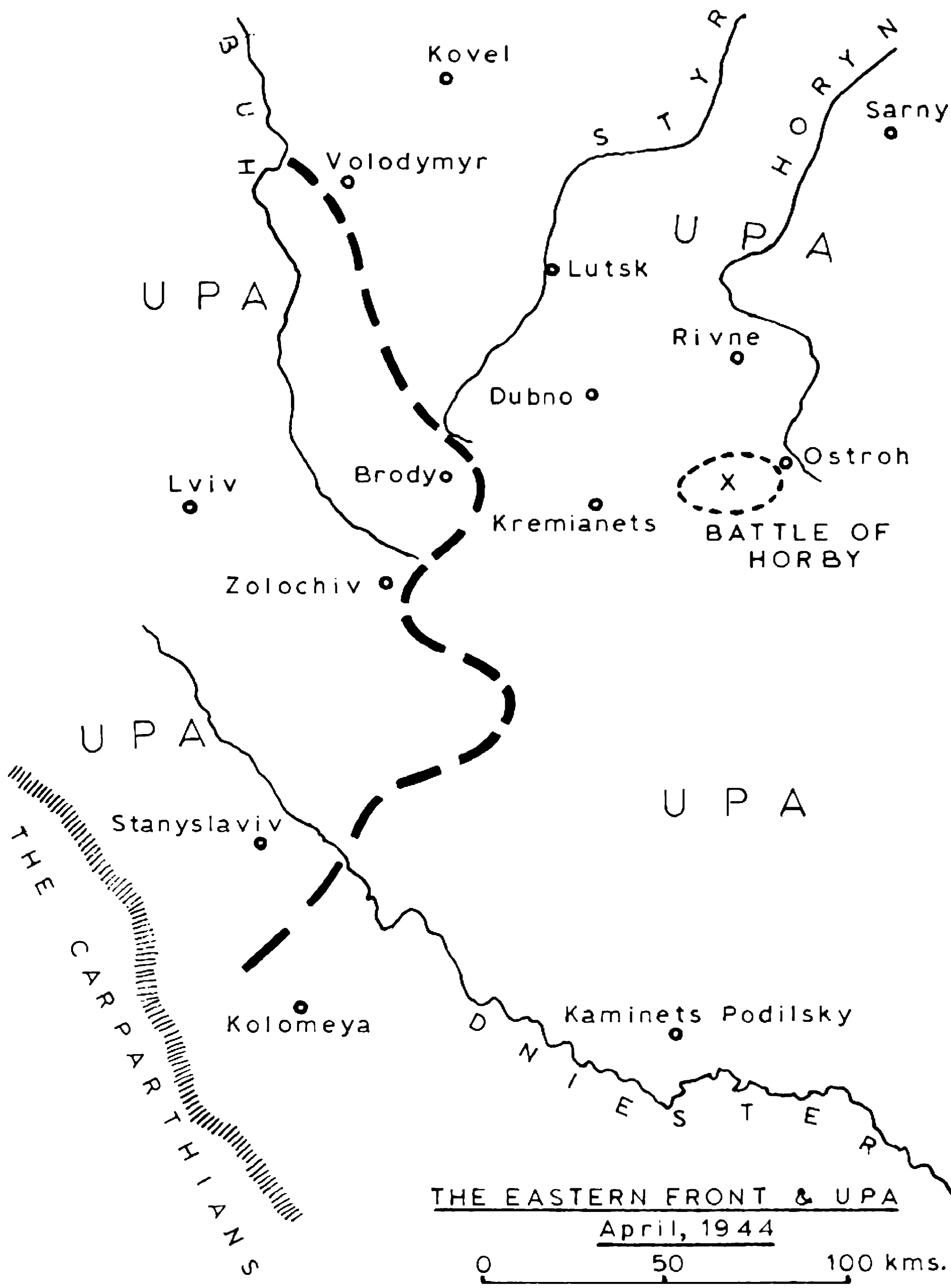
Significantly, despite the power and spontaneity of the Ukrainian partisan movement, it did not enjoy much of a press in the Western world. Even the Germans, with some exceptions, were reticent with regard to the Ukrainian partisan movement.

In his memoirs German Field Marshal Erich von Manstein did say:

We felt the partisan movement in Western Ukraine to be especially strong. First of all, the great forests provided the partisans with a secure shelter and facilitated their attacks on railroads and highways. Second, the policy of *Reichskommissar* Koch simply drove the population to the partisans. There were three kinds of partisans: the Soviet partisans who fought against us and terrorized the peaceful population; the Ukrainian partisans who fought against the Soviet partisans and the Germans—Germans they took prisoner were released after being relieved of their weapons; and finally, the Soviet partisans who fought against both the Germans and the Ukrainians, especially in the Lviv district. . . .<sup>115</sup>

As the German-Soviet front shifted, it was difficult to reestablish contact with the civilian network of the OUN under the Soviet occupation. The OUN suffered heavy losses. Some members moved into other areas in compliance with orders of the organization; many who remained were apprehended by the Russians. The villages were combed by the NKVD who behaved as if they were in enemy territory: they pillaged, arrested and maltreated people, raped women. It became an absolute necessity to set up some sort of self-defense; the disrupted liaison and communications had to be reestablished. The local civilian network of the OUN anxiously awaited instructions from the national leadership.

<sup>115</sup> Manstein, von, *op. cit.*



One UPA commander wrote in his memoirs:

The opportunity of hitting the enemy is a great one: he is bleeding at the front and extremely weak in the rear. The population, which heretofore was passive, now wants to take active part in our defense. . . . Our work must paralyze the enemy actions and support the fighting spirit of our people. In order to win the soldiers and peasants to our side, we must stage some spectacular actions; we must behave exemplarily and tactfully, and we must always guard their interests and help them and defend them. Then they will be wholly behind our work and our struggle. . . .<sup>116</sup>

### **Battle for Kosmach**

In the winter of 1944-45 the training UPA battalion "Haidamaky" was quartered in the town of Kosmach in Western Ukraine. At the end of January, 1945, it was joined by the "Hutsulian" Battalion, returning from an operation in the field.

Toward evening on January 30 reconnaissance scouts reported that Soviet troops had taken the neighboring villages of Yabloniv, Mel, Polianytsia, Prokury, Richka and Zhabie and were moving on Kosmach.

At a briefing of the UPA battalion commanders it was agreed to evacuate the UPA field hospital and military supplies. Since such an operation would consume several hours, it was decided to effect a delaying action.

In the night the UPA units assumed the following array:

a) Battalion "Haidamaky"—

Company "Surma" positioned against the village of Yabloniv;

2 Platoons of Company "Bohun" positioned against the village of Prokury;

b) The "Hutsulian" Battalion—

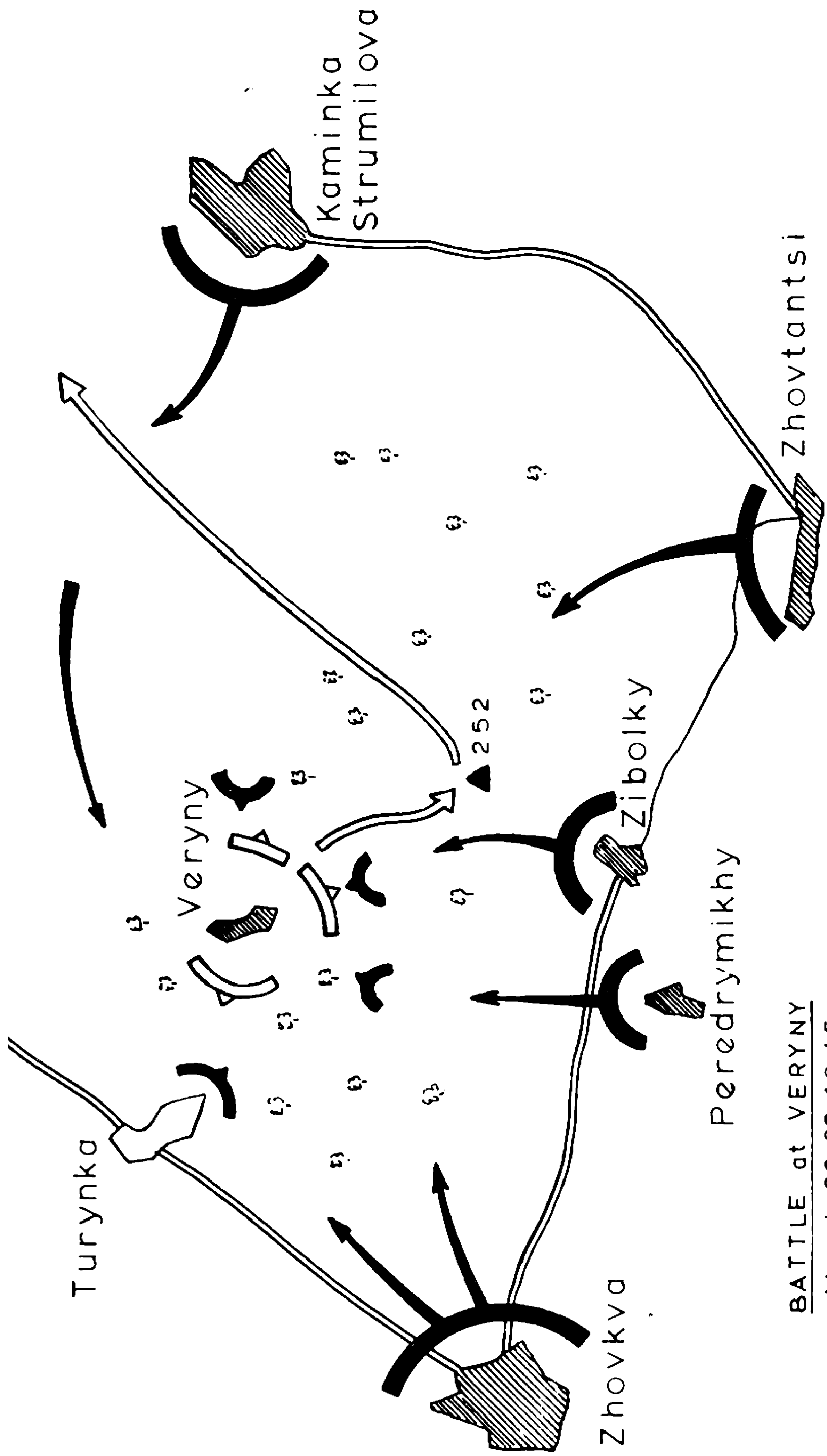
1 company positioned against the village of Dil; Company "Cheremosh" positioned against the villages of Richka and Zhabie.

The remaining companies were placed in defense points in Kosmach as reserve and garrison.

The battle began at 6:00 A.M. The enemy attacked from all sides after a heavy artillery barrage. Three enemy attacks were beaten off, but at 12:00 noon the UPA company which had taken a position against the village of Dil, retreated to Kosmach, a development enabling the enemy to encircle Company "Surma," which was defending the exit from the village of Yabloniv. Despite its spirit, this company sustained considerable losses because of the numerical superiority of the enemy. Then the third platoon of "Bohun" Company, which had been held in reserve, by a sudden thrust pierced the enemy ring, and the company got to Kosmach. The necessary time having been gained, the UPA units were ordered to retreat to Klyva


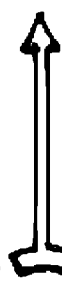
<sup>116</sup> Khrin, *op cit*.

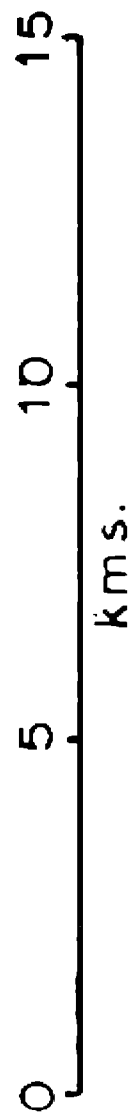




# BATTLE at VERYNY

March 22-23, 1945

-  Soviet Troops
-  UPA Troops



Hill, where the UPA hospital and arms supplies had been installed. The delaying action had cost 14 dead and 17 wounded. The Russian losses were 140 killed and an unknown number of wounded. Kosmach was taken over by the Soviet troops.

On February 3, 1945, two companies of "Haidamaky" Battalion raided Kosmach under cover fire from Klyva Hill. The third company meanwhile destroyed the Soviet reserves near the village of Zaviy. Another UPA battalion, "Pidcarpattia," came from around Stanyslaviv and took up positions around Rushov-Mel-Podil-Dil, but at this point the Soviet troops quit these localities.

### **Armed Encounters Between UPA and Soviet Troops: Soviet Attack on UPA Hide-Out**

On March 17, 1946, a Soviet police unit attacked a hide-out of OUN leaders in the vicinity of Strutyn Nizhny, near the town of Rozhnitiv. Among the OUN leaders was a girl. The hide-out had only one exit, which was exposed to the Soviet troops. The response to the latter's call, "Surrender," was a salvo of fire. The grenades thrown by the Soviet police were flung back by the OUN members. When the ammunition was all but gone, the OUN members, crying "Glory to Ukraine," blew up the bunker and themselves.<sup>117</sup>

### **Death of Tamara, Ukrainian Red Cross Nurse**

Between March 26 and March 30, 1946, an NKVD manhunt took place in the woods between the villages of Valna, Vytvytsia and Kniazheluka.

On March 29 in the afternoon, the Soviet police spotted Tamara, a Ukrainian Red Cross nurse, Oles, her assistant, and two members of the OUN. During the shooting Tamara was gravely wounded in the stomach. She managed to conceal herself in the undergrowth, where she staunched her wounds. Although she was picked up later by the OUN, she died early next morning. To the end she maintained good spirits and behaved as a true soldier. She did not cry nor did she ask for anything, save a hand grenade to keep with her to prevent the Russians from taking her alive. She died alone, because her compatriots had to flee the Russian manhunters. When the Soviet police withdrew, her body was recovered and interred in the cemetery in Kalna. She died a heroine for Ukrainian freedom.<sup>118</sup>

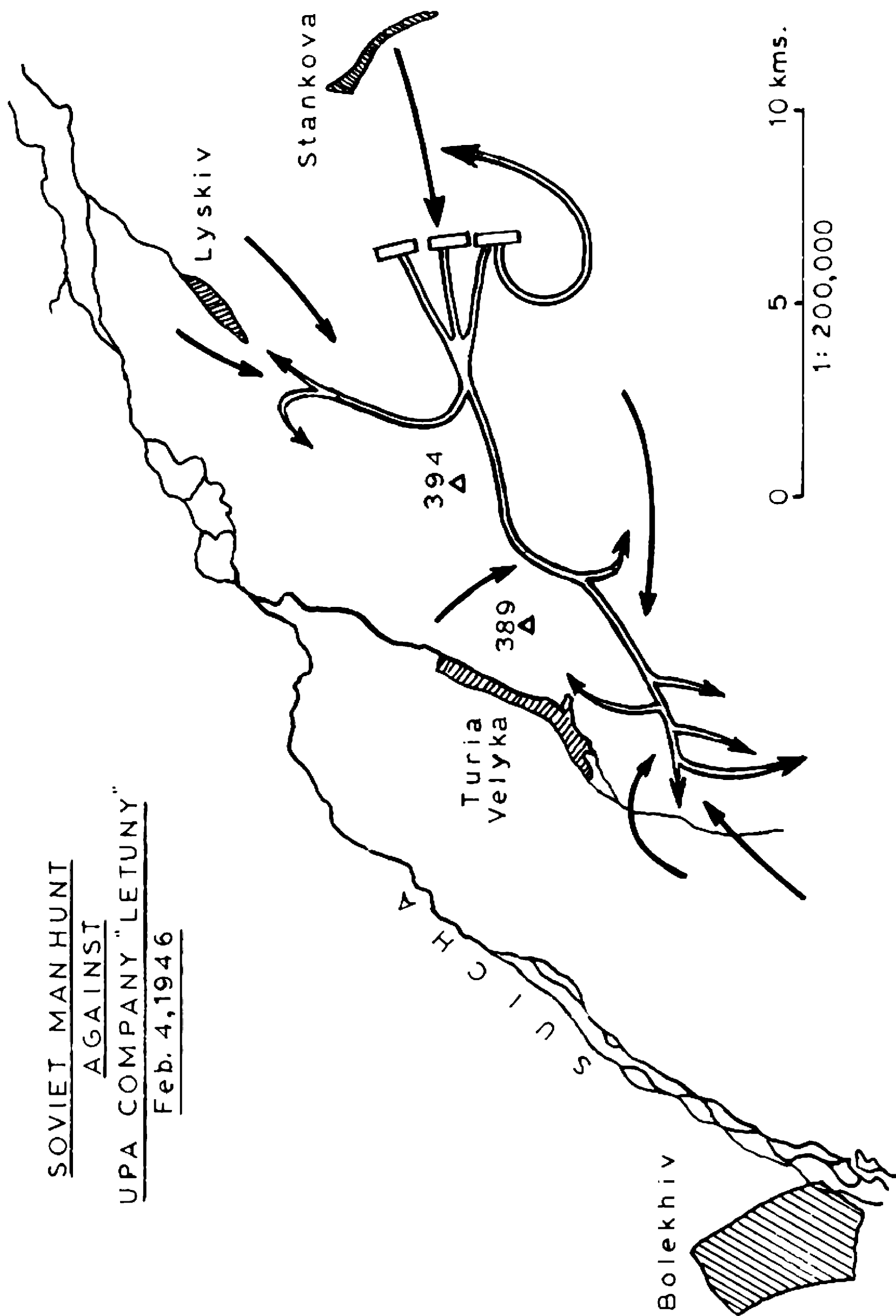
### **Soviet Manhunt Against UPA Company "Letuny" (February 4, 1946)**

In the first days of February, 1946, the UPA Company "Letuny" was stationed in the woods between the villages of Turia Velyka and Stankova.

<sup>117</sup> *Na Storozhi!* (On Guard!), Nos. 3-4, 1948.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*

SOVIET MANHUNT  
AGAINST  
UPA COMPANY "LETUNY"  
Feb. 4, 1946



Soviet police and troops in division strength were searching for Ukrainian insurgents in and about this woody complex.

At 9:00 A.M. UPA scouts reported that a large Soviet force was moving toward the forest and the UPA encampment. The UPA company hastily fell in and started for the village of Turia Velyka, anxious to avoid direct confrontation with the enemy. The Soviet troops, however, succeeded in making fire contact with the rear elements of the UPA company.

The UPA company was forced to accept a frontal battle. When the Soviet troops began attacking, the left platoon of "Letuny" circled the enemy line and attacked the enemy from the left flank. Then the UPA counterattacked. The Soviet troops could not maintain their line and began to retreat. At this juncture two Soviet tanks lumbered up in support of the Soviet force and compelled the UPA fighters to fall back to the recesses of the forest. Despite their swift withdrawal, the UPA's rear elements were kept engaged by the enemy. Eventually, the UPA unit succeeded in reaching the road connecting Turia Velyka and Bolekhiv. There they were set upon by another Soviet force, with which they had to fight for several hours. Regaining the wooded areas, the UPA unit broke up into small groups. However, they succeeded in losing the Soviet troops only when dusk fell. A squad under Sgt. Mukha, sent to the village of Lyskiv for food supplies, was ambushed and destroyed. Losses were heavy on both sides.

### **Ambush Against Soviet Party Officials**

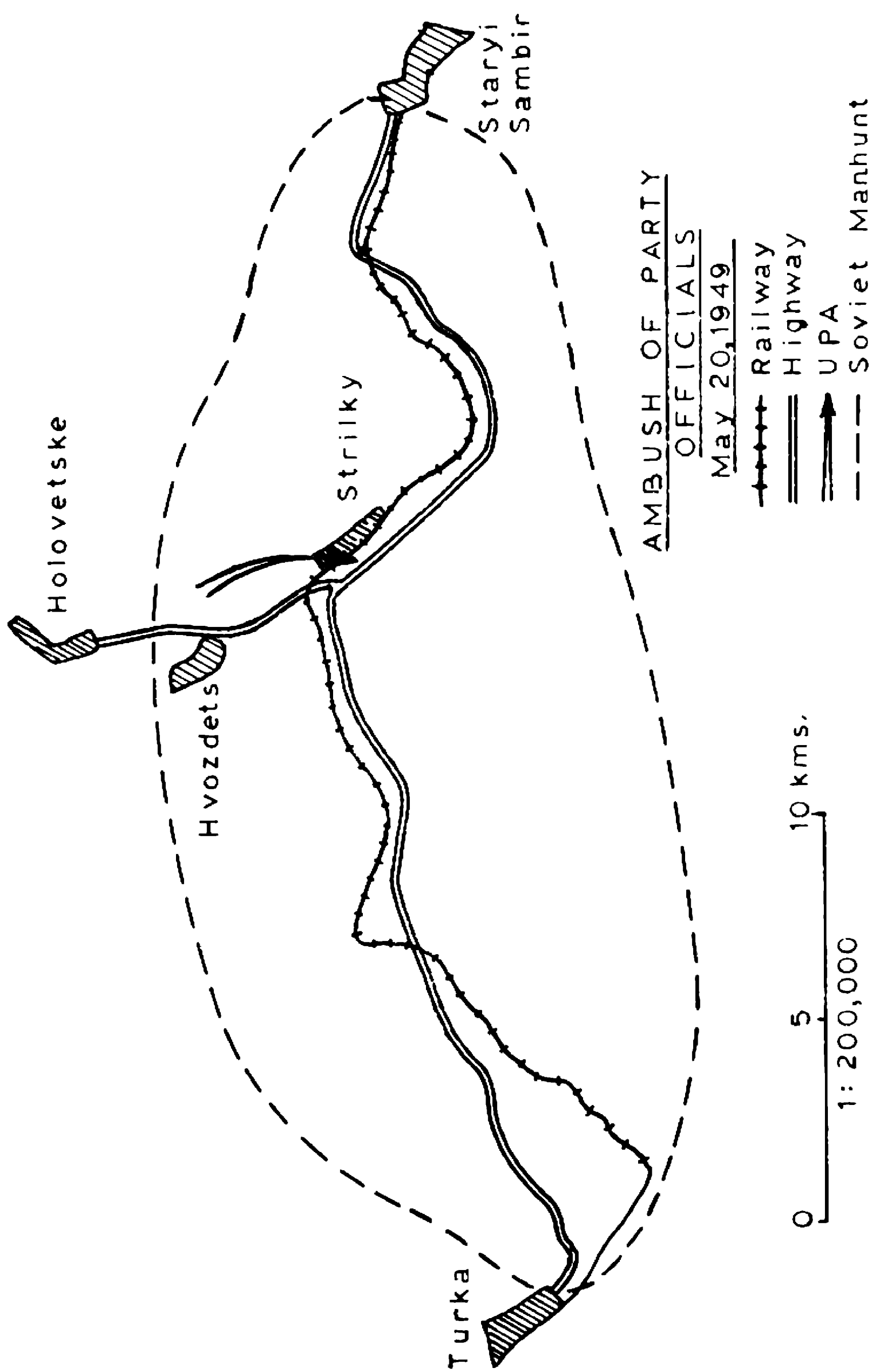
#### *Report of UPA Commander Warrant Officer O.<sup>119</sup>*

On May 20, 1949, at nine in the evening a sub-group of an UPA unit commanded by Warrant Officer O., ambushed a convoy of Soviet officials who had come to check on the frontier areas and who were returning from the city of Turka. The trap was sprung in the *raion* center of Strilky.

The previous day the commander of the sector had held a briefing with the sub-group. Having received information that an MGB regiment from Drohobych was conducting a search in the areas of Turka, Strilky, Staryi Sambir, along the road and in the woods, the commander of the UPA concluded that some Soviet higher official would make use of the highway. Then the report came in that a limousine, escorted by three half-trucks with armed guards, had departed from Turka.

Warrant Officer O. received an order to take his group outside the *raion* center and to ambush the limousine and its escort when it returned from Turka. Another UPA group, commanded by Sgt. K., was ordered to hide in the marshes between the villages of Holovetske and Hvozdet and watch for the limousine.

<sup>119</sup> *Do Zbroyi!*, Nos. 1-32, Munich.



Warrant Officer O. and his group lay in wait in the woods all day. When dusk came, he moved to Strilky, despite heavy Soviet troop movements on the highway. In a few moments appeared the first truck, carrying some 30 musicians. It was followed by another with Soviet special troops, and then a limousine with several high officers and party functionaries in civilian clothes. The convoy was brought up by a third truck loaded with Soviet police troops.

Then Warrant Officer O. ordered the firing of a flare rocket: the signal for mass fire on the whole enemy convoy. The limousine careened into the ditch. The occupants of the first truck jumped out and began running in all directions, some managing to fire back. All the occupants of the limousine and of one truck were killed. All in all 18 men were killed, among them NKVD Col. Kolodiazhny and several delegates from Moscow and Kiev. The entire enemy convoy numbered about 100 men. The UPA insurgents had no casualties.

#### **Ambush Between Villages of Strilbychi and Bilychi**

On June 3, 1949, at 9:30 P.M. an UPA group under the command of Warrant Officer O. ambushed a group of Soviet party officials returning from an inspection of collective farms around Staryi Sambir. They were ambushed after leaving the village of Voloshyny. When the car with its eight occupants hove into view, the UPA volume of fire killed four and wounded three of them. The UPA ambushers were untouched.

# Chapter Twenty-Three

## UPA ON THE WEST SIDE OF THE CURZON LINE

On August 16, 1945, it was announced in Moscow that a treaty on the new Soviet-Polish border had been concluded between the USSR and Communist Poland. The new border ran roughly along the so-called Curzon Line, with the result that such cities as Peremyshl, Yaroslav, Lubachiv, Tomashiv, Zamostie, Hrubeshiv and Kholm, situated in Ukrainian ethnic territory, were now incorporated into Communist Poland. In addition, Poland received the areas of the Carpathian Mountains, populated by the Ukrainian Lemkos, with such towns as Balyhorod, Ustryky Dolishni, Lisko, Sianok and Krosno. According to the Soviet-Polish treaty, the Ukrainian population on these territories assigned to Poland were to be “voluntarily” resettled.

In order to compel the Ukrainians to abandon their ancestral land, the Polish communists began a series of actions of terrorism, pillage and assassination in these lands, known in Ukrainian military and political literature as *Zakerzonnia*, or the “Land West of the Curzon Line.”

The Ukrainian population was wholly defenseless against the Polish violence and depredations, carried out by armed groups that were organized on the model of the Russian Communist partisans and directed by experienced Soviet officers. These groups included the *Milicja Obywatelska* (Citizens Militia) or MO, the Corps of the State Public Security (UBP), military formations of the frontier troops and regular units of the Polish army.

The Supreme Council of the OUN could not remain an inactive observer of what was taking place in these Ukrainian lands. In 1945 it had thousands of leaflets distributed calling on both Ukrainians and Poles to join forces against

Communist Russia and its imperialistic policies. Moreover, in the face of the countless arrests and the physical destruction of the Ukrainian people, the Supreme Council of the OUN decided to utilize all its resources in assisting the Ukrainian population.

The self-defense system organized during the German occupation against the Germans was no longer adequate to effectively oppose the terrorism of Communist Poland. Therefore, the UPA was ordered to commit itself to the defense of the Ukrainian population.

To be noted is that the Curzon Line territory was not unfamiliar to the UPA. In 1944 eleven companies had operated there against the Germans. Specifically, these were the three companies each of the Battalion of Ren and the Battalion of Eugene, and the companies of Chorny, Nechai, Ostap, Baida and Hromenko. The UPA was ordered to move into Volhynia and the Carpathian Mountains as the German-Soviet front moved westward and the *Zakerzonnia* was left exposed and defenseless.

Early in the winter of 1944 the Battalion of Yurchenko and "Tyhry" Company moved to the Curzon Line territory from the lands under Soviet occupation. But the crossing of the border was costly for these units; only a half of their original strength survived to reach the *Zakerzonnia*.

Only in the spring of 1945 did those UPA units that had operated there return to the Curzon Line areas. They were joined by other units, such as the unit of Yahoda-Chernyk, the "Kochovyks" (Commander Shtyl), the "Halaida II" (Commander Kulish), the unit of Commander Shumsky, and other smaller units.

The command of these UPA units warned the Polish Communists to cease immediately their terrorism against the Ukrainian people, and appealed to the more reasonable elements of the Polish people to cooperate with the UPA against the Communists. But this effort failed to elicit any positive reaction from the Poles. On the contrary, the Poles stepped up their terroristic actions. Reluctantly—for it was the view of the Ukrainians that they and the Poles shared a common enemy—the UPA announced in April, 1945, that all Poles guilty of the persecution would incur retribution at the hands of the UPA.

One appeal read:

We shall be just and consistent, be assured of this. We are trying once more to warn you that should some innocent people suffer in the course of our retaliatory actions, let the Polish people blame not us but their own bandit-provocateurs!

On April 9, 1945, we captured the MO Commander of Wola Michowa, but we released him because he was innocent. Please, ask him yourselves. Ask also the militiaman from Hichva, ask the militia commander of Tarnawa, ask Polish soldiers from Stanowa, Zavadka and Bezmigowa, and others! And, lastly, ask all honest Poles in the counties of Lisko and Sianik how the Ukrainian insurgents have behaved with honest Poles!



We therefore appeal to all honest Polish society in this area to rise and struggle against the bandit-agents of Moscow, against those who are building the 17th Soviet Republic, who would exclude the Polish people from the powerful anti-Bolshevik front and who stand as obstacles in the way of normalization of Ukrainian-Polish good-neighbor relations. . . .

April 14, 1945

Ukrainian Insurgents

When all these appeals went unanswered, the UPA made good its word. In one month—April 15 to May 15, 1945—it destroyed many posts of the Polish militia, burned those Polish villages which had taken part in the terroristic activities directed against the Ukrainian population, and effectively attacked Polish military garrisons. The Poles suspended the terror. Even more, the UPA succeeded in concluding a treaty with the Polish anti-Bolshevik organization WIN (*Wolność i Niepodległość*, or “Freedom and Independence”) regarding common operations against the Communists in the area. After May of 1945 all *Zakerzonnia* was dominated by the UPA, the Polish armed units avoiding any armed encounters. It was an “Insurgent Republic,” built after the same pattern as the “Insurgent Republic” which had existed during the German occupation in Volhynia in 1943-44.

In his memoirs a noted UPA commander in the *Zakerzonnia* reported:

A good system of supply was organized. Even transient partisans were issued ration cards for food and other items of prime necessity. There were small factories that manufactured tobacco with UPA trademarks, cigarettes, soap, and leather. Other small factories turned out shirts, uniforms, shoes and boots, socks, sweaters, and bandages. Military training schools also were in operation, and young girls were trained for military nursing service. Blacksmith and locksmith shops repaired weapons and produced spare parts. Collection of weapons and ammunition went on day and night, and a census of the Ukrainian and Polish populations in the area was taken. . . .<sup>120</sup>

The administration of the *Zakerzonnia* at that time was entirely in the hands of the UPA.

Ukrainian insurgents did not object if some of the inhabitants of the area expressed a desire to depart from the Ukrainian SSR voluntarily. For the most part, there were local Communists or communist sympathizers. There were some others whose farms had been completely destroyed and who now hoped to gain a better livelihood in the USSR. Many of the alien element that had come into the area during the Polish or German occupation returned to their original habitations in Poland.

After the termination of World War II in May, 1945, entire Soviet divisions began returning home from Germany. The leadership of the OUN and UPA ordered avoidance of all armed encounters with these Soviet troops in transit.

<sup>120</sup> Khrin, *op. cit.*

Instead, an intensive propaganda campaign was waged in the ranks of the Red Army. Masses of leaflets were distributed among the soldiers of the Soviet and Polish armies explaining the aims and purposes of the UPA struggle.

The Polish communist government, which owed its very existence to the Soviet army and Soviet diplomacy, decided to forcibly resettle the Ukrainian population and to extirpate the UPA units.

Toward the end of 1945 large concentrations of Polish troops formed in the Curzon Line territory for the purpose of combing the terrain for the UPA. But here they met with a phenomenon which was unexpected. As a Polish newspaper in Peremyshl put it:

The military group of Col. Popka arrived in Peremyshl toward the end of 1945. It had many tasks, but the most important and fundamental was the struggle against the bandits. But the army met a great obstacle, unfortunately put up by those from whom the opposite was expected. This obstacle was the lack of cooperation on the part of the population. . . .<sup>121</sup>

The "many tasks" the Polish army units had to perform included the forcible resettlement, burning of villages so that the evicted people would have no place to which to return, destruction of the Ukrainian churches on the whole territory of the *Zakerzonnia*, executions and assassinations of those Ukrainians who balked at being forcibly repatriated, protection of freight trains transporting the deported Ukrainians, and armed assistance to Communist para-military organizations. The leadership of this large-scale terroristic action was in the hands of experienced Russian NKVD officers.

This bestial policy inflamed the Ukrainian insurgents. In short order hundreds of Polish armed posts were destroyed, bridges blown up, railroad track sabotaged, and "repatriation commissions" liquidated, especially their Soviet personnel. Polish army and police units were ambushed time and again, and several armed encounters took place. At this time the Ukrainian partisans had comparatively small losses, for the Polish troops had no experience in waging partisan warfare.

Polish Marshal Rola-Zymierski admitted in the Polish Parliament that the action of resettlement was not proceeding successfully because of the activities of the Ukrainian insurgents. He stated:

During the resettlement action these bands have impeded the repatriation of the population, destroyed bridges and railroads, and burned villages. Several large-scale encounters occurred in which the army attained a series of important successes. Our seizure of large quantities of weapons attest to the seriousness of these battles. We have captured 31 machine guns, 312 rifles, 179 automatic rifles, 110 pistols and

<sup>121</sup> Mirchuk, *op. cit.*; *Nowe Horyzonty* (New Horizons), August 4, 1946.

1,768 hand grenades, and a great number of cars, wagons, horses and cows. . . .<sup>122</sup>

Premier of Poland Osobka-Morawski, speaking at the session of the National People's Council, reported:

In the struggle against the bands the organs of the MO suffered in 1945 these losses: 1,411 dead, 1,410 wounded and 940 captured by the bandits. . . .<sup>123</sup>

In 1946 the battles of the UPA not only did not diminish, but increased in number and intensity. Hundreds of battles, raids, acts of sabotage and partisan actions made up the powerful UPA effort in 1946. The Polish press surprisingly reported these battles and activities at length.

In March, 1947, Polish War Minister General Karol Swierczewski arrived in the *Zakerzonnia* to take personal command of the drive to stamp out the UPA. For the Communists, General Swierczewski was a living legend. He had been born in Warsaw. During the Russian Revolution in 1917 he joined the Red Guards and fought against White General A. Denikin. In 1921 he was sent to the "Polish school" for officers in Moscow, and subsequently he attended the Frunze Military Academy. In 1929 he joined the General Staff of the Red Army.

With the outbreak of the Spanish civil war, Moscow sent General Karol Swierczewski to Spain to assume the command of the "14th International Brigade" under the *nom de guerre* of "General Walter." Later on he became the commander of the 35th Division, composed of Communists from various countries sent to Spain to combat the nationalist forces of General Franco.

### **Assassination of General Swierczewski by the UPA**

After the victory of General Franco in Spain, Gen. K. Swierczewski made his way back with the help of Communist organizations to the Soviet Union, where he was assigned to the military academy in Moscow as an instructor.

In World War II Swierczewski commanded an infantry division for a short time before being transferred to the General Staff and given the assignment to set up a Polish Communist armed force. He organized the Polish division of T. Kosciuszko, and subsequently the First and Second Armies.

After the war's end, he was put in charge of Polonizing the German lands which had been given to Poland by settling therein veterans of the Polish armed forces. In February, 1946, he became Deputy Minister of Defense and performed various functions in the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Polish Workers' Party).

On March 28, 1947, during an inspection of the Curzon Line territory,

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*; Mirchuk, *op. cit.*

<sup>123</sup> Mirchuk, *op. cit.*

Gen. Swierczewski was ambushed by UPA units. He and many of his aides were killed.

It is not possible today to reconstruct in detail how the UPA found out the route of Gen. Swierczewski's convoy. But the plan of the ambush itself was undoubtedly executed with precision and certainty. Knowledge of Gen. Swierczewski's inspection trip was provided by the OUN civilian network. Evidently, the OUN must have had access to the highest circles of the Polish army, the level at which the inspection tour was planned. For obvious reasons, OUN materials regarding this important matter cannot be made public now or in the near future.

Some information on the ambush is found in the memoirs of Ostroverkha, who then served with the Company of Khrin. Recuperating from wounds at the time, he did not take part in the actual ambush.

The morning of the ambush found Commander Khrin, who had not slept all night, walking in a forest clearing, smoking one cigarette after another. Finally, he ordered all administrative personnel and the badly wounded to remain. All the rest followed him to an undisclosed destination. Ostroverkha stayed with a party which was held in reserve.

Ostroverkha writes:

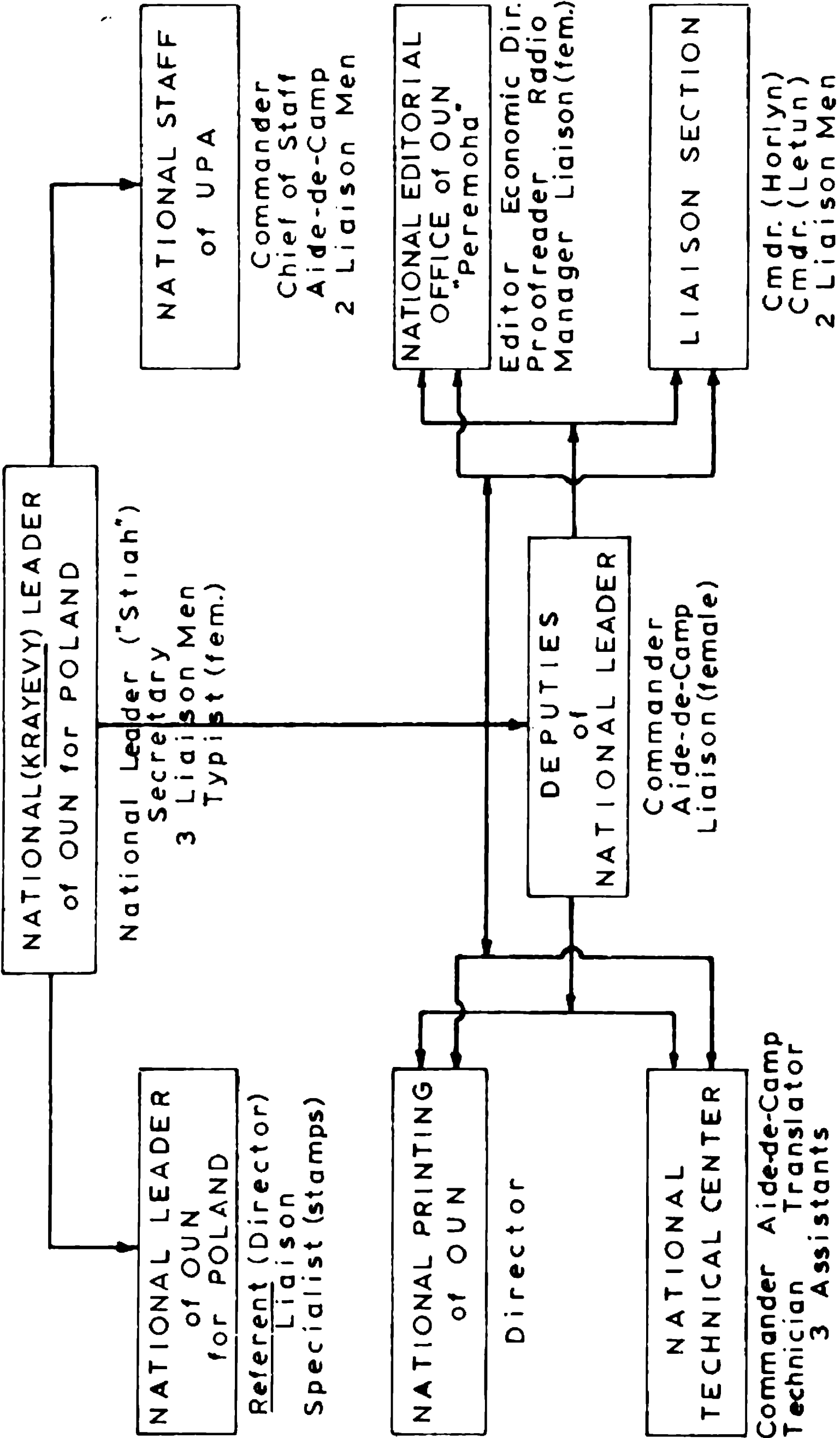
Tired and hungry because the last time we had eaten was yesterday morning, we move along in a long single file. At the Balyhorod-Tysna highway we hear shots and humming of motors, and all around a hunt for us obviously is going on. What did the Old Man want with an ambush just now?

We wait impatiently, wondering whether our party will be fired upon by the enemy. We are listening for a barrage and signs of the ambush. Suddenly we are deafened by a series from the "Dekhtiar" and a barrage. Thank God, ours have begun their *kolomeyka* [Ukrainian national dance]. We hear firing from both sides. Friends! We must hurry to help our friends. . . . All rise as one. I feel "cured" of my wound and everyone is on his feet, loading ammunition and preparing to march. But suddenly the firing dies out, and we hear only sporadic shots here and there. My soldier's ear tells me that our side is finishing off the enemy. . . . Never have I had to wait so long for the return of our fighters. They finally appear after several hours, barely dragging their feet. Everyone seems to be leaning on a cane. The Commander comes up and asks if everything is in order. He asks for his musette bag, and takes out a military notebook. Finding a picture of a bold general, he shows it to me and says: "Look Oleksa, we took care of this 'grandpa' today!" On the picture is inscribed the signature: General Swierczewski.

On the Polish side, numerous accounts appeared about this ambush of the UPA in which the Polish Minister of Defense was killed.

New and extended operations against the UPA in the Curzon Line territory were launched in May, 1947. In order to accomplish encirclement of

ORGANIZATION OF OUN-UPA IN POLAND  
(Based on depositions of captured UPA soldiers as cited in Blum's work)



the UPA units, Poland concluded a special military treaty with Czechoslovakia and the USSR which set up a common effort against the UPA, including joint military operations. At the same time the Polish government decided to forcibly resettle 250,000 Ukrainians, regardless of methods or the personal needs of the people. This two-pronged attack—one military, entailing a common effort with Soviet and Czech forces, and the other genocidal, involving the mass transfer of Ukrainians—spelled the doom of the UPA in the *Zakerzonnia*.

In accordance with the military agreement, the USSR sent an armored division and a few anti-partisan army divisions against the UPA forces, which were concentrated on the Polish-Soviet border. These Soviet units closed off every possible avenue of retreat for the UPA units into the territory of Ukraine. They fortified the border with barbed wire, watch towers, a belt of plowed ground which was heavily mined, dog patrols and automatic rocket signals.

Czechoslovakia sent a mountain brigade into the Carpathian Mountains to assist the Polish troops near the Czech border and to pursue those units of the UPA which might try to cross over into Czechoslovakia. (The strength of the Polish troops, according to Polish sources, appears farther on in this account.)

In the course of a few months, and despite fierce opposition, the Poles succeeded in resettling almost the entire Ukrainian population and burning their villages. In this situation the UPA units were deprived of the indispensable assistance of the population. The civilian network of the OUN was neutralized, in part by the wholesale resettlement of the Ukrainians and in part by being taken into the UPA units. One of the most pressing problems for the insurgents was acquisition of food. Their popular support gone, and the area crawling with enemy troops, the UPA units were compelled to make far-flung raids for food and other supplies into areas which were not populated by Ukrainians.

But the mass deportation of Ukrainians from the *Zakerzonnia* meant the UPA task of defending the population had all but come to an end. There seemed to be no one left to be defended.

Because of this genocidal development and because of the change in the general situation, the UPA Supreme Command ordered the UPA to break up into small units. Some were sent to Western Europe for the purpose of publicizing the Ukrainian struggle for independence. The remainder were gradually demobilized and integrated into the civilian population.

This process took place in a highly organized fashion. Most of the UPA was demobilized and infused into the underground system of the OUN, and moved with the resettled Ukrainians to the new territories acquired by Poland, the so-called "recovered territories," from which the German population had been expelled. Other units were assigned back to Ukraine.

Disclosure of the methods and tactics of transformation of the UPA into the underground system of the OUN is necessarily postponed to the distant future.

### **Polish Official Reports on UPA Activities**

In contrast to the policy of the Soviet press, which tried to ignore the activities of the UPA, the Polish Communist press was relatively open in reporting the various armed encounters, raids and ambushes which marked the warfare between the Ukrainian underground and the Polish troops and police force.

The following is taken from a major Polish work on the operations of the Polish troops against the Ukrainian Insurgent Army:

Units in the area are implementing the resettlement of the Ukrainian population and conducting armed operations against the bands.

On the night of May 20-21 an UPA band with a strength of 19 men attacked a unit of the 9th Infantry Regiment in the village of Konopne. As a result our unit lost one dead and two officers taken prisoner; we also lost one machine gun and two revolvers. . . .

On May 28 a band about 300 strong attacked the city of Hrubeshiv. The attack was repelled by the 5th Infantry Regiment and a Soviet infantry battalion. As a result of the battle and the ensuing pursuit 15 bandits were killed. The Red Army group captured two hand machine guns, three rifles and one pistol. Our losses: seven killed, three wounded and two taken prisoner; the losses of the Red Army: five dead, six wounded; the losses of the security unit: two dead and one captured. . . .

On May 29, while still pursuing the band we came across a group of refugess in the village of Dovhobychiv. In the ensuing skirmish two of them were killed, one wounded and four captured. . . .

On June 1 in the locality of Lisko a bunker was uncovered; three bandits were captured. On that day the pursuit was terminated. . . .

Activities of the bands have diminished. In the report period registered there were many other incidents, such as destruction of bridges and railroad track and the burning of villages. . . .<sup>124</sup>

(In all Polish official reports, the UPA fighters, after the Soviet Russian pattern, are referred to as "bandits" and their military formations as "bands.")

### **Polish Report on Deposition of Captured UPA Fighter**

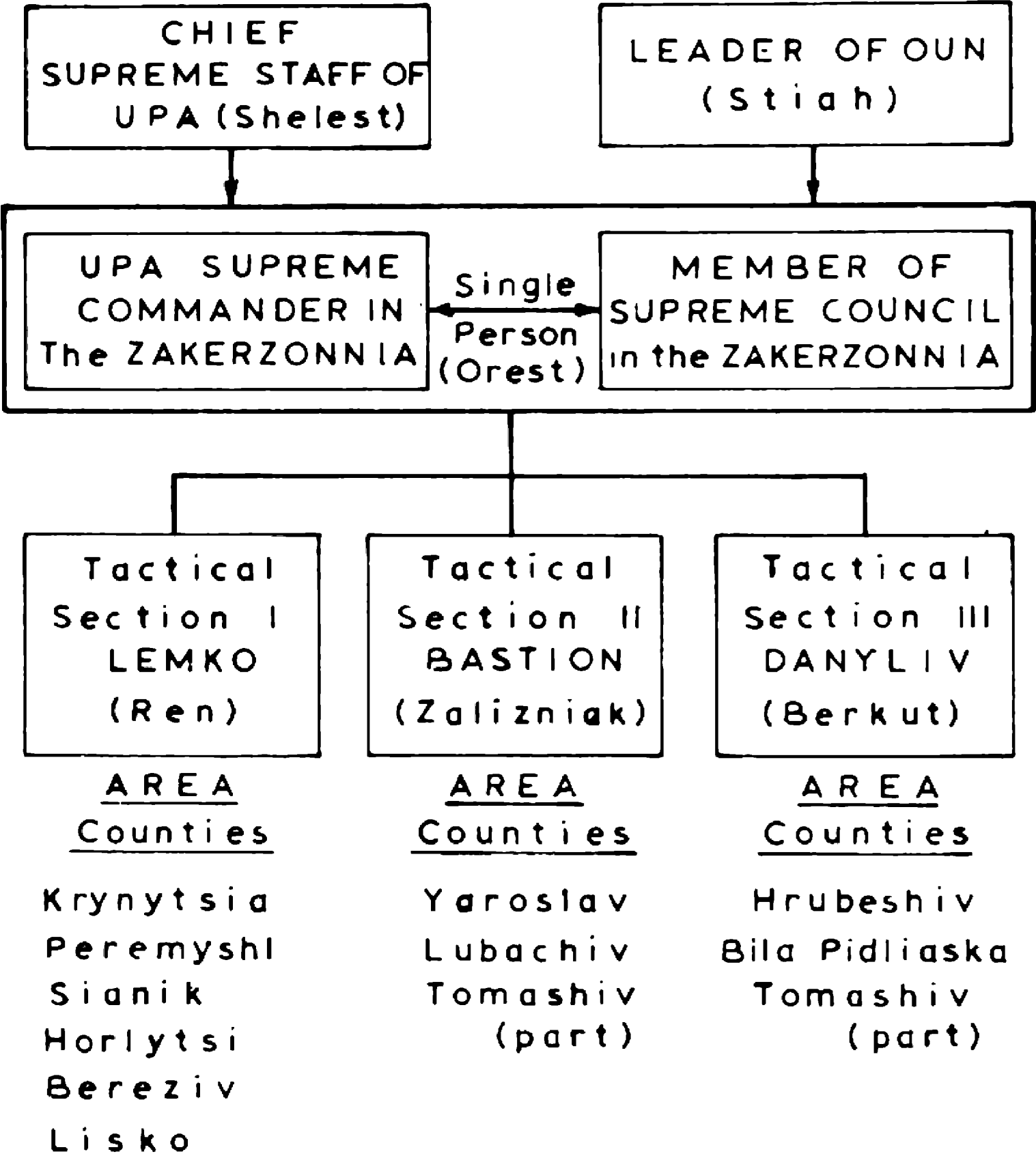
Polish writer Ignacy Blum also reported that during an attack by Polish troops against an UPA bunker near the city of Lublin, an UPA fighter, Andriy Kharkivsky, who was wounded in the fighting, was captured. His deposition (almost undoubtedly obtained under torture) was summarized by Blum:

He [the prisoner] joined the band in April, 1945, and took an active

<sup>124</sup> Blum, *op. cit.*

ORGANIZATION OF UPA  
IN THE ZAKERZONNIA

(According to Deposition of  
Chief of UPA Security (SB) Orest)





part in its operations until the day of his capture, April 28, 1946. He belonged to the "Duda" Platoon, which numbers some 30 men and which operates for the most part in the woods around Uhryniv. His platoon and the "Lev" Platoon are part of the "Lys" Company. The "Lys" Company, which numbers 70 men, belongs to the battalion commanded by "Prirva," the replacement for Commander "Yahoda," who was killed near the city of Sniatyn. He also knew that the battalion included the platoon of "Kropyva," consisting of 30-40 men, which operates independently. . . . Each platoon is sub-divided into three squads of ten to twelve men each. . . .

In addition, there also exist the so-called VOP groups,\* which consist of the civilian population. Members of the VOP meet on orders in a preselected place. After performing some assignment, such as the destruction of a bridge or a stretch of railroad track or the burning of a village, they return to their homes and resume their daytime occupations, which have nothing to do with the bands. . . .

The bands are well armed. For instance, a squad has two hand machine guns and a few automatic and manual rifles. . . . They manufacture pistol ammunition themselves from empty shells and lead. Weapons, ammunition and food are provided for the bandits by the so-called territorial network, which even has its own tailors. The people of the villages, who acquired a great many Soviet uniforms during the war, as well as various medals and insignia, pass these along to the bandits. The bands have gotten their Polish uniforms and overcoats from the dead and wounded; some of their overcoats date from before the war.

Moreover, the greatest possible help and sympathy for the bandits are manifested by the Ukrainian village population, including village heads and their deputies, who head up collections for all sorts of supplies and sundries for the bands. Those village heads and deputies who are not loyal and who refuse to cooperate with the bands are killed, as was the case in Khorobriv and in Dovhobychiv. The discipline of the bands is quite strict; it is based on fear and blind obedience. For any infraction, as for instance, falling asleep at one's post or excessive drinking or disobedience of orders, is punished by firing squad execution in public. Lesser violations are punished by whipping, standing at length at attention in full equipment, or assignment to a penal battalion across the Buh River (in Soviet territory—the author).

In the area of Hrubeshiv there also is a clandestine radio station which is constantly on the move, as well as a printing press which runs off illegal leaflets and proclamations.

Propaganda in the bands is conducted very vigorously. Every two weeks each platoon is visited by special political and educational propagators who hold a briefing and discussions. The principal aim for the existence of the bands is given as the necessity of preserving the Ukrainian armed forces so that they may take part in a general revolution and in a struggle against Communism and the Polish forces for the establishment of a Ukrainian independent state. They presage the outbreak of World War III. They also conduct a vigorous cam-

\* VOP stands for *viddily osoblyvoho pryznachennia* (units for special designation), actually the OUN—Author.

paign and agitation against the repatriation of Ukrainians across the Buh River and apply terrorism to prevent it (at that time the Soviet government had forcibly resettled hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians to the USSR—the author).

In one such operation against the repatriation the UPA acted in cooperation with an officer, known by his pseudonym of “Los,” of the Polish AK [*Armja Krajowa*, or the Polish Home Army, an anti-Nazi and anti-Soviet Polish underground resistance force of World War II]. It involved the disarmament of an army company in the village of Verbkovychi. The AK officer gave the UPA a password, which enabled the UPA to disarm the entire company without firing a single shot.

The people who took part in this operation were hand-picked and knew the Polish language well. The commissar of the repatriation commission was taken by the band, dressed up in a uniform of the Security Service [Polish] and compelled to agitate against the repatriation and against the USSR. The captured bandit further stated that he heard at first that the commissar had escaped, but subsequently found out that he had been executed. . . .<sup>125</sup>

### **The UPA in the Curzon Line Country: Testimony of Captured Commander Dalnych**

On September 16, 1947, the Poles captured Commander Dalnych in a bunker, who, severely wounded, was unable to make his escape. His testimony is in the archives of the supreme military attorney's office in Warsaw in the documents and prosecution papers prepared against Myroslav Onyshkevych, or “Orest,” an outstanding leader of the OUN and UPA.<sup>126</sup>

Dalnych, in the course of an intense interrogation and investigation conducted by the Polish security organs, revealed that in the years of 1945-46 Orest was the commander-in-chief of the UPA for the entire area of the Curzon Line territory, where UPA units had been active previously. Up to April, 1945, Yaroslav Starukh, known by his military *nom de guerre* of “Stiah,” had been in temporary command of these units.

The organizational scheme of the UPA in the *Zakerzonnia* under the rule of Communist Poland is presented in the accompanying chart (see P. 352).

Orest, as commander-in-chief of all UPA units in Communist Poland, organized the ambush between Balyhorod and Tysna against the Polish security unit that escorted Gen. Swierczewski. The UPA developed a strong if ultimately unsuccessful program of activities and agitation against the deportation of the Ukrainian population to the USSR and to the interior of Poland. In conjunction with the Polish underground organization WIN, for example, the UPA raided the city of Hrubeshiv. The UPA blew up a building in which units of the Red Army were quartered, attacked the headquarters

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>126</sup> Blum, *op. cit.*

of the Polish political police and freed the political prisoners. The raid took place at the end of April, 1946.

Captured military equipment, food supplies and the like were passed on by the UPA units to the OUN supply leaders of districts and counties for storage against future need. Later on this equipment was passed still farther on for the use of the organization. This also was true of captured money.

The Security Service (SB) was the security force of the OUN, as the UPA was the armed force of the OUN. The SB had its own assault groups of 10-15 men each. Each *raion* had one such assault group; thus if a district had 7 *raions*, it had an equal number of SB groups. The functions of the assault group were to organize diversionary and sabotage actions, to cooperate militarily with the UPA, to conduct investigation and questioning of captured enemy personnel and all suspect persons, and to collect and evaluate information on the enemy.

In September, 1947, the transformation of the UPA began. Some of its units crossed into the USSR, others were dissolved and dispersed throughout the western areas of Poland.

### **Report of a Polish Deputy Commander**

The following is an extract from an official report by the deputy commander of the Vth Military District to the Chief of the Political-Educational Department of the Polish armed forces:

On March 23 the commander of the 38th sector, Major Frolov, assembled the soldiers of the police headquarters of Komancha, the 3rd battalion of the 34th Infantry Regiment under the command of Capt. Kozyra, and 60 other men. . . . This group was to strike southward from Nove Zahiria to the police stations of Mikhova Volya, Radoshytsi, Lupkiv and Yasin. [These police stations had been surrounded by the "Banderivtsi" and had lost all contact with the command of the sector and headquarters.] The force was to extricate the beleaguered Polish police and bring them to Komancha as it cleared the terrain. Near the village of Mokre the group of Major Frolov noticed the movements of the "Banderivtsi," but paid them little heed. Near the village of Kozhushne the group was attacked by the "Banderivtsi." A chaotic defense ensued which revealed an utter lack of firm command: some units of the group took off for the village of Nove Zahiria, others for Lupkiv. The latter units arrived in Lupkiv to find the police garrison gone, in fact, the building itself had been burned down. It transpired that as Major Frolov was moving to relieve the isolated police station, the garrison was attacked by the UPA. The attack was repelled without losses, but because of the shortage of ammunition, the commander of the police station in Lupkiv appealed to the Czech border units for whatever ammunition they could spare. The Czechs could not oblige them. Instead, they offered to escort the Lupkiv unit with their arms and equipment through the territory of Czechoslovakia to any other Polish border post. Unwilling to wait for

another attack by the "Banderivtsi," the Poles took advantage of the Czech offer, and were taken by the Czechs to Duklia. It was stated that the number of armed "Banderivtsi" could not possibly have been higher than 400, but interrogated officers reported that their number was 2,000 men. It appeared that the "Banderivtsi" had driven along with them a great many unarmed people for the purpose of disguising their real strength. But speaking about our own side, our intelligence work was completely deficient at a time when the UPA intelligence functioned very well. The best proof of this is the fact that the "Banderivtsi" \* had lists of the names of soldiers who had taken part in the confiscation of wagons. . . .<sup>127</sup>

From this report it would appear that Major Frolov's group had been dispersed by a UPA unit, if not severely mauled, and the Polish garrisons in the villages neutralized if not destroyed. The remnants of the Polish troops were saved only by the intervention of troops of another state.

Also revealed was another ruse of UPA: use of civilians, undoubtedly volunteers eager to strike back at the Poles, in order to deceive and frighten the enemy with a mighty show of strength.

### Organization of Counterinsurgency in Poland

Long active in Communist Poland, besides the units of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army, were the strong Polish nationalist partisan units. These forces maintained close touch with the Polish emigre government, but could not manage to unite under one leadership and to coordinate their operations. Their ties to various political parties weakened considerably the anti-Russian and anti-Communist struggle of the Poles.

The Polish partisans operated throughout the whole country with varying intensity. When the Communist Polish government, following in the footsteps of the Soviet government, announced an amnesty for those who would lay down their arms, hundreds of Polish partisans came out of the woods and surrendered—a heavy blow to the Polish nationalist underground.

Towards the total destruction of the partisan movements a special organization was formed. Called the State Committee of Security, it was placed under the direction of the supreme commander of the Polish armed forces and the Minister of Public Security. The Committee was established on Moscow's orders and was run by Soviet specialists in partisan warfare.

The tasks of the Committee were to:

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*

\* The appellation "Banderivtsi" derives from the name of OUN leader Bandera (Stepan). Both Russians and Poles tried to deprecate the importance of the Ukrainian liberation movement by linking it with an individual rather than a whole nation. The Polish writers used the Polish version, "Banderowcy." The Germans also copied this trick by calling the Ukrainian liberation movement the *Banderabewegung* (the Bandera movement).

- 1) Preserve security in the country;
- 2) Direct the provincial (*województwo*) security committees and coordinate their operations;
- 3) Devise plans for combatting the partisan movement;
- 4) Specify the timing of particular operations;
- 5) Regroup troops taking part in the operations.<sup>128</sup>

The entire territory of Poland was divided among provincial security committees, which supervised the following:

- 1) The Polish army;
- 2) Troops of the Corps of Internal Security;
- 3) Provincial security organs;
- 4) Citizens' militia.

The overall tasks of these organs embraced:

- 1) Responsibility for the status of security in the province;
- 2) Direction of military operations;
- 3) Planning of the means and methods of the struggle against the partisans;
- 4) Preparation of reports and operational plans for approval.

The provincial security committees were made up of the following functionaries:

- 1) Provincial leader or director;
- 2) His deputy, the politico-educational director;
- 3) Chief of staff;
- 4) Deputy chief of staff and director of propaganda;
- 5) Officer in charge of distributing printed propaganda materials;
- 6) Chief of liaison.

This was the general outline of the organization to combat the partisan movements in Communist Poland. In practice, the organization was flexible enough to adjust its operations to local and political conditions.

The propaganda sector was important only as regards the areas that were populated by Poles exclusively. The Communist government in Warsaw labored to convince the Polish people that the communist regime was the wave of the future and that the USSR now was a "friend" of Poland.

Such propaganda never was and never could be effective as regards the Ukrainian population in Poland. The only argument that was effective was a mix of terrorism, genocide and military operations against the UPA.

The provincial committees functioned in their areas through the so-called defense-propaganda groups. Acting within designated districts, these organs dealt directly with political propaganda and the combat operations aimed at the destruction of the partisan units.

In those areas dominated by the OUN network and UPA units, the Polish groups operated militarily solely. In those areas populated by Poles they

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*,

acted primarily in the field of political propaganda. This was an extremely difficult undertaking even among the Poles; the underground Polish nationalist propaganda spoke up clearly and unequivocally for a free Poland.

In *Principles (Osnowy)* of propaganda, published by the Polish underground organization WIN, we read as follows:

Our propaganda must run parallel to the propaganda of the enemy, with the sole difference that it goes in an opposite direction. The enemy should not be allowed to express a single sentence without counteraction on our part. We must remember, however, that if we restrict ourselves to the machinations of the enemy, we remain on the defensive, while the enemy retains the offensive. Therefore, we must not only counteract, but also go on the offensive by proposing our own theses, such as sovereignty, freedom, and the like. We attain the optimum when the propaganda of the enemy is reduced to combatting our arguments. . . .

"We must admit," writes Ignacy Blum, "that the enemy in many cases succeeded in attaining this 'optimum,' forcing us to take a defensive position. . . ."

In the attempt of the Polish Communist government to wipe out the resistance movements, the country was divided into provincial districts that coincided with the administrative division of Poland, except that the districts in which the UPA operated were divided to correspond with the operational areas of the UPA insurgent groups. (Blum points out, however, that with the strengthening of the anti-partisan operations, resistance and attacks by the partisan groups increased commensurately as well.) Finally, on November 4, 1946, the Supreme Command established "emergency districts." The most threatened districts in the eyes of the Polish Communist government were the areas populated by the Ukrainians, namely, the provinces of Kholm (Chelm), Lublin, and Cracow and the many counties of Rzeszow, Peremyshl and Horlytsi (Gorlice). Assigned to each *raion* was a defense-propaganda group of the following composition: one officer, one deputy, five propagandists and 38 security men.

In less menaced areas the number of security men was smaller, in many instances security personnel was not used at all. In the "emergency districts" the groups also had battle assignments, with the number of soldiers varying from place to place: the *raion* of Peremyshl had 38 groups, totaling 1,710 soldiers; Rzeszow—36 groups and 1,620 soldiers; Horlytsi—26 groups and 1,170 soldiers, and Kholm—25 groups and 1,260 soldiers.

After a number of extensions of the amnesty deadline, by 1947 a total of 28,773 partisans had come out of the woods and laid down their arms; among them were only 145 UPA members.

According to Polish official estimates of that time, there still remained at large 30 groups of political partisans totaling 800 men, 36 robber bands embracing 300 men, and an *UPA force of 6,000 fighters* (italics ours—the author).

Blum also discusses the problem of whether the efforts exerted, entailing so much in manpower and materiel, were necessary and concludes that partisan warfare is guided by different laws, that here the political aspect is decisive more often than the military. The strength of the partisans, he contends, depends largely on the support of the civilian population.

As we can see, the analysis of this Polish officer and Communist is quite accurate—in direct contrast to the writings of the Russian Communists, who commonly shape the facts to fit their propaganda objectives.

Blum continues his argument:

Partisan warfare is not classic warfare wherein the number of troops mustered is related to the strength of the enemy. The number of units that are designated for operations must bear a certain relationship to the size of the area in which the band operates. The experience of the Corps of Internal Security indicated that the nearer the area approaches saturation with troops, the shorter the duration of the operations. For instance, in the campaign "Wisla" the one division used meant a coverage of 500 men over 100 sq. kilometers: this brought results in 98 days. The operational group "Narew," averaging 25 men per 100 sq. kilometers, took 365 days to achieve results. In order to attain an average of 500 men per 100 sq. kilometers in Lublin Province, it would be necessary to deploy 100,000 troops. . . .<sup>129</sup>

In the operation against the UPA in the "emergency districts," the ratio of the opposing forces works out about the same as the saturation concept put forth by the Polish communist writer. Thus to combat 6,000 UPA fighters, which included the civilian network of the OUN, the Warsaw government should have committed at least 100,000 troops, for a ratio of 6:100.

When we take into consideration the complete failure of the communist propaganda, despite the fact that the ratio of the armed forces of the UPA (excluding the civilian network of the OUN) to the Soviet troops was 1:100, then we begin to appreciate the extent of the dedication, patriotism and tenacity of these partisans of nationalist character who fought for the freedom and sovereign independence of their own country.

### **Polish Communist Appraisal of UPA Struggle in Curzon Line Areas**

The aforementioned Polish Communist officer and writer, Ignacy Blum, devoted a chapter of his book to the Ukrainian question (pp. 87-123). But like the Soviet Russian historians and propagandists, Blum is silent with regard to the struggle of the UPA against the Germans, saying only that some UPA units, on their own, waged a sporadic struggle with the Germans. This, of course, was either inspired by Moscow or written in abject toadying to the Soviet line on the subject of the UPA, which makes the UPA and the OUN

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*



“hirelings” of the Nazi invaders of Ukraine and thus implies that the Ukrainian underground movement basically was directed against the Ukrainian people—an upside-down distortion of the historical truth.

In describing the organizational scheme of the UPA, Blum relies heavily on the book, *Ukrainska Povstanska Armia 1942-1952* (The Ukrainian Insurgent Army in 1942-1952), by Peter Mirchuk, which was published in Munich in 1953 and which is cited in this work. But he gives as well a detailed description of the organizational scheme of the UPA in the *Zakerzonnia*, apparently on the basis of documents and records dealing with the UPA in the archives of the Attorney General in Warsaw. Thus, the following account of the *Zakerzonnia* makes use of Blum's book, *Z dziejów Wojska Polskiego w Latach 1945-1948* (On the Activities of the Polish Army in the Years 1945-1948).

The Curzon Line areas of the *Zakerzonnia* belonged to the operational group UPA-West as the 6th Military District and was known under the code name of “Sian.”

The *Zakerzonnia* was divided into three operational sectors (or districts):

1. Sector “Lemko” with two *nad-raions*, comprising the counties of Peremyshl, Bircha, Lisko, Sianok, Balyhorod, Novy Sanch, Horlytsi and Krynytsia. The *nad-raions* were divided into *raions*: the *nad-raion* “Kholodny Yar” had five *raions*, the *nad-raions* “Beskyd” had six.

2. Sector “Bastion” had only one *nad-raion*, “Baturyn,” made up of five *raions* and extending from the Sian River to the former Polish-Soviet border of 1939; in the south it included part of the county of Peremyshl, and in the north it reached the counties of Bilhorai and Tomashiv.

3. Sector “Danyliv” had 2 *nad-raions*: “Levada” and another whose name is unknown. It encompassed the western part of the county of Tomashiv and the counties of Volodava, Hrubeshiv and Bila Pidlaska.

The administration of the Curzon Line territory was in the hands of a supreme council, *provid*, composed of a leader, economic director, organizational director, propaganda director and the chief of the Security Service.

This council was repeated at the levels of the sector, *nad-raion* and *raion*.

Operating in the Curzon Line territory were 17 UPA companies in all, each confined to one or another sector. In sector “Lemko” were the companies of “Burlaka,” “Lastivka,” “Hromenko,” “Krylach,” “Bor,” “Brodych,” “Khrin” and “Stakh;” in “Bastion” those of “Shum,” “Bryl,” “Kruk,” “Tucha,” and “Kalynovych;” and in “Danyliv” those of “Yar,” “Duda” “David” and “Chavs.”

The UPA units were well armed. Each company had two heavy machine guns, eight to ten hand machine guns, and, when in certain cases the district command assigned them, small-caliber artillery and mortars. UPA fighters were armed with automatic pistols, rifles and hand grenades. Units constantly



exchanged their old weapons for new ones captured from the enemy. This accounted for the unvaryingly strong firepower of the UPA companies.

UPA units concealed many stores and weapons caches in the woods and mountains. The strength of a company varied from 60 to 150 men. In each *raion* there was a group of the Security Service (SB), consisting of a few men. During certain operations of the UPA, many members of the civilian network of the OUN took part. Overall, in 1946 the insurgents had about 6,000 armed men in the *Zakerzonnia*.

The sector command consisted of the sector commander, chief of staff, political officer (political education officer), secretary of staff and four security men.

The company command consisted of the company commander, political officer, mess and supply officer and combat instructor.

Blum writes:

The UPA units, despite the fact that they looked like a regular army, operated as typical partisan units. The shortage of commanders with military training was compensated by the specific methods of struggle which corresponded with the prevailing conditions. Military and civilian leaders used pseudonyms, while administrative units (OUN) used cryptonyms. Also, the military units used code names and numbers. For instance, companies of the first sector were identified by the cryptonym "Udarnyk." The companies also were numbered consecutively; if there were five companies, there would be an "Udarnyk" No. 5. Companies of the second sector went under the cryptonym of "Mesnyk," (Avenger) while those of the third were the "Vovky" (Wolves). This practice made it difficult to identify UPA units and thus to an extent to combat the UPA forces. . . .<sup>130</sup>

Blum reports on the UPA's activities only in the southern part of the Curzon Line area.

In Poland, Blum writes, the UPA units also fought the repatriation of Ukrainians to the USSR in various ways: by organizing ambushes against those Polish army units engaged in the repatriation of Ukrainians, by burning down villages, blowing up the railroad stations and bridges, by burning forests, and the like. . . .<sup>131</sup>

To be added is that the deportation of the Ukrainians was conducted forcibly and *en masse*, regardless of whether or not they belonged to the OUN. Most of those repatriated were sent by the Russians without trial to the slave labor camps in the northern areas of the USSR and kept there many years.

Blum continues:

The UPA bands disorganized the normal course of life in those counties in which they operated. For instance, in 1945, the entire

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 100.

administration of Rzeszow Province was paralyzed. Village councils were functioning in only two villages.

In some villages these councils had to be re-created four times, each successive council having been liquidated by the UPA. Tax collection in this province ran only ten to twelve percent of normal. Most of the police posts were attacked and destroyed by the bands.

From October, 1945, to March, 1948, in but four counties (Tomashev, Hrubeshiv, Volodava and Bila Pidlaska) the UPA bands made about 60 armed attacks on Polish army garrisons, police organizations and the Soviet army, killing a total of 160 officers and men. In these four counties UPA soldiers burned down 50 villages and made about 250 attacks on state institutions and private citizens, pillaging assets worth several million *zlotys*.

Considering the area of the "Bastion" sector alone, in the period from November, 1945, to the end of 1946, the UPA bands executed the following attacks:

—In November, 1945, an UPA unit under the command of Zalizniak blew up a railroad bridge near the village of Surokhiv in the county of Yaroslav, killing several members of SOK (security force) guarding the bridge;

—In March, 1946, the UPA company of Shum, which numbered about 150 men, attacked the repatriation commission in Lubysh, burned down the village and slew the members of the commission and several Poles; \*

—In April, 1946, the company of Shum attacked the railroad station of Uhniv, wiped out the military guards and escorts of the transport and dispersed the Ukrainian people awaiting transfer to the USSR;

—In May, 1946, the UPA company under the command of Zalizniak burned down the villages of Sosnytsia and Sviat in the county of Peremyshl, killing several Poles;

—In May, 1946, the UPA company of Bryl attacked the post of the Polish communist militia in Sieniawa in the county of Yaroslav, capturing a few militiamen, whom they killed subsequently;

—On December 6, 1946, the UPA companies of Kalynovych and Bryl and one platoon of Tucha's company attacked the town of Bilhorai and plundered a cooperative and a pharmacy.

The UPA bands, as I have mentioned earlier, constitute a serious danger for the young Communist government. This danger was augmented by the open cooperation of the UPA with the Polish reactionary underground, especially with the organization WIN. In this cooperation both sides were equally interested. The UPA wanted to demonstrate to the world that it was striving for cooperation with the underground organizations of Europe and that it was strong and progressive, inasmuch as it was fighting not only in the name of the Ukrainian people but in that of the Polish people as well. The Polish

\* It may be noted that so-called "repatriation actions" were conducted forcibly with inhuman brutality by the MVD and the Polish Communist police. These actions were bitterly opposed by the UPA.

bands, on the other hand, were seeking to strengthen their forces and to secure an ally in the struggle against the people's government.

The Polish reactionaries wanted to develop cooperation with the bands of the UPA not only for immediate objectives, such as expansion of espionage networks and organization of common attacks, but also for a far-reaching objective: the realization—after the destruction of the Soviet power in Ukraine and in the People's Poland—of a federation with a fascist Ukrainian state. This was wholly confirmed by the trial in Cracow of Franciszek Niepolulczycki and of others, and by the exchange of friendly correspondence between WIN and the UPA, as well as by the propaganda literature of both.<sup>132</sup>

As an example of the close cooperation the author cites the attack on the city of Hrubeshiv, reported elsewhere in this work.

Blum writes further on the counterinsurgency activity of the Polish army and police against the UPA:

Inasmuch as the forces of the security organs in the given terrain (internal security forces and police) were unable to liquidate the bands, contingents of the Polish army were called in.

The Supreme Command moved the following units from the front to the most threatened "emergency districts" and sectors: the 3rd, 8th, and 9th infantry divisions. In addition, one infantry regiment of the 2nd division was moved to Hrubeshiv.

The principal task of these forces was to combat and destroy the bands of the UPA. Throughout all this period, which began in June, 1945, the soldiers of the Polish army waged fierce battles with the well-armed bands, which enjoyed the support of the local Ukrainian population.

In the first phase of operations these forces failed to liquidate the bandit activities for the following reasons:

- Lack of experience in such operations;
- The excellent espionage of the bands, who also knew intimately the mountainous and woody terrain in which they operated;
- Lack of the requisite coordination in the operations between the divisions of the Polish army and the operational groups of the internal security.

The establishment of the State Committee of Security; the creation of the Provincial Committee of Security, consisting of representatives of the Polish army, the Internal Security, the Office of Public Security and Citizens' Militia, and the division of the areas into spheres of responsibility . . . and finally a close coordination of actions—all this failed to achieve substantial successes in the struggle against the UPA.

For the purpose of realizing effective combat against the UPA bands, the supreme command of the Polish army created an operational group known under the cryptonym of Rzeszow. Its activity began on April 5, 1946, and terminated on October 31, 1946. The forces that were at the disposal of this group failed to liquidate the bands.

<sup>132</sup> Blum, *op. cit.*

The secret of the vitality of the bands was revealed by a captured member of an UPA band, Kharkivsky. . . . (Reported on elsewhere in this work, Kharkivsky spoke of the efficacy of the UPA Security Service, which seeks out and destroys all elements inimical to the UPA and of the support of the OUN and that of the Ukrainian people at large—the Author.)

The fact remains that the help given the Ukrainian bands by the Ukrainian population, partially out of good will and partially under duress, made the struggle against the bands that much more difficult. As described by the Political Educational Section of the Military District of Lublin in May, 1946:

. . . As soon as night falls, peaceful peasants are transformed into bandits. We could cite thousands of examples, as when chasing a bandit the soldiers see him enter his house, only to have his wife, who was there all the time, swear that she saw no one. A detailed search would prove he had secreted himself in a hiding-place, disappearing like a stone thrown into water.

I have sought to depict the situation in the southeastern areas of Poland; this situation compelled the Polish government to undertake a radical measure—to liquidate the bands of the UPA by resettling the Ukrainian population to the northern and western terrains of Poland. There was no possibility of liquidating the UPA bands without resettling the Ukrainian population. . . .<sup>133</sup>

We must add a word of caution here. Credibility of such reports from communist sources suffers from the demands and the nature of a communistic regime.

### **Operation “Wisla” Against the UPA in Poland—Appraisal of the Polish Side by Blum**

Two years after the end of World War II the southeastern part of Poland was still being harassed by the Ukrainian underground. The communist government of Poland, forming an alliance with the USSR and Czechoslovakia, decided to eradicate the UPA and OUN once and for all. By order of the State Committee of Security of April 17, 1947 and that of the commander-in-chief of the Polish army of the same date, an extensive campaign was launched. The operation was called “Wisla” (from the Vistula River). The army units taking part were ordered also to help deport the Ukrainians from the ethnic Ukrainian territories to the USSR and to the interior of Communist Poland. This uprooting of a people necessitated the use of force, which inevitably degenerated into countless acts of terrorism and bestiality.

The following account of the military operations is based on Blum’s work.<sup>134</sup>

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*

### **The Polish Forces**

Brig. Gen. Mossora, deputy chief of the General Staff of the Polish armed forces, was designated as the overall commander of the "Wisla" campaign. The entire terrain of operations was divided into two sectors: Sector "S" (Sanok) and Sector "R" (Rzeszow).

The combat forces of Sector "S" consisted of the following:

The 6th Infantry Division, with a combined regiment of the 2nd Infantry Division and a combined regiment of the 6th Infantry Division;

The 7th Infantry Division, consisting of a combined regiment of the 10th Infantry Division and a combined regiment of the 11th Infantry Division;

The 8th Infantry Division, consisting of a combined regiment of the 1st Infantry Division and a combined regiment of the 8th Infantry Division;

A combined division of troops of the Internal Security of three brigades.

Sector "R" embraced the following units:

The 9th Infantry Division, supported by combined regiments from the 3rd, 5th, and 14th Infantry Divisions;

A combined regiment of the 4th Infantry Division and another from the 12th Infantry Division, supported by a police unit of 700 men serving as a reserve force for the operational group.

In addition, the "Wisla" operation had at its disposal a regiment of engineers of 500 men; a motorized regiment of six companies, with 50 vehicles in each, and one technical supply company with a platoon of medical personnel, equipped with ten trucks, and one air force squadron, consisting of one Douglas and nine P2 planes.

The staff was protected by a security guard, consisting of an officer, four non-commissioned officers and 46 men. The commander of the "Wisla" operation also had at his disposal the commanders of the Military Districts of Cracow and Lublin.\*

### **Forces and Tactics of the UPA**

The "Wisla" operation and the resettlement of the Ukrainian population to the northwestern areas of Poland and to the USSR were met by a last ditch effort on the part of the OUN and the UPA.

The national leader of the OUN for Poland, Yaroslav Starukh ("Stiah"), outlined in April, 1947, special instructions on the stand to be taken by the Ukrainian population in the drastic situation. He fully realized that the resettlement of the Ukrainian population would automatically undermine the

\* The estimate of the UPA staff placed the entire Polish force at 30,000 men; in addition, some 12,000 Czech troops and an unknown number of Soviet troops cooperated in the "Wisla Operation."

existence of the UPA in these areas. Hence he emphasized this vital aspect of the resistance. His instructions in part, read:

In this situation, we must use all means at our disposal to the end that the largest possible number of people not be resettled. In this maneuver, every and all methods must be utilized, including the return of deportees from the places to which they are taken. We must dispel the fear of being persecuted in those who remain; we must convince them that those who remain will be better off than those who are resettled. Leaflets which threaten those who remain with all sorts of repression are nothing but enemy propaganda. With regard to the question of whether or not it is possible to put up an effective resistance against the government, we must convince the population that such a resistance is indeed possible, that there will be many people who will remain and who will survive. Most important in this tactic is to preserve all one's assets and possessions.

Depopulated villages will have to be burned down, especially those villages which have the greatest exposure to the enemy action, for instance, those villages which are closest to highways. Parts of villages must be burned down as soon as possible in order to discourage the enemy from resettling them. The population must be convinced, however, that there will be at least a few places to which to return to. All the rest must be burned down so as to prevent the PPR elements [*Polska Partja Robotnicza*—the Polish Workers' Party] from occupying them. . . .<sup>135</sup>

Realistically aware that the resettlement program could not but damage severely the very foundation of the UPA, Stiaħ ordered further:

All organizational and military units are obligated immediately to stock their supply stores with maximal quantities of food: dried bread, flour, some baked bread for consumption the first few days, and the like. . . . In addition to food supplies, other items must be supplemented, such as salt, soap, kerosene, matches, linen cloth, leather and all other articles required by partisan life and work. . . .

In this new situation the organizational structure of the UPA was compelled to undergo a substantial change. The gradual liquidation of bases and the network of the OUN and the difficulties encountered by particular units forced the command to merge companies into larger units—battalions. At the beginning of the "Wisla" operation (April 24, 1947) there were four UPA battalions in the terrain, namely, the Battalion of Berkut in the counties of Hrubeshiv and Tomashiv, the Battalion of Zalizniak in the counties of Peremyshl and Lubachiv, the Battalion of Baida in the counties of Sianok and Lisko and the Battalion of Ren in the counties of Yaslo, Krosno and Sianok. The combined strength of the four battalions was 2,500 men. In addition, the civilian network of the OUN numbered several thousand men and women (their exact number could not be ascertained).

<sup>135</sup> Blum, *op. cit.*

### The "Wisla" Operation

The Polish combat units of Sectors "S" and "R" received the following assignments:

—The Division of the Corps of Internal Security: to liquidate the band of "Bir" operating in the mountainous terrain girded by the villages of Radieva, Yablinka, Cisna, Kryve, Gulske and Tvorylne; to implement the complete evacuation of the Ukrainian population from the southeastern sector of Lisko county by assigning units to seal that sector of the Polish-Czech border which is traversed by the railroad, 2 kilometers south of the town of Lupkiv, and to maintain close contact and cooperation with the 6th and 7th Infantry Divisions.

—The 6th Infantry Division: to provide detailed intelligence on the strength, weapons and places of operations of the band commanded by Khrin and to liquidate it; to deport the Ukrainian population from the area of its operations and to close the Polish-Czech border in the area of Cheremkha where the railroad crosses into Czechoslovakia, and to maintain a close liaison and cooperation with the 7th Division and the Division of the Corps of Internal Security.

—The 7th Infantry Division: to liquidate the band commanded by "Stakh" and to deport the Ukrainian population from the area designated for the operations of the division. All actions were to be implemented in coordination with the 6th and 8th Infantry Divisions.

—The 8th Infantry Division: to liquidate the band of Krylach operating in the areas of Dobra, Maliava, Lishchava, Horishnia and Kuznytsia, and the group of Lastivka, operating in the areas of Lomna, Triitsia, Yamna Dolishnia and Yamna Horishnia; to deport the Ukrainian population from these areas and to act in conjunction with the 7th and 9th Infantry Divisions.

—The 9th Infantry Division: to liquidate the UPA bands in the areas west, north, and southeast of Peremyshl; to deport the Ukrainian population from the counties of Peremyshl and Lubachiv; to secure this area for the "Wisla" operation from the west and southwest; to prevent the bands from escaping in that direction, and to cooperate closely with the 8th Infantry Division.

The collecting points of the Ukrainian population designated for deportation were as follows:

Lupkiv and Zahiria—under the Commander of the Corps of Internal Security;

Komancha and Lisko—under the Commander of the 6th Infantry Division;

Kulashyn and Pysarovychi—under the commander of the 7th Infantry Division;

Zaluzh, Lukavytsi and Vilshanka—under the Commander of the 8th Infantry Division;

Sianok and Perevorsk—under the Commander of the 9th Infantry Division.

At these railroad stations, special security troops acted as guards, escorted the convoys, and conducted placatory propaganda among the Ukrainians who were being deported from their villages and towns.

At its outset the “Wisla” operation embraced only the eastern part of Rzeszow Province, specifically, the counties of Lisko, Sianok, and Peremyshl and a part of Lubachiv county.

On the basis of intelligence reports it was ascertained that the most important forces of the UPA in this area were the battalions of Ren and Baida, which had accounted for the greatest number of killings and robberies. Consequently, the principal effort initially was aimed at the destruction of these two battalions.

Eradication of the third UPA battalion, commanded by Zalizniak, was left for a later date. In the meantime operations against this unit were confined to reconnaissance and skirmishes.

The battalion of Ren consisted of four companies: “Stakh,” “Bir,” “Khrin” and “Brodych”—393 men in all.

The battalion of Baida at that time also had four companies: “Burlaka,” “Lastivka,” “Hromenko” and “Krylach,” for a total of 413 men.

In addition, the civilian network of the OUN in the *raions* and *nad-raions* covered by the Battalions of Baida and Ren mustered 558 men. All in all, the UPA-OUN forces in this area numbered 1,364 men. (According to Mar’s report, however, there were 1,500 in the OUN civilian network in the *nad-raion* alone—the Author.)

As a result of operations by individual “Wisla” units the heavily outnumbered UPA bands were beaten off. Simultaneously, the evacuation of the Ukrainian population and the ferreting out of the civilian network of the OUN deprived the bands of their community support.

Despite considerable combat losses, however, the mustered strength of the UPA actually increased. The UPA fighters were joined by armed members of the civilian network of the OUN, supply and administrative personnel, and members of the Security Service. One month after the start of the “Wisla” operation the political organization of the OUN, for all intents and purposes, had ceased to exist, but the numerical strength of the Battalions of Ren and Baida, serious losses notwithstanding, had increased to 840 men.

The merging of UPA bands into larger groups had also a positive side, providing momentarily the possibility of conducting bigger and more successful operations. Thereafter, however, the UPA again began to break up into smaller units, which moved southward toward the Carpathian Mountains.<sup>136</sup>

<sup>136</sup> The constant changes of tactics and organizational structure of the UPA came under the category of accepted methods for deceiving the enemy. They were made not only under the pressure of the enemy, but also in compliance with the specific orders of UPA General Staff.



Units of "Wiśła" operation groups succeeded often in blocking the avenues of escape of smaller groups of the UPA, compelling them to fight out of encirclements. For instance, the company of Hromenko tried seven times, and that of Burlaka eight times, to break out of enclosing rings. These tactics made for heavy losses in the ranks of the UPA.

In the period of a month the invading army units killed about 900 UPA fighters. An UPA group of 200 crossed the Czechoslovak border and another group, one hundred strong, escaped to the USSR.<sup>137</sup> Thus, according to Blum, the strength of the most numerous and active bands of the UPA had been cut down by 75 percent, with most of the remainder escaping abroad. In the counties of Peremyshl, Lisko and Sianok there remained only a hundred men, the remnants of the UPA and the Security Service.

The second phase of the "Wisla" operation abandoned the tactics of encirclement that had been employed against the Battalions of Ren and Baida; it was felt that it had consumed too great a number of men and that, in the face of changing circumstances, would no longer yield desired results. The principal forces of the bands in this area had been all but destroyed. There remained only the small groups hiding in the woods, from which they made occasional raids.

An operational directive of June 25, 1947 recommended direct pursuit once a band was uncovered. In the event it fled to the woods, special assault battalions should catch up with and destroy it. Such assault battalions, possessing special weapons and equipment, were created by order of the commander of the "Wisla" operation. Now acting in unison were the operative group of the "Wisla" operation, Czechoslovak border units and these special assault groups, which ended up at the Czech border. When a band was spotted, the Polish forces would drive it within reach of the Czechoslovak troops, which would make the final assault and destroy the band.<sup>138</sup> These tactics, writes Blum, contributed to the final liquidation of the Battalions of Ren and Baida.

In the following months the activity of the "Wisla" operation was extended to the counties of Yaroslav, Lubachiv and Tomashiv, here to liquidate the Battalion of Zalizniak. This group, because it broke up into small units, managed to escape complete destruction.

At the same time the 3rd Infantry Division, which operated in the counties

<sup>137</sup> According to Mar, the following crossed the Soviet border: three companies of "Stakh," two companies of "Bir," one company of "Khrin," and members of the civilian network of the OUN.

<sup>138</sup> Here we may point out a contradiction in the work of Blum. In May, 1947, the author says, the UPA was reduced to 100 men in the area. Yet, in June, 1947 the "Wisla Operation," unable to destroy the UPA units with its divisions, has to change its tactics and was compelled to ask for military support from Czechoslovakia. Here, I. Blum, for obvious reasons, omits the close cooperation against the UPA which existed between Communist Poland and the USSR.

of Hrubeshiv, Tomashiv and Bilhorai, crushed the companies of "Tucha," "Kalynovych" and "Kruk," only some 15-25 men escaping alive.

During these operations in the counties of Hrubeshiv and Tomashiv the "Berkut" Battalion of the UPA was uncovered. It comprised the companies of "Yar," "Chavs," "Duda" and "David," numbering about 150 fighters in all.

Of the 789 men in both battalions, about 400 remained, and of the 249 members of the OUN civilian network 70 survived, mostly in the cells of the Security Service.

Uncovered was the UPA unit "Volodia," which was operating in the county of Volodava and in the southern part of the county of Biala Pidlaska. Originally some 35 armed men strong, it was bolstered by Ukrainian youth during the resettlement actions, reaching a total of 100 men. When the leadership of the band was destroyed, says Blum, the "bandits" dispersed in all directions.

### Results of UPA-Polish Army Operations

From April, 1947, to the end of July, 1947, the UPA made 460 attacks, resulting in the following:

152 civilians killed, 113 wounded, 10 abducted; 1,118 homesteads burned down; 3,929 hectares \* of forest burned; 11 bridges blown up; 2 railroad stations destroyed.

The losses of the Polish army were 61 dead and 91 wounded, with no losses sustained by the Corps of Internal Security and the operatives of UB and MO (*Urząd Bezpieczeństwa*, Office of Security, and *Milicja Obywatelska*, Citizens' Militia, respectively).

The Polish army units made 357 attacks against the UPA with the following results:

Killed or captured: 1,509 "bandits," or 75 percent of the band strength of April, 1947;

2,781 active Ukrainian "fascists" were sent to concentration camps;

The captured war materiel included:

11 heavy machine guns, 103 hand machine guns, 6 50-mm mortars, 3 anti-tank guns; 171 automatic pistols, 128 revolvers, 701 rifles, 303 hand grenades, 212 mortar shells, 49,781 rifle rounds, 531 anti-tank shells, 2 radio stations, 2 telephone switchboards, 20 typewriters, 30 supply stores with food and 8 hospital supply stores.

Destroyed were 1,178 bunkers.

On July 31, 1947, by order of the State Committee of Security, the "Wisla" operational group was dissolved. All the units of the Military Districts of Cracow and Lublin remained in the areas of their operations until the final

\* One hectare=2.427 acres

liquidation of the UPA was attained. These operations were placed in the hands of the commanders of the Military Districts of Lublin and Cracow.

The situation in the central and southern parts of Rzeszow county was, in principle, secured, but in the northern and southern parts of Lublin Province the activities of the UPA were again on the increase in August, 1947.

On the night of August 10-11, 1947, a band of the UPA, 110 men strong, attacked the Polish troops quartered in the villages of Uhryniv and Dovhobyshev, and on its way back ambushed a pursuing group, killing 9 and wounding 11.

Again, on the night of August 16-17, 1947, some 100 men of an UPA band ambushed a group of the 9th Infantry Regiment, killing 7 soldiers.

On August 22 an UPA band set up an ambush against an operational group of the 9th Infantry Regiment. The unit, which was being transported in three army trucks, rode into a mine field set up by the UPA. Killed were 18 men, including an officer, while 34 were wounded.

In August, 1947, in battles against the UPA the troops of the Military District of Lublin sustained heavy losses: 34 killed and 45 wounded. The bands succeeded in burning down 1,300 homesteads.

This was a result, notes Blum, of the premature dismantling of the "Wisla" operation, giving the dispersed UPA groups the chance to reorganize and to regain the offensive.

The activities of the UPA in August, 1947, served as a warning to the staff of the military District of Lublin. It was recognized that as long as Ukrainian "banditry" is not stamped out, the army must remain on the offensive. The staff consequently prepared a plan for the final phase of the campaign against the centers of resistance of the UPA. In this plan, the Military District commander revealed, army units would be assigned individual areas and would be in constant operation. "For this purpose," writes Blum, "we went to the headquarters of the 3rd Division."

Blum continues:

At the headquarters of the division we outlined the functions and provided for exact documentation of planning and reporting. Subsequently, we established a group operational staff in Wariash (for the 9th Infantry Regiment in the county of Hrubeshiv) and a similar staff in Hradoslavytsi (for the 8th Infantry Regiment in the county of Tomashiv). With our participation these staffs elaborated a detailed plan for the month of September for each assault group and each garrison down to daily activity.

As to method, we proposed to maximize the mobility of the troops and to cast a net of raids and ambushes over the whole area. Group commanders were compelled to coordinate daily activities, according to the plan. We also coordinated our operations with the security apparatus, which henceforth became an integral part of the forces engaged in the operations. On each staff was a representative of the

intelligence service and of the office of state security. Briefings were held daily for all officers taking part in the operations.

We imposed upon the staffs of the operational group a system of work and operational documentation, which led to a planned and systematic command over subordinate groups. The same system was applied in the first half of October in the county of Volodava. The political work was organized along two lines: that with the army [after the Soviet pattern—the author] and that in the terrain. In the army sector our task was not to allow troops to become detached from the general political work in the Polish army and to orient them politically to every-day tasks.

With regard to the political work in the terrain, we sought a detailed picture through political intelligence acting within the framework of activities of the operational groups. The task of the deputy commander for political affairs was to record daily on the political map all the data regarding the status of each village, its buildings, the national composition and character of its administration, and the like.

The operational groups also were given tasks of active political work in the terrain. On the basis of intelligence reports we endeavored to purge the village organs of undesirable elements.

At the same time, the internal security troops created the operations group "Lubachiv," consisting of five battalions, the "Sianok-Horlytsi" group, consisting of three battalions, and one squadron of cavalry.

Thanks to the detailed reconnaissance data, the military operations brought successful results.

In the month of August, 1947, the operational groups of the 8th Infantry Regiment, the 9th Infantry Regiment and the Corps of Internal Security killed 49 bandits, captured 59 and arrested 60 persons suspected of collaboration with the bands. Captured in the same month were: 2 mortars, 20 hand machine guns, 54 automatic rifles, 12 submachine guns, 20,000 rounds of ammunition, 1,100 mines, 3,500 artillery shells and 1 radio station.

Application of the method of operations brought better results with time. More and more of the bandits fell into ambushes. Serious results also were accomplished by the encirclement maneuver, an operation, however, which requires a longer preparation.

In September, 1947, reconnaissance activities which had been conducted from July 23 to September 8, led to the discovery of the hide-out of the group of the national leader of the OUN, Stiah. On September 8 three infantry companies, supported by a platoon of engineers and a heavy weapons company, encircled that part of the forest in which the bunker of Stiah and Tsyhan had been reported. In order to forestall ambushes, counteract any attempts of the UPA to break through and cut off any help from outside, the entire forest was girded with barbed wire festooned with tin cans.

On September 9, 1947, the bands made their first attempt to break through. On the night of September 10-11, the bandits tried three more times to escape the ring. At this point, the 3rd Infantry Division arrived in support of the internal security troops. (It is interesting to note that the Polish command felt it necessary to call on an infantry

division, over and above four companies of troops, to deal with a bunker containing a few dozen UPA partisans—the author.)

On September 14, 1947, as a result of the operations of the 3rd Division, killed were 15 UPA bandits who had come up to help beleaguered UPA commander Stiah. Only on September 17 at 4:00 P.M. was his bunker uncovered by a platoon. The bunker's entrance was camouflaged with a small wooden crate, filled with dirt in which grew a little pine shrub. When the bunker was surrounded and escape made impossible, the garrison along with Stiah blew themselves up. . . .

UPA activity began to die out after the "Wisla" operation and the actions of the internal security troops.

In July, 1947, the UPA Command had decided to transfer a part of its fighters and members of the OUN civilian network to the USSR, and the remainder to the western lands of Poland, where, according to instructions, "they are to settle in the sectors of political and economic life, to become legalized and to become part of a milieu which would not attract attention to them."

This dispersion, however, did not mean that their activities came to an end. On the contrary, from all important and more active members the Ukrainian fascists exacted the following oath:

—I (name, pseudonym, rank and function) will remain, though in changed circumstances and in different character, a disciplined Ukrainian revolutionary and, according to my strength and ability, will work on for the benefit of my people and the establishment of an Independent Ukrainian State.

—I will continue to execute the orders of my superiors.

—I will preserve the secrets of the organization and will not betray those secrets known to me.

Some of the leaders of the OUN civilian network and the UPA command succeeded in reaching the Federal Republic of Germany through Czechoslovakia, and others survived in conspiratorial form in the northwestern terrain of Poland.

On March 2, 1948, on a Wroclaw street, the police arrested Myroslav Onyshkevych—"Orest," commander of the UPA group "Sian." His apprehension accelerated the final liquidation of the civilian network and assault groups of the Ukrainian fascists on the territory of Poland. . . .<sup>139</sup>

A few additional statements by Blum may be cited:

In the province of Rzeszow, on the Sian River, were concentrated the forest units of the AK [Polish anti-Communist insurgents, the Home Army]. But more serious and more dangerous for the people's government was the presence here of units of the UPA, operating in the triangle Beskyd-Lubachiv-Sian. This area served as a place of concentration for UPA units from the areas of Lviv, Stanyslaviv, and Ternopil. . . .

The most important action conducted against the UPA was the "Wisla" operation. All other actions consisted of larger or smaller skirmishes, hunts, ambushes and raids. This struggle was difficult,

<sup>139</sup> Blum, *op. cit.*

inasmuch as it was waged in a difficult terrain, often against a numerically superior enemy. Soldiers of the Polish army had no experience in this type of fighting. They had front-line experience, but they had to learn effective tactics of battle against the bands. The development of these specific tactics was a long-drawn process, the tactics leading the way to formulation of theory, and the theory in turn being checked and verified in battles and concrete operations. . . .

(Here Blum omits the fact that Soviet Russian instructors were attached to the Polish army; also, that hundreds of former Soviet partisans helped the Polish troops in the struggle against the UPA—the Author.)

In the period of 1945-46 border troops occupied the zones fronting with Czechoslovakia and the USSR. The UPA bands, which heretofore had crossed at will to Poland from the USSR and vice versa, now had their hands and movements tied down, thereby facilitating their liquidation.

But despite the serious losses incurred, the resistance of the underground in this period could not have been ignored. In addition to the political factors, factors of a military nature came into play. The bands possessed an excellent espionage network and the necessary experience in partisan warfare, always taking advantage of the element of surprise and therefore being frequently able to escape unscratched from even tight situations. . . .<sup>140</sup>

It is worthwhile to mention that Blum places the effective fighting force of the UPA in Poland at 6,000 men.

Also in order are estimates from two different sources of the number of Ukrainians who fell victim to the inhuman deportations in the years 1945-47.

According to Soviet statistical data, on the basis of the Nazi-Soviet agreement on the "exchange of population" some 496,000 Ukrainians west of the Curzon Line were "repatriated" to the USSR. Some 1,000,000 Ukrainians remained in Poland at that time. Soviet statistics, it may be added, are always subject to doubt.

Most of the Ukrainians "repatriated" to the Soviet Union were sent to the Siberian *taigas* and the slave labor camps.

Polish official statistics that were published in 1958 reported that as many as 1,500,000 Ukrainians were "repatriated" to the USSR, and only 68,000 to Poland (many Ukrainians, fearing the fate of Soviet slave labor camps, opted for Polish citizenship in 1939 and returned to Poland.) It may be safely assumed that the Polish statistics are closer to the truth than the Soviet data and official statistics.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*

# Chapter Twenty-Four

## OPERATIONS OF UPA IN THE CURZON LINE TERRITORY

The Polish and Soviet onslaught against the Ukrainian population and the UPA in the *Zakerzonnia* understandably evoked the response of an all-out struggle against the occupier. The resettlement of the Ukrainian population in Communist Poland that had been planned in 1945 failed to be implemented fully. Therefore, the Polish administration, aided by Soviet advisers, decided to apply force by all the means accessible to a totalitarian government. The Poles instituted mass hunts, blockades, deforestations, and the like.

The Ukrainian population was brutally harassed and molested by Polish bands consisting of the worst human elements—thieves, cutthroats and local Communists. They wore no uniforms and were not part of the Polish army, although in most cases they were commanded by NKVD instructors and agents in civilian garb.

Their task was to spread panic and terror and thus to compel the Ukrainian population to resettle voluntarily. The Soviet “repatriation” commissions openly advised: “You better move to Ukraine, for here the Poles will kill all of you.”

An attack on a Ukrainian village followed, as a rule, hard on the heels of the Soviet “repatriation” commission’s visit. Polish bands indiscriminately burned villages and butchered Ukrainians in such villages as Pavlokoma, Berzka, Iskan, Bakhiv and Piatkova. One Polish village, Borovnytsia, took

part as a whole in these murderous actions against the Ukrainian population; in retaliation the UPA destroyed that village completely.

The Polish military action also elicited a strong reaction from the UPA. A rain of armed attacks descended upon Polish villages, Polish police posts and stations and frontier garrisons of the Polish army. Bridges, railroad track and other military objectives were blown up; day and night Polish and Soviet communist leaders and the Soviet "repatriation" commissions were ambushed.

The UPA attacked such towns as Bircha, wiping out its Polish garrison in the spring of 1946, Lubyh and Uhniv, and later the city of Hrubeshiv. Many Polish villages were razed for overzealous cooperation with the Communists.

The Polish government was soon compelled to bring into action large contingents of the Internal Security Corps. In May, 1946, they began the forcible deportation of the Ukrainian population patterned after Soviet methods. This action was accompanied by the destruction of Ukrainian churches in the cities. The Ukrainian Catholic bishop, Josaphat Kotsylovsky, and several dozen Ukrainian Catholic priests were arrested. (Bishop Kotsylovsky was subsequently handed over by the Poles to the Soviet government, which put him on trial for "high treason" and sentenced him to several years at hard labor. The bishop died in a Soviet slave labor camp.) Over 80 percent of the Ukrainian population was forcibly deported; the remainder was left simply because the opposition on the part of the UPA prevented completion of the program.

Among the major UPA feats were the destruction of the Polish officers' school "Czerwony Sztandar" (The Red Banner) on June 26, 1946, by the men of the Konyk school for noncommissioned officers and the destruction of a Polish infantry regiment on July 24, 1946, in the village of Yavirnyk.

On August 31, 1946, as an UPA battalion was observing "Army Day" in the village of Yamna Dolishnia, it was attacked by 2,000 Polish police. The attackers first were repelled, then slaughtered.

The UPA made armed attacks on the cities of Dyniv and Lubachiv and a number of raids into Slovakia.

Finally, after the conclusion of the pact between the USSR, Poland and Czechoslovakia, the Polish government launched a general offensive against the UPA, conducted by Marshal Rola-Zymierski with the assistance of Chief of Polish Security Radkiewicz.

As pointed out earlier, the UPA found itself in a critical situation because with the deportation of the Ukrainian population they were deprived of their sources of supply and intelligence. The entire system of the UPA had to be reorganized. A part was demobilized and sent into the civilian network; another part crossed the Soviet border into the USSR; still another went west of the Curzon Line, some of whom got through Czechoslovakia into the American zone of Germany.



Some of the fighting during this terminal period was described by UPA commander S. Khrin:

I dropped some of the men from the group who seemed to be weak. Zozulia and Dem. Romashko will soon join the group of Bis in the 4th area. I divided my group of only 20 men into three squads, commanded by Ostroverkha, Chmil, and Chumak. . . . We change camps often in order to get the men accustomed to the nature of raiding. Our constant movement makes it difficult for the enemy to follow us and set up ambushes and raids. I maintain contact with informers in order to keep abreast of events. I visit villages, collect materials on secret informers and *sek-sots*, learn about the movements of the enemy. I also study the sentiments and moods of the people. To be detached from the people is to lose them. . . . We constantly change the routes we use. . . .

Once the enemy found our traces. As we retreated into the woods in single file we spotted a group of the enemy police. Our boys wanted to take them over, but I forbade it. . . .

It was impossible to go to the defense of the village of L. because of the open terrain around it. Therefore we set up an ambush between the villages of L. and K. A cavalry unit came up heading an enemy column of carts. The people in the carts wore civilian clothes, nor were any weapons visible. It was clear to me, however, that this was a deception on the part of the enemy. I gave the prearranged signal to open fire. But one of the fighters, Dub, yelled: "Do not fire, they're civilians!" But my unit opened fire, and immediately the "civilians" produced weapons, jumped out of the carts, took up positions and began to return our fire. . . .<sup>141</sup>

A Soviet Russian specialist in partisan warfare, Slepý, commanded the Polish extermination units which were charged with the destruction of the Ukrainian villages.

S. Khrin reported the attempts to ambush Slepý:

Captain Hromenko gathered his unit and set up ambushes, but to no avail. Led by Soviet partisan expert Slepý, the Polish assault men kept changing their routes. In the village of B. a Ukrainian, Piekh, was murdered in a savage manner. One day I joined Capt. Hromenko with my group and together we lay the whole day in the snow waiting for the enemy to show up—in vain. Another ambush against Slepý was prepared by UPA men under the command of Olen, but a few hours before the trap was to be sprung Olen attacked a group of Soviet officers, killing a few of them, only to perish himself as well.

Now it fell upon me to ambush Slepý. We lay in wait not far from the village L. We were informed that Slepý would be traveling with two soldiers. Indeed, we soon saw a horse-drawn sled containing three people—two peasant women and a Polish Catholic priest. We let them pass. A few days later we learned that the "priest" was Slepý himself. Another ambush for Slepý was set up, but this time Slepý got

<sup>141</sup> *Surma* (The Bugle), Annals, 1-32, Munich.

off his conveyance before it reached the site of ambush. But Slepý eventually was ambushed and killed. . . .<sup>142</sup>

### **Attack on the Town of Bircha (January 6-7, 1946)**

The town of Bircha was transformed by the Poles into a fortified jump-off point from which they conducted sorties and operations against the UPA. In this area the fighting was fierce and unabating. The UPA decided to take the area and retain it as a base of operations, which meant clearing it of all Polish troops. To take the town the UPA was compelled to make several frontal attacks. Three times the UPA took the town, only to be pushed out again. The last and successful attack took place on January 6-7, 1946. The town was held by a Polish garrison 1,500 strong, most of them from the security troops (UBP) and the communist militia. The roads leading into town were punctuated with defensive bunkers, while the army barracks also were well fortified.

The battalion-size UPA force was commanded by Col. Konyk. The attack against the town was made from three sides. The UPA insurgents destroyed the telephone lines, took seven bunkers and demolished the barracks. The savage and stubborn street fighting lasted the whole night. The Poles suffered 70 dead and 150 wounded; the UPA had 23 killed and 22 wounded. Among the fallen were Col. Konyk and company commander Orsky. (Among the wounded UPA fighters was Lev Futala, now a leader of the Organization of the Ukrainian Liberation Front in the United States—the Author.)

The battle for Bircha was one of the fiercest waged by the UPA. It was an attack made not in a forest, but in an open town, with the house-to-house fighting characterizing the combat of conventional warfare.

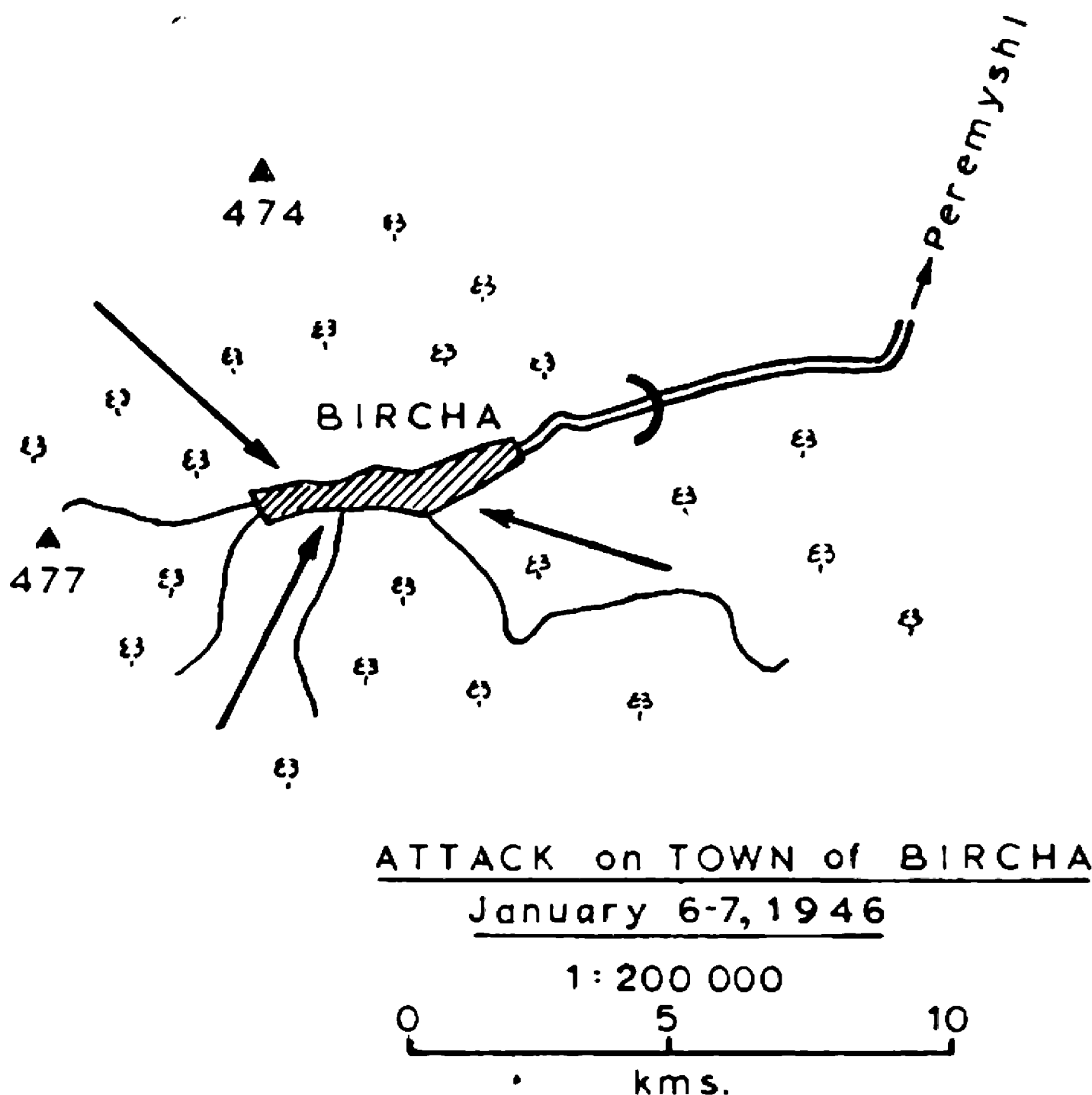
### **Attack Against the Village of Viazovnytsia (April 24, 1946)**

The village of Viazovnytsia, near the city of Yaroslav, was a center of communist forces that constantly raided the Ukrainian villages in the surrounding countryside. When the UPA attacked, the village contained 140 militiamen, 120 communist assault groups, 50 NKVD troops and two companies of Polish internal security troops (UBP). In addition, there were a great number of the lowly elements used by the Polish authorities to terrorize the Ukrainian population.

On the UPA side there were two companies, based in the woods north and west of the village.

The UPA companies crept up at dusk of April 24 and started their attack

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*

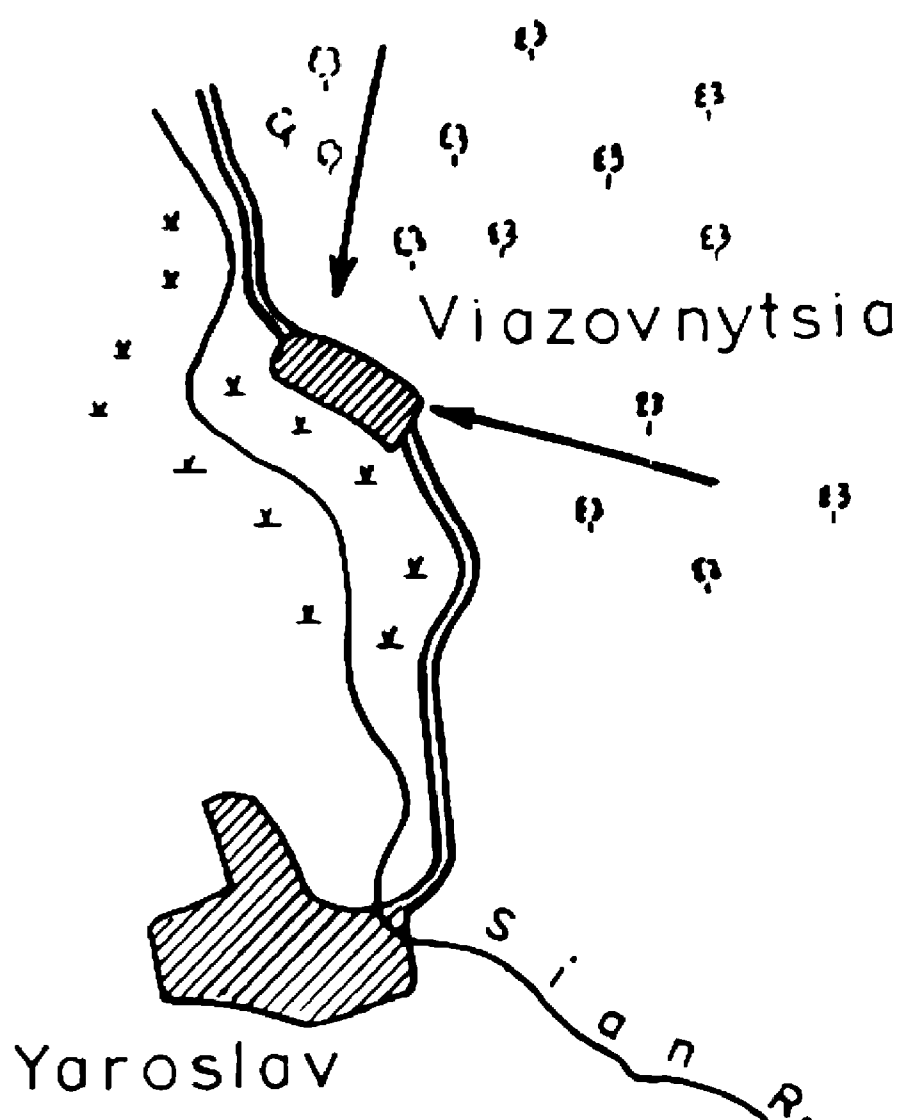


by first setting fire to the village. The results were astonishing. Because of the proximity of the city of Peremyshl, which contained a great number of Polish troops, the Polish force in the village never dreamt they would be attacked. The appearance of the UPA was a stunning surprise. UPA fighters massacred the panic-stricken enemy by the light of the conflagration.

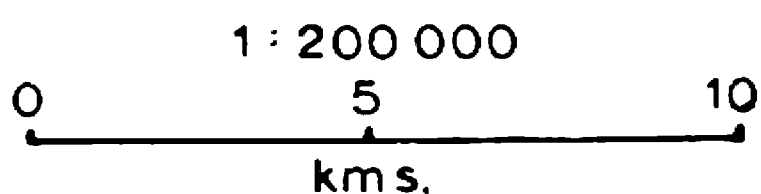
Two hours later the UPA insurgents left a destroyed village. The Poles suffered over 500 dead. Those who fled the village were cut down by the UPA reserves. The UPA losses were 9 killed and 13 wounded.

#### **Polish Attack on the Village of Uliuch (March 21, 1946)**

On March 21, 1946, the Polish command sent a battalion from the town of Dyniv against the village of Uliuch, where 2 UPA companies were resting. The Polish battalion entered from the direction of Yablonytsia and began occupying house after house. The UPA insurgents, who knew well the topography of the village, let the Poles advance to the center of the village as they



Attack against  
Village of Viazovnytsia



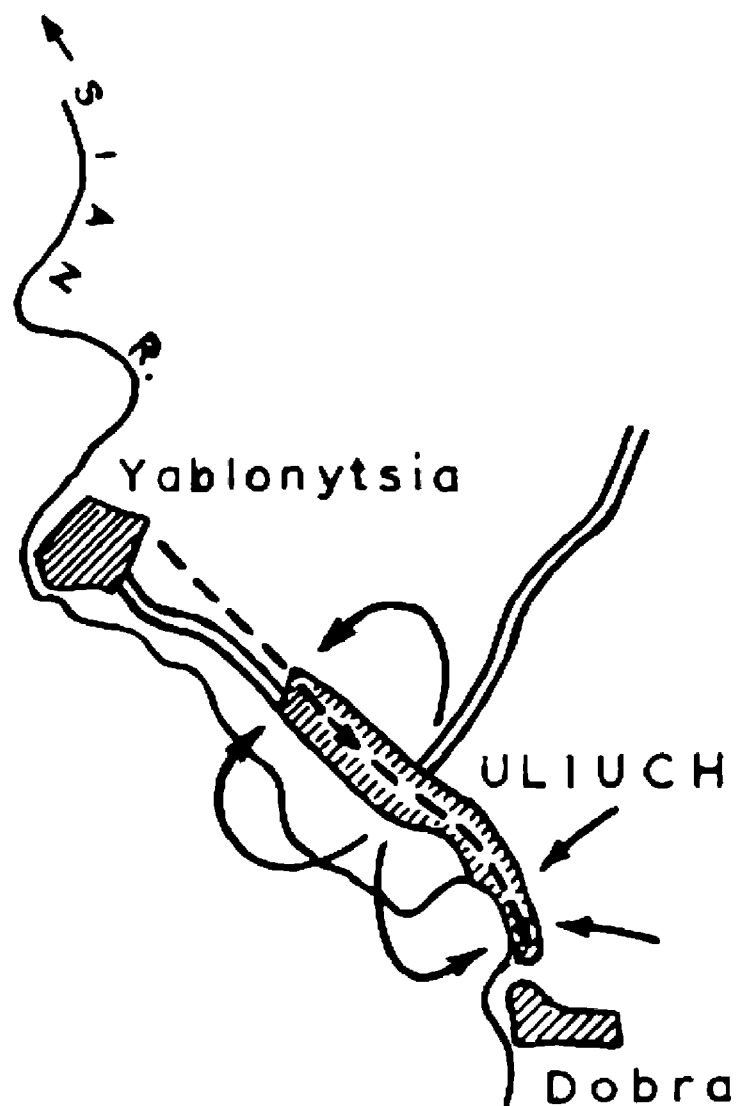
turned both flanks of the invaders. The sudden UPA attack from three sides created panic among the Polish troops. That part of the Polish battalion which had not as yet entered the village fell back toward Dyniv. Almost all of those in the village were caught in the murderous cross fire. A few managed to keep on going to the village of Dobra, but here they fell into an UPA ambush, which accounted for virtually every Pole.

**Attack Against the City of Lubachiv**  
**(March 8, 1946)**

On March 8, 1946, an UPA battalion launched a night attack against the city of Lubachiv, a springboard of the Polish forces against the UPA. The attack was made simultaneously from three sides. One company took the railroad station, destroyed the telephone center, burned 80 freight cars at



Dyniv



POLISH ATTACK  
on Village of Uliuch  
March 21, 1946

Sianik



---> Polish Troops

—> UPA Troops

1:200 000

0 5 10  
 kms.

the station, and released several hundred deportees after dispatching their guards. The second company hit the center of the city, surrounding the building which housed the military command and destroying all its inmates.

The third group attacked the city from the direction of Rava Ruska and ripped up the railroad tracks. Two platoons of the third company were placed as outposts in the direction of the village of Teniatyska, where there was a garrison of enemy troops, and opened fire on the village with machine guns.

As a result of the attack all members of the "repatriation" commission were killed, as well as a Polish colonel, the commander of the group, and his entire staff.

Altogether the enemy had 5 killed and 70 wounded, while the UPA battalion suffered only 10 wounded.

### **Attack Against Komancha and Lupkiv (March 22 and 26, 1946)**

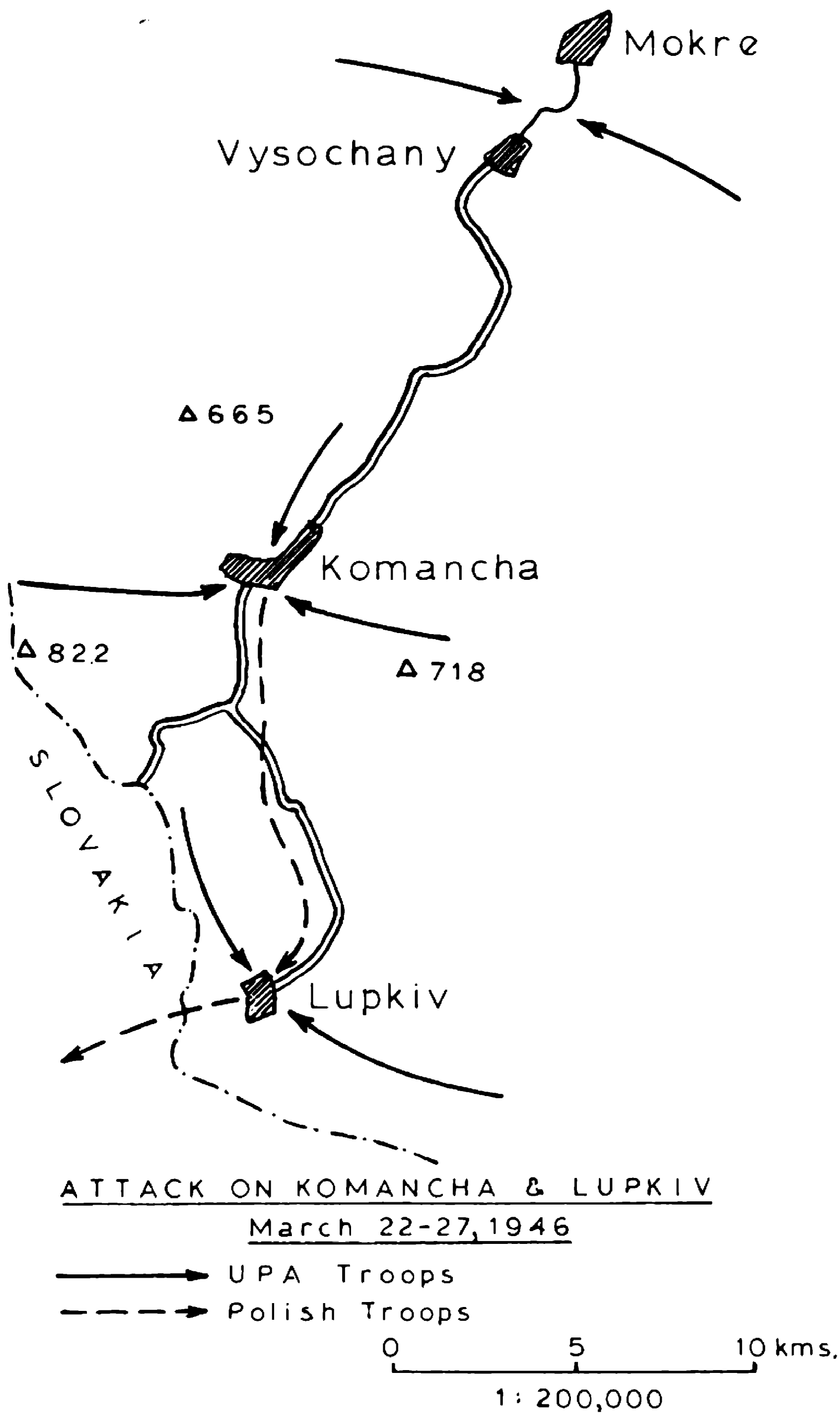
The UPA unit of company strength commanded by Didyk was in its camp in the woods near the town of Komancha when OUN scouts reported that the town had been entered by a group of 80 Polish troops.

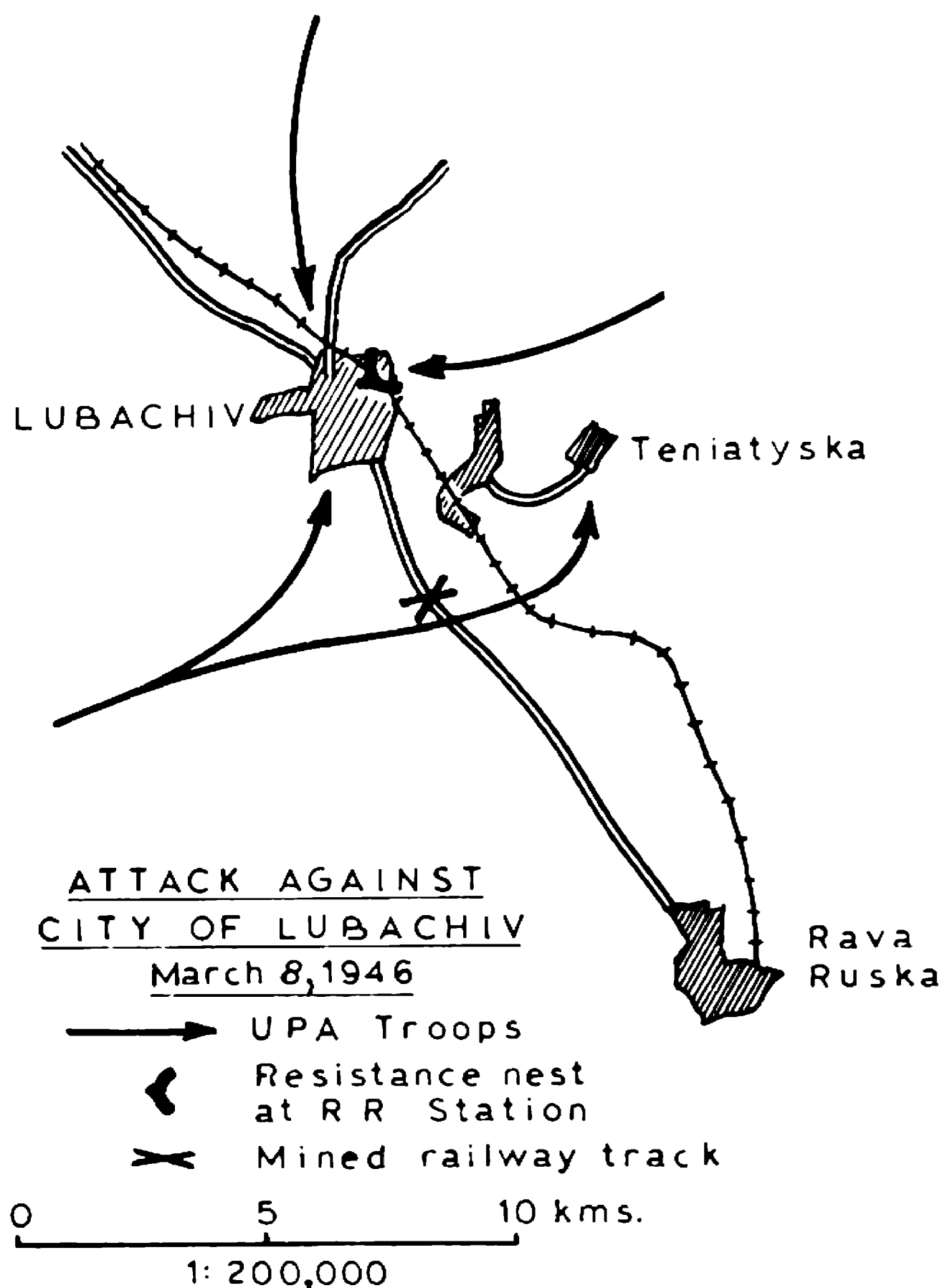
Commander Didyk decided to make an attack that night. The UPA fighters approached the town surreptitiously and attacked it from the direction of the village of Mokre. With the first assault the headquarters of the army and the security troops were destroyed. Most of the Poles were disinclined to fight back, and retreated toward Lupkiv. Here they were ambushed by a small group of UPA fighters, but they got away with minor casualties to Lupkiv.

Four days later, on March 26, 1946, the insurgents stormed Lupkiv itself. The attack took place in the daytime, but the garrison of 2 companies (250 men) managed to escape to Slovakia.

According to a report by a super-*raion* leader of the OUN in the *Zaker-zonnia*,<sup>143</sup> a Polish army unit slated to strengthen the garrison in Lupkiv was wending its way toward Komancha. It had earlier left Sianok; after leaving the village of Mokre it was attacked by the UPA battalion commanded by S. Khrin, near the village of Vysochany. A part of the Polish force, attacked from both sides, escaped to the village of Mokre; another part was dispersed in the terrain, and eventually some 80 men of this group straggled into Komancha. The UPA unit attacked the Poles who had escaped to Mokre, took the village, destroyed the Polish force and seized the radio station and a great quantity of military equipment. Captured Polish soldiers disclosed that the Polish forces concentrated in Komancha were destined to strengthen the frontier post of Lupkiv.

<sup>143</sup> *Relatsia Mara* (Report of Mar), Chief *raion* Leader of the OUN in the *Zaker-zonnia*.





Near Lupkiv Khrin's UPA unit joined up with that of Didyk. Jointly they attacked Lupkiv.

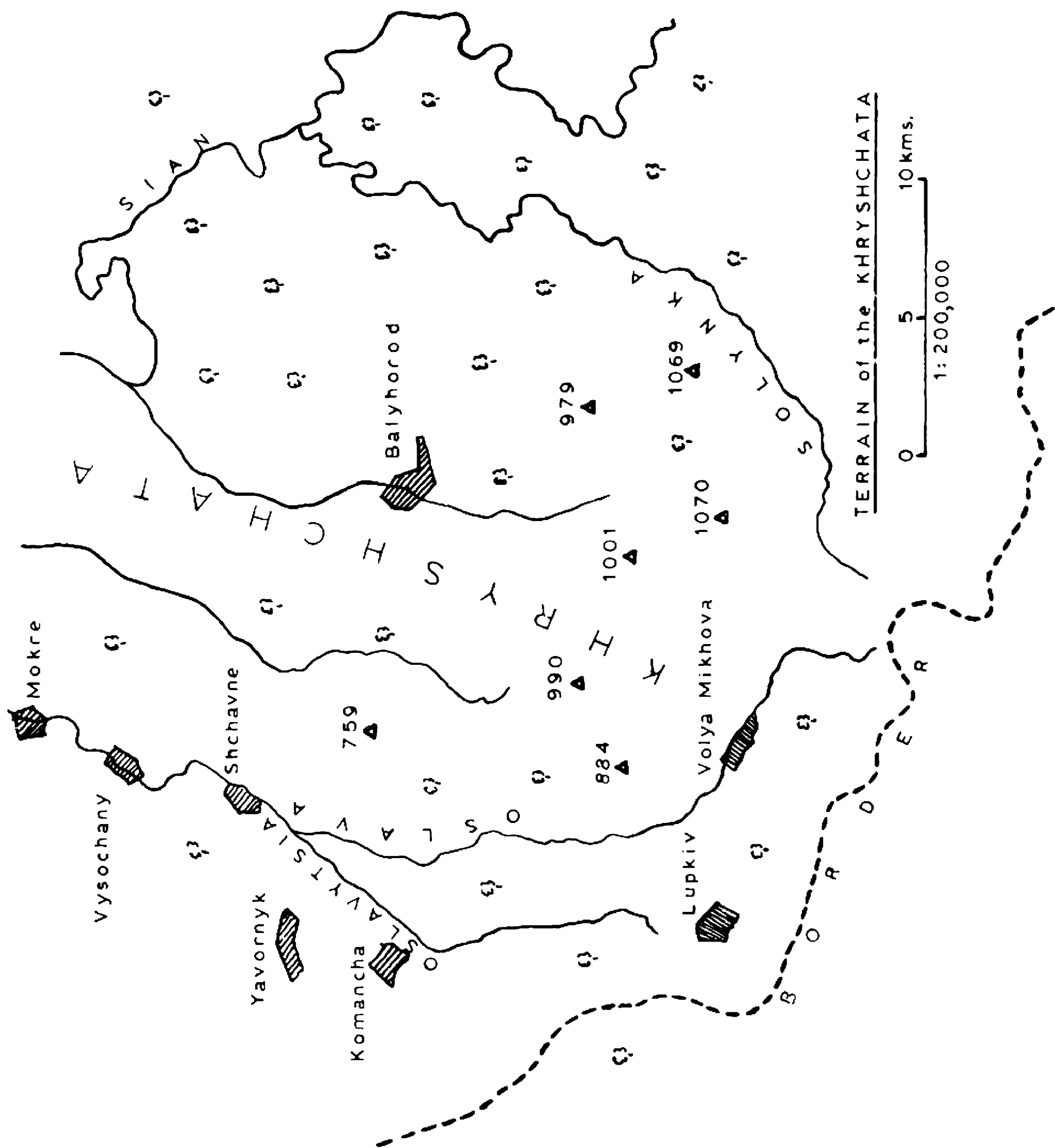
The Poles ducked into the territory of Czechoslovakia, where they were disarmed and returned to Poland via Silesia.

The destruction of the garrison in Lupkiv brought an end to the struggle for the frontier posts. For some time there was only the "Insurgent Republic" of the UPA, save for a strong Polish resistance center in Balyhorod.

### **Battles for Khreshchata Forest**

In the years 1945-1947 the UPA dominated the Ukrainian ethnic territory which had been assigned to Communist Poland after the end of World War II.





It constituted a long belt running along the Polish-Soviet frontier, widening in the Carpathian Mountains to include the city of Krynytsia. In the northern end of the belt the UPA units were to be found near the city of Hrubeshiv in marshy and inaccessible terrain, from which they often carried their struggle onto the territory of the USSR.

At the southern end, in the mountains covered by dense forests, UPA units created bases, consisting of hundreds of bunkers, hide-outs, supply stores and dispensaries. What arose was a sort of "Insurgent Republic" in the mountains, similar to that which existed in the marshes and forests of Volhynia and Polisia.

Depending on the military situation, the territories dominated by the UPA base in the mountains varied in size and distribution. Generally, it extended from the city of Peremyshl to Krynytsia, and was dominated by a larger or smaller UPA force, depending on the requirements and the tactical plans of the UPA Supreme Command. Here also were the central lines of communication connecting the OUN civilian network with Ukraine, and in the west, with the underground in Slovakia, the German territory and that part of Bavaria occupied by the Western Allies.

Control of the Carpathian Mountains was always important not only for the UPA, but for all the belligerents in World War II. Whoever held the Carpathians had an open road into Europe. No idle gesture was the attempt of the Russians to capture the Carpathians with their partisans during World War II, even when the German-Soviet front was still far to the east. They failed in this important bid, the Carpathian Mountains remaining in the hands of the UPA, although this mountain range and its foothills continued to see fierce battles waged by the UPA against the Germans, the Russians and the Communist Poles.

The center of all the bases and the most strongly fortified citadel of the UPA was the area of a wooded massif at the foot of Mount Khreshchata (990 meters); the area was known as the "Khreshchata" in the insurgent terminology. Stored here were great supplies of ammunition and weapons, food and other military equipment; here were training schools and the planning centers of all major operations in the *Zakerzonnia*, and here, too, was the point of departure for UPA campaigns.

The Poles strove to take this terrain and to clear it of Ukrainian insurgents. They tried to approach the mountainous massif by the roads, which followed the numerous rivers and streams and ran in narrow valleys; in the towns and villages they built up resistance points and put up fortified border posts along the Slovak border. The UPA could not afford to allow the strengthening of the Polish garrisons before its very eyes. Therefore, in the years 1945-1947 countless battles were waged for every village, town, terrain mesas and communication points, vital from the strategic military viewpoint. The names of

the villages and towns filled the battle reports of the UPA as well as of the Polish forces.

Easiest to overcome were the Polish frontier posts on the Slovak border. Once destroyed, they could not easily be reconstituted because access to them was extremely difficult and strongly guarded by the UPA units. It was much more difficult to oust the strong Polish garrisons from the cities and towns in the UPA territory; these possessed good approaches and roads from Western Galicia. Hence, the battles for Bircha, Balyhorod, and the numerous villages situated in the valleys and up north were waged with changing fortune. If the Poles held certain cities, they could do so only a day or two at most. For them night was charged with menace, for the whole countryside bristled with the UPA.

The importance of this area as a strategical asset is attested to by the fact that the Poles exerted every effort to take it over. The area merited the personal inspection of Polish Defense Minister Swierczewski, who met death not far from a heavily manned Polish resistance point in the city of Balyhorod.

Among the UPA commanders in this area who carried out their military duties with elan and patriotism were Commanders Khrin, Didyk and Myron.

The concentrations here of large contingents of Polish troops and security police, the overwhelming assistance rendered by the Soviet Union with its special units and, last but not least, the deportation of the Ukrainian population—all made for the gradual penetration of the area by small enemy units.

Nevertheless, the enemy never succeeded in conquering this bastion of the UPA. When in 1947 the struggle in this area lost its importance—there no longer were any Ukrainians in the villages and towns—the UPA detachments abandoned the area of the Khreshchata massif; it had outlived its usefulness as a military stronghold.

Some of the UPA units moved into the territory of Ukraine occupied by the Russians (Ukrainian SSR), others, on orders of the UPA Supreme Command, made their way through Czechoslovakia into Western Europe.

There remained only small UPA cells and groups that operated as an armed underground, but they, too, after 1953, joined the civilian network of the OUN.

The Khreshchata area will be inscribed in the annals of the liberation struggle of the Ukrainian people as a bastion of freedom, on a par with the "Kholodny Yar" area near Kiev, where anti-Communist Ukrainian insurgents fought the Russian Communists almost to the middle of the 1930's.

1. The first part of the document is a title page. It contains the title of the document, the author's name, and the date of the document. The title is "The History of the United States of America". The author is "John Adams". The date is "1776".

2. The second part of the document is a preface. It contains a short introduction to the document. The preface is written by John Adams. It is dated 1776.

3. The third part of the document is the main body of the text. It contains the history of the United States of America. The text is written by John Adams. It is dated 1776.

4. The fourth part of the document is a conclusion. It contains a short summary of the main points of the document. The conclusion is written by John Adams. It is dated 1776.

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# Chapter Twenty-Five

## **RAIDS OF UPA INTO WESTERN EUROPE**

One of the most typical traits of UPA operations from a military viewpoint was its armed raid. As far back as 1943 UPA units had made raids in Volhynia, Polisia and Galicia, but their purpose then was, for the most part, to move UPA units from one place to another. The successes obtained drew the attention of the UPA Supreme Command to the importance of this partisan tactic, and it began to apply it more and more often and to use it in its more extensive operations.

The purposes of these raids were manifold: sabotage, defense of the population against enemy terrorism, harassment of the enemy, and the like. But with time these raids acquired significance in connection with psychological warfare and propaganda, and also in organizing a resistance against the political and economic plans of the enemy.

As a principle, the raiding parties tried to avoid open contacts and engagements with the enemy, instead concentrating on attaining their main assignment. They joined in battle only when it was opportune or when they had no other choice.

After the end of World War II the majority of the raids had a purely propagandistic character. For instance, in 1945 the "Kholodny Yar" unit (under Commander Hrad) made a raid into Carpatho-Ukraine, and the unit of "Wolves" into Pidlasia. Other UPA units made raids to far-flung areas in Ukraine, such as those of Zhytomyr and Kiev.

Needless to say, the commanders of the raiding parties were veterans of partisan warfare and excellent officers.

After the end of World War II the Supreme Command of the UPA planned raids into the territories inhabited by the other captive nations.

In the summer of 1945 an UPA battalion hailing from Carpatho-Ukraine, under the command of Prut (with companies commanded by Sokil, Bur, and Myron) and of the commander of the tactical sector of Makivka, Capt. Andrienko, made several raids into Czechoslovakia. These units remained over three months in the Slovak territory, whose inhabitants were extremely friendly toward them.

In June, 1947, the UPA made a raid into Poland, with at least one UPA unit, consisting of 50 fighters, reaching the outskirts of Warsaw. In its raid into Pidlasia the UPA unit "Halaida II" captured the town of Krasnobrid and destroyed the staff of a Polish army division in the Bilhorod forest.

In the summer of 1947 UPA units made their first raids into Czechoslovakia and Austria in an attempt to enter the American zone of Germany.

In the winter 1947-48, Commander Yasen headed a raiding party into East Prussia, followed by another UPA unit commanded by Commander Prirva.<sup>144</sup> At the same time a UPA raid was made into Hungary for the purpose of determining the sentiments of the Hungarian population.

In the summer of 1949 Commander Khmara led an UPA unit into Rumania. The Rumanian Communist government dispatched a regiment of the regular Rumanian army against the UPA unit, but the Rumanian population, which was very friendly to the Ukrainian insurgents, notified them of the army pursuit and helped shelter them from the police. The UPA unit returned to the Carpathian Mountains after spending two weeks in Rumania.

But one of the most remarkable pages of UPA history deals with its raids into Western Europe to the American zones of Germany and Austria. With the appearance of the Ukrainian insurgents in Czechoslovakia, Austria and Germany, the Ukrainian resistance could be kept secret no longer. The world press extensively publicized the appearance of the "Banderivtsi," which in turn compelled the communist press in the satellite countries to break their silence. In the Polish, Czech, and Hungarian press a series of articles on the UPA appeared. In some countries a number of brochures and pamphlets on the UPA were published. Understandably, in both the press and other publications the satellite regimes attacked the UPA and sided with the propaganda of Moscow. The facts about the UPA were grossly distorted and slanted so as to make the UPA appear as remnants of the "Nazi forces" and the like. These "revelations" were mainly based on Moscow-inspired information, and in part on depositions extorted from captured UPA fighters.

These communist publications and those segments of the Western press which parroted the Soviet Russian and the communist line, necessitated a

<sup>144</sup> Prirva, E., "Reid UPA u Skhidniu Prusiyu," (Raid of the UPA in East Prussia), *Ukrainska Trybuna* (The Ukrainian Tribune), Nos. 18-24, 1949, Munich.

rebuttal on the part of the Ukrainian side. Issued in 1948 by the Supreme Ukrainian Liberation Council (UHVR), the rejoinder was entitled, "Communique Regarding UPA Raids Abroad." It explained the reasons underlying the raids:

1. To inform the world at large about the struggle of the Ukrainian people against Communist Russia for their freedom and national independence;
2. To scuttle the big lies of the Russians that there was no anti-Soviet resistance in Ukraine and that the Ukrainian people were content to live under the Soviet regime;
3. To disprove to the West the Russian thesis that the UPA consisted of "German fascists, deserters and criminal elements"; the presence of Ukrainian freedom fighters in the West was ample demonstration to the world that the Ukrainian underground resistance was a genuine Ukrainian force fighting for the liberation of the Ukrainian people.

In order to provide the West with a living proof that the Ukrainian anti-Soviet and anti-Russian resistance was no figment of imagination, in May, 1947, the UPA sent to Western Europe three groups, led by Hromenko, Burlaka, and Brodych. To reach Bavaria they had to march through Slovakia. The Hromenko group moved through the Great Tatra and Little Tatra Mountains, Prerav, Trebich and Pilsen. On August 11, 1947, the group reached Bavaria, after trekking 1,500 kilometers and after repelling the Communist forces in 22 separate engagements.

The Burlaka group, which consisted of three companies (led by Burlaka, Lastivka, and Krylach), left the Ukrainian territory on June 3, 1947. According to one of the participants who is now in this country, the Burlaka group was encircled in the complex of woods and mountains called "Krivan" on the Vah River near Zilina. The opposing force, commanded by General Hosek, consisted of 15,000 Czech troops, with armored cars, artillery, and reconnaissance planes.

On August 13, 1947, the Burlaka group was completely surrounded. Three days later Burlaka broke his group down into 7 smaller units, led by Burlaka, Zenko, Marko, Bilyi, Burkun, Sahaidak and Holyi. The number of UPA fighters had dwindled to 67.

After three weeks of desperate fighting Burlaka's group was trapped by the Czechs. Burlaka and 4 other fighters shot off in one direction, the remainder in another. Burlaka was finally taken in a forest ranger's hut, pinned down by sheer force of numbers. Brought to trial in Prague he and another captured UPA fighter were condemned to death and were executed.

Until the end of 1949 various other groups crossed Czechoslovakia into Austria, among them a large OUN group under the leadership of Mar.<sup>145</sup>

<sup>145</sup> See article on the "Banderites in Austria" (in German), *Salzburger Nachrichten*, September 6, 1947, Salzburg, Austria.

The appearance of the UPA raiders in the occupied zones of Germany and Austria under the Western Allies caused a torrent of reports to course through the communist press, in which the communist regimes in the satellite countries tried to explain away the phenomenon of the UPA. Their appearance was cheered in Czechoslovakia by the Slovaks, who extended warm support and understanding to the Ukrainian insurgents. The Slovaks, who were fighting the Czechs for their independence, in World War II had been granted the status of an independent nation by the Germans; now encouraged, they became more intransigent and rebellious toward the Prague regime.

All the anti-UPA material was printed by the communist governments of the satellite countries; all had a common interest in trying to dismiss the Ukrainian underground resistance movement as a myth. Thus they wrote that the UPA were nothing but itinerant bands of thieves and cutthroats, that they were the remnants of the "Nazi and fascist collaborators," or that they were in the paid service of the "Western capitalists," serving as "spies and agents for the Western nations." But, here and there, the true image of the UPA showed through, especially in Czechoslovakia, where all knew that the UPA was fighting against the Soviet Russian oppressors of Ukraine for a free and independent Ukrainian state.

But one virulently anti-UPA book in the Czech language, which was widely circulated by the Czech satrapy, was entitled, *Prava Tvar Banderovcu*.<sup>146</sup> It posed as a sort of official handbook on the aims and purposes of the UPA. The book, which contained several maps of areas and cities in which the UPA operated, castigated the UPA as "the worst bandits and criminals," whose purpose was to "impose a reactionary regime" in Czechoslovakia.

Slavic, its author, writes:

These groups crossed the state boundary in Eastern Slovakia, north and northeast of Priashiv. They then proceeded along the line Priashiv-Zilina. Helped by the mountainous terrain, several of these groups reached eastern Moravia. Their further progress toward Czechia was extremely difficult, as indicated by the enclosed map. Herein also revealed was the cooperation extended them by the population. The Banderivtsi and their collaborators counted on the fear of the population; for this reason they kept bragging about their weapons and disseminating alarming rumors about the forthcoming struggle. If in some cases the Banderivtsi did reach Czechia, they did so by going through the northern part of the country, only a few of their group using the southern route. . . .<sup>147</sup>

The author explains that the marking of Prague on the map as an operational area of the UPA "does not mean that the insurgents were also operat-

<sup>146</sup> Slavic, Vaclav, "Prava Tvar Banderovcu," (The True Face of the Banderites), (Czech), Prague, 1948.

<sup>147</sup> Slavic, *op. cit.* For clarity, we use here the Ukrainian term "Banderivtsi" instead of the Czech version, "Banderovcu."



ing in the capital of the state." It was marked because Prague "was one of the live points of their civilian network. . . ." One of the "proofs" of their presence in Prague, the author relates, was the trident emblem found at Charles Bridge, an emblem which "was used by the Banderivtsi as a symbol of the Ukrainian state." Slavic contends characteristically that in Prague a church was used as a liaison point by the OUN (a standard line of all communist regimes is that the church is an instrument of "bourgeois reaction"). Through this meeting point the OUN was able to send its couriers from Poland to Munich, and vice versa.

Received in the Ukrainian Catholic parish were the leaders with their instructions, and also various Banderite materials for the illegal crossing of the border into the American zone of Germany. . . .

Up to now large segments of our society have had only a partial picture of the activities of the Banderite military bands. Now they may fully see the danger that threatened the republic with the appearance of the Banderite killers in the territory of the CSR in 1947. Even with the destruction of Burlaka and the armed bands that followed and of the centers of their civilian network, further and constant vigilance is absolutely necessary. . . .

By a series of peace treaties the Soviet Union renounced after World War I territories to which it historically and legally had a right in order to establish friendly relations with neighbors on its western borders. This peaceful move was exploited by the Western imperialists, who from the very beginning began organizing bands of hired sell-outs for the struggle against the USSR. These hirelings were recruited from members of the interventionist armies and from adventurers the world over. . . .<sup>148</sup>

As we can see, the Czech communist regime adopted totally the Soviet Russian line that the USSR is entitled "historically and legally" to certain Western countries, especially Western Ukraine, a line that regrettably still influences some Western statesmen and journalists.

Here the author ascribes fantastic activities to the UPA, wherein fact is difficult to distinguish from fiction:

Out of the most experienced Banderite bands, the "SS Division Galicia," was created in 1941. It fought in the decisive battle at Stalingrad. . . . As the front rolled westward the UPA endeavored to become what it never could become—fighters for Ukrainian independence. In this phase of the war it acted against its former protectors, the Germans. It was proved, however, that simultaneously with the Banderite attacks on German transports and their other destructive activities, their leaders kept in continuous contact with the German staff. The Banderites did not kill a single German soldier, so that they could continue to fight against the Soviet army. . . .

The activities of the military formations of the Banderites would

<sup>148</sup> Slavic, *op. cit.*,

have been impossible without the "civilian network," which was silent but no less dangerous for that. . . .

These bands used to come to the Slovak villages at dusk. They would surround the village with machine gun emplacements and send forth a strong detachment to take over the station of people's security (political police—the Author). Then they would order a meeting of all the villagers at which there were two speakers, one from the band and the other a representative of the democratic party (at that time in Czechoslovakia the communist regime allowed the existence of a non-communist democratic party so as to give the appearance that the elections were "democratic"—the Author). The Banderites would openly agitate for the democratic party and appeal for the election of its candidates. . . . They would also distribute leaflets and plaster the walls with posters bearing their slogans, and then, being armed, would order the villagers to feed them. The Banderite units, trying to give the best possible impression, abstained from plunder. They spread the fear that their appearance signified the outbreak of World War III. It must be noted that in the eastern districts of Slovakia the democratic party received most of the votes, over 70 percent: the Banderite terrorization of the civilian population had its effect.

The Banderite bands passed the winter of 1946-47 relatively well in their hide-outs in the rocky woods and mountains of the two Polish districts of Peremyshl and Sianok, close to the Czechoslovak border. The actions of the Polish army and militia against the Polish underground barely touched them. In the event of danger, they would cross the border by swifty maneuvering into Czechoslovakia, but abstained from any operations in order not to attract any attention. When the danger passed, they would return to their districts. Here they found support on the part of some elements of the population (the Communist author purposely does not specify that it was the Ukrainian population—the Author). The evacuation of the population was not of major benefit, either. Inasmuch as the evacuation was voluntary, there remained, on orders from the OUN, various criminal elements. They received help from the Polish underground, which maintained contact with the British and American embassies. . . .

As regards the raids of the UPA, the Czech author further states:

These companies, which since 1946 had taken part in the raids into our territory, received orders to transfer the center of the Banderite armed bands into the Slovak mountains and to remain there. First, many individuals were sent ahead who were to provide detailed instructions for the raiding companies. Other units had to cross Slovakia by forced march, pass through the Czech territory and reach the American zone of Germany. These units contained also a great many members of the civilian network. These were ordered detached from the armed units and to establish resistance points in various places for the bands, which were to return after attending courses in espionage and sabotage in Germany. . . .

Slavic further contends that the Banderite movements were connected with a planned uprising against the Czech communist authority in Slovakia. UPA

units found helpers among the civilian population, a fifth column, as the author calls them. These "reactionaries" demagogically disseminated rumors and information about great losses sustained by the Communists in battles with the UPA.

To minimize this propaganda campaign against the communist regime, the communist author quotes official statistics to the effect that the Ukrainian insurgents lost 344 fighters, of whom 59 were killed, 39 wounded and the rest captured. Sixteen members of the civilian network of the OUN were captured. On the communist side, he reports, there were casualties, made up of 39 killed and the rest wounded or captured.

These statistics will raise some doubt in the mind of anyone familiar with partisan warfare. The ratio of losses should have been at least 1:10 or 1:15 in favor of the insurgents, especially if we take into account the inexperience in partisan warfare of the soldiers of the communist Czechoslovak army.

The Czech communist author frankly admits that there was a lack of "fighting spirit" in the Czechoslovak army:

There were also shortcomings in the organization of our armed forces. It became apparent that the purge which had earlier been conducted, had been inadequate. Some officers had to be relieved because of their deportment in the face of the enemy. In certain units there also were cases of incipient treason involving going over to the enemy. . . .

The enemy readily confessed that there was no enthusiasm in the ranks of the Czechoslovak army to fight the UPA. Since small UPA units were able to cause disorientation and doubt in the enemy army, one gains a fair idea of the extent of the reaction among the captive nations in the event of a favorable anti-communist and anti-Russian uprising. By the same token, we can now see why the Soviet army command had to withdraw the regular Red army units from the front against the UPA and replace them with the NKVD troops and special security forces. The fear was of large-scale desertions to the UPA, especially on the part of the soldiers of the non-Russian nations in the Red army.

Slavic comments further on the UPA:

At the beginning the battles were very fierce. Frequently, an hour or two after an army unit entered an area where the Banderites had operated previously, it would have to fight against the Banderites, who knew the terrain well and who had helpers who often hailed from the most influential sectors of the local society. . . .

Concerning the tactics of the Ukrainian insurgents, Slavic writes:

The most difficult task that our units had in Slovakia arose from the Banderites' propagation of Slovakia's separation from Czechoslovakia and their contention that they were fighting for it. There were, in addition, other problems to be solved: How did the Banderites manage

to penetrate the country? What were their tactics? Why didn't our most effective intelligence service produce results? There were other questions to be answered, and each day brought new ones. It was necessary to make heavy sacrifices until, through constant reconnaissance and interrogation of captured prisoners, some data were obtained: the Banderite camps are usually established close to water; fires are made under trees, so that the smoke will not be visible; when encamped they avoid any and all battles, using the time for rest. Indeed, the Banderite units were always on the move. . . .

In planning they checked in great detail any locality marked for attack. The advance patrol, which they called *shpitsa* (the point), was dispatched first in order to gain information from the population about the roads, telephone network, connections with neighboring villages, village cooperatives, and the like.

They designated the place of reassembly for the forthcoming attack. Then only the principal force moved in. Its first blow was directed against the post office and other important points in the locality. They were followed by the conveyors of food supplies. When they had to enter the cooperative or a private house, they always did so in pairs. The entire main force then gathered at the reassembly place, from which they made farther jumps, sometimes even as far as 50 kilometers, in order to obviate pursuit. Then food was distributed, and they rested. . . .

The only thing they left behind them were fantastic rumors: at every contact with the population, even when they were defeated, they spread the rumor that they were only the vanguard, that they were followed by thousands upon thousands of others. . . .

The band of Burlaka was excellently trained for fighting in the woods. It also possessed the best intelligence service of all Banderite units. The first question asked of their point always was: Where are the Slovaks and where are the Czechs? They counted on the near-certainty that the Slovak units would be more friendly to them. As a rule, Burlaka operated in those areas wherein there were no Reds. His unit consisted of 50 men, but he moved so cleverly that one got the impression that he had only three men along with him. At night they sneaked by our positions bare-footed in a single file, holding each other by the hand. If necessary, they could turn right or left; against our positions they always presented the narrowest profile. They marched noiselessly through the outskirts of forests. They decided to march farther only when they had assessed the objective of our intelligence and the place of our concentration, having then a free road to move on. . . .<sup>149</sup>

The communist press, despite the strict censorship existing in Czechoslovakia and despite its endeavor to deprecate and debase the UPA fighters,

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*

was unable to conceal the fact that these people were fighting for an ideal. Despite the label of "criminals," bestowed officially upon the UPA by Moscow and its communist satellites, the people of the satellite countries could not miss the glaring fact that the UPA fighters were Ukrainian patriots, fighting against overwhelming odds for the liberation of their country and the establishment of a free and independent Ukrainian state.

1. The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions and activities. It emphasizes the need for transparency and accountability in financial reporting.

2. The second part of the document outlines the various methods and techniques used to collect and analyze data. It includes a detailed description of the experimental procedures and the statistical analysis performed.

3. The third part of the document presents the results of the study. It includes a series of tables and graphs that illustrate the findings of the research. The data shows a clear trend in the relationship between the variables studied.

4. The fourth part of the document discusses the implications of the findings. It highlights the potential applications of the research in various fields and the need for further investigation.

5. The fifth part of the document concludes the study. It summarizes the key findings and provides a final statement on the importance of the research.

## EPILOGUE

In these pages we have endeavored to portray for the reader the epic history of the battles and tactics of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army. It is by no means, however, a chronological history.

One of the difficulties encountered in presenting this account of the daring and often inspired efforts of Ukrainian patriots is that the UPA, as an armed movement of the Ukrainian underground resistance, fought against the Nazis and Russian Communists at the same time, and then against the Soviet, Polish Communist, and Czech Communist troops in the same period.

Another difficulty arose from the fact that the Ukrainian underground resistance continues to operate today in Ukraine, if in different forms and emphases. It would have been impolitic to disclose all the operations, tactics and plans of the UPA and the OUN.

Be that as it may, the historic fact remains that the Ukrainian people, led by their underground Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists and their Ukrainian Insurgent Army, in the years 1942 to 1952 waged an armed resistance against the most ruthless totalitarian regimes ever known to history.

The UPA and OUN and their successors today constitute an invisible army of nameless heroes. Only from time to time is mention made in the Soviet press of trials of "UPA bandits and criminals," but these trials prove that the ideals espoused by these heroic organizations are still very much alive among the Ukrainian people.

The struggle of the UPA against Nazi Germany and later on against Communist Russia and Communist Poland contributed substantially to the development of modern partisan warfare, the same warfare that is being waged today in South Vietnam.

The Ukrainian warfare must be seen against the background of the liberation struggle of the Ukrainian people for their freedom and national state-

hood; popular support both distinguishes partisan warfare from the conventional and makes partisan warfare comprehensible. Its study should be on the agenda of world military and political leaders, charged with preserving the freedom of mankind threatened by the aggressive forces of imperialist-minded Communist Russia and its subservient puppets in Europe and Asia.

It is our humble hope that this work serve as an introduction and stimulus for such study.



APPENDIX A

Nomenclature of Ukrainian Names, Transcription in Other Languages

Towards a better understanding on the part of the reader with regard to the nomenclature of Ukrainian geographical names of provinces, cities and rivers, transliterations of some principal place names are given below in several languages.

Ukrainian	Russian	Polish	German	English
<i>Provinces:</i>				
Halychyna	Galicia	Galicia	Galizien	Galicia
Volyn	Volyn	Wolyn	Wolhinia	Volhynia
Polisia	Polesia	Polesie	Polesie	Polesia
Pidlisia	Podlisia	Podlesie	Podlesie	Podlisia
<i>Cities:</i>				
Kiev	Kiev	Kijow	Kijow	Kiev
Lviv	Lvov	Lwow	Lwow	Lvov
			Lemberg	
			Leopol	
Kharkiv	Kharkov	Charkow	Charkow	Kharkov
Ternopil	Tarnopol	Tarnopol	Tarnopol	Tarnopol
Stanyslaviv *	Stanislavov	Stanislawow	Stanislau	Stanislavov
Kholm	Kholm	Chelm	Cholm	Kholm
Rivne	Rovno	Rowne	Rowno	Rovno
Zhytomyr	Zhitomir	Zytomierz	Shitomir	Zhitomir
Vynnytsia	Vinnitsa	Winnica	Winniza	Vinnitsia
Peremyshl	Premysl	Przemysl	Przemysl	Przemysl
Kryvyi Rih	Krivoi Rog	Krzywy Rog	Kriwoi Rog	Krivoi Rog
Sokal	Sokal	Sokal	Sokal	Sokal

\* Recently the name of the city of Stanyslaviv was changed to Ivano-Frankivsk, in honor of Ivan Franko, an outstanding Ukrainian poet and writer who was born in the province of Stanyslaviv.

Ukrainian	Russian	Polish	German	English
Kherson	Kherson	Cherson	Cherson	Kherson
Kolomyia	Kolomiia	Kolomyja	Kolomea	Kolomia
Kamianets-Podilsky	Kamianets-Podolsky	Kamieniec Podolski	Kamianets-Podolsk	Kamianets-Podolski
Berest-Litovsky	Brest-Litovsk	Brzesc-Litewski	Brest-Litowsk	Brest-Litovsk
Sambir	Sambor	Sambor	Sambor	Sambor
Drohobych	Drogobych	Drohobycz	Drogobycz	Drogobich
Lubachiv	Lubachov	Lubachow	Lubachow	Lubachov
<i>Rivers:</i>				
Dnipro	Dniepr	Dniepr	Dniepr	Dnieper
Dnister	Dniester	Dniestr	Dnjestr	Dniester
Prypiat	Pripet	Przypec	Pripjet	Pripet
Buh	Bug	Bug	Bug	Bug
Horyn	Goryn	Horin	Gorin	Gorin

## APPENDIX B

### Abbreviations of Political and Military Organizations

#### Ukrainian

*UPA (Ukrainska Povstanska Armia)*, the Ukrainian Insurgent Army, organized in Ukraine in 1942 for the purpose of waging a liberation struggle against Nazi Germany and Communist Russia and for achieving the freedom and independence of Ukraine.

*UNR (Ukrainska Narodnia Respublyka)*, the Ukrainian National Republic, proclaimed on November 20, 1917 (the Third *Universal* of the Ukrainian Central *Rada*); the first Ukrainian government in modern times.

*UVO (Ukrainska Viyskova Organizatsia)*, the Ukrainian Military Organization, founded in 1920 by former officers of the Ukrainian national armies and headed by Col. Eugene Konovalets until 1929, at which time the organization's name was changed to the OUN. A secret military and revolutionary organization, it was primarily directed against the Polish domination of Western Ukraine; subsequently, it combatted the Russian Communists in Ukraine as well.

*OUN (Organizatsia Ukrainskykh Natsionalistiv)*, the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists, established at the first Congress of Ukrainian Nationalists, held in Vienna, Austria, in 1929. It eventually replaced the UVO as the all-Ukrainian nationalist underground organization; its ultimate aim was the establishment of a free and independent Ukrainian state.

*ABN (Anty-Bolshevytsky Blok Narodiv)*, the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc of Nations, established in 1943 and composed of representatives of all the nations enslaved by Communist Russia.

*SKV (Samo-oboronni Kushchevi Viddyly)*, the Self-Defensive Bush Detachments, consisting of Ukrainian partisans who initially operated independently but who eventually were integrated within the UPA.

*VOP (viddily osoblyvoho pryznachennia)*, units for special assignment.

*VPZ (Viyskova Poleva Zhandarmeria)*, the Military Field Gendarmerie.

*UNS (Ukrainska Natsionalna Samo-oborona)*, the Ukrainian National Self-Defense, the first units of the Ukrainian underground resistance movement, organized against the Nazi administration in Galicia in 1942.

*UHVR (Ukrainska Holovna Vyzvolna Rada)*, the Supreme Ukrainian Liberation Council, established in 1944 as "a supreme state organ of the Ukrainian people"; the political authority of the Ukrainian underground resistance movement.

*SB (Sluzhba Bezpeky)*, the Security Service, the counterintelligence corps of the UPA and of the OUN.

*UCK (Ukrainsky Chervonyi Khrest)*, the Ukrainian Red Cross, which cared for the wounded and ailing members of the UPA.

*BUSA (Bukovynska Ukrainska Samo-oboronna Armia)*, the Ukrainian Self-Defense Army of Bukovina, the Ukrainian resistance movement in Bukovina.

## Russian

*SSSR (Soyuz Sovetskikh Sotsialisticheskikh Republik)*, or the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, established on January 1, 1924.

*CHEKA, GPU, NKVD, MVD, MVD-MGB, KGB*: Initials of the organs of Soviet internal security, from the inception of the Soviet power to the present.

*CHEKA (Chrezvychainaya Kommisia)*, the Extraordinary Commission, the first Soviet internal security organ, replaced in 1922 by the *GPU (Glavnoye Politicheskoye Upravlenie)*, the Principal Political Administration; *NKVD (Narodnoy Kommisariat Vneshnikh Del)*, the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs, which functioned until 1941; *MVD (Ministerstvo Vneshnikh Del)*, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, which replaced the NKVD in 1943. From 1943 to 1946 operated the *MVD-MGB* (the latter initials standing for *Ministerstvo Gosudarstvennoy Bezpeki* (the Ministry of State Security)); the MVD existed until the liquidation of Lavrenti Beria in 1953. The *KGB (Komitet Gosudarstvennoy Bezpeki)*, or the Committee of State Security, is the present official name of the Soviet internal security organ.

*MTS (Mashyno-Traktornoye Stantsiye)*, the Machine-Tractor Stations, tractor repair and assembly stations on the collective farms throughout the Soviet Union.

## German

*SA (Sturmabteilung)*, were the Assault Sections of the Nazi Party, used primarily as auxiliary police.

*SS (Schutzstaffel)*, the protective troops which originally were intended to be the personal guard of Hitler; not to be confused with the *Waffen SS* troops, which were regular formations of the German army during the reign of Hitler.

*SD (Sicherheitsdienst)*, the Security Service, commanded by Heinrich Himmler.

*GESTAPO (Geheime Staats Polizei)*, the State Secret Police, also under the command of Himmler.

## Polish

*AK (Armja Krajowa)*, the Home Army, the anti-German and anti-Soviet Polish underground army, known for its Warsaw uprising against the Germans in 1944.

*WIN (Wolność i Niepodległość)*, Freedom and Independence; an underground Polish organization that operated mainly in northeastern Poland against the Russians and cooperated with the UPA against the Soviet troops.

*NSZ (Narodowe Sily Zbrojne)*, the National Armed Forces, also anti-Communist and anti-Russian, that operated in Western Poland.

*WP* (*Wojsko Polskie*), the Polish Army of the Polish Communist regime.

*KBW* (*Korpus Bezpieki Wewnętrznej*), the Corps of Internal Security, also of the Polish Communist government.

*KOP* (*Korpus Obrony Pągranicznej*), the Corps of Frontier Defense of the Polish Communist government.

*MO* (*Milicja Obywatelska*), the Citizens' Militia, organized by the Polish Communist government for use against the UPA and Polish anti-Communist underground groups.

*UBP* or *UB* (*Urząd Bezpieczeństwa Publicznego*), office of Public Security, or simply *UB* (*Urząd Bezpieczeństwa*), the Office of Security.

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# Pictorial Section

(All pictures: Courtesy of Ignatius M. Billinsky of Philadelphia, Pa.)



**“Arms Holiday”: a part of the military parade on August 31, 1947.  
UPA Captain reports to his superiors.**



**UPA soldiers shot by the enemy in their bunkers on April 11, 1947.  
They are, left, Nekhryst and medic Chuyko.**





**Medical inspection of an UPA group in the fall of 1946 near the City of Peremyshl**



**Company medical officer, Dr. Kyvay, extracts a tooth from the mouth of UPA runner Slavko in the Kurmanytsky Forest near Peremyshl, in the fall of 1947.**



**Second from left is Mar, district OUN leader for the Lemkoland, with his security, and villagers of Buk village, fall of 1946**



**Fall of 1946 near the village of Zatvarnytsia. District medical officer of the subdistrict "Beskid," Melodia, is in the center with the wounded, his security and a nurse**



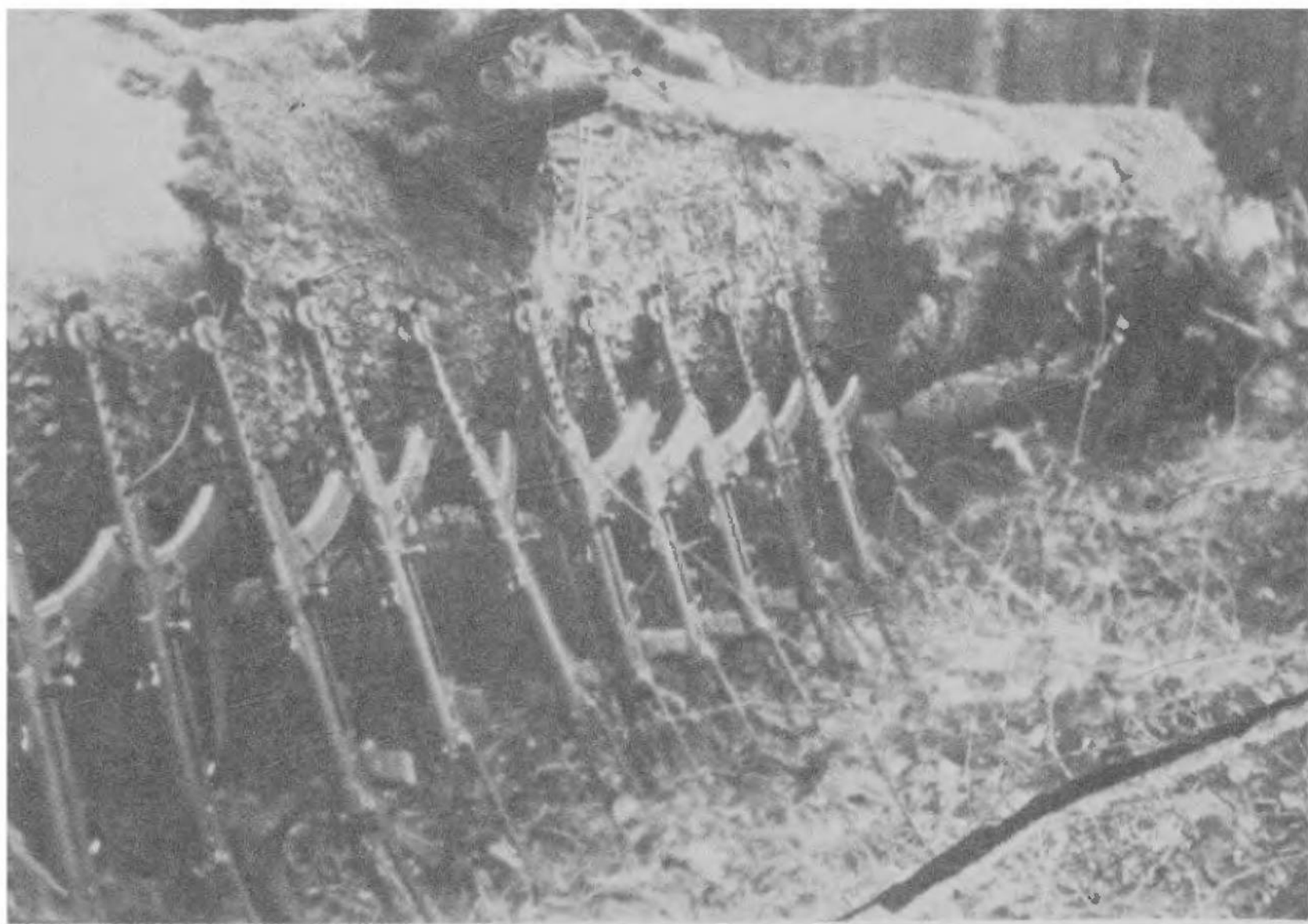


**UPA soldiers catch up on their sleep in a winter bivouac area in the forest in 1946**



**UPA medical point in the Kurmanytsky Forest near Peremyshl in the spring of 1947**





**Automatic rifles captured from Polish troops by the UPA**



**A collective grave of UPA soldiers, killed between Sukhi Riky and Zatvarnytsia in Lemkoland. This is the burial of Sgt. Horbovy from the company commanded by Bir. Father Yavorenko, a battalion chaplain, speaks. Sgt. Horbovy was killed during a skirmish with the Poles at the beginning of July, 1946, near the village of Nesichne.**

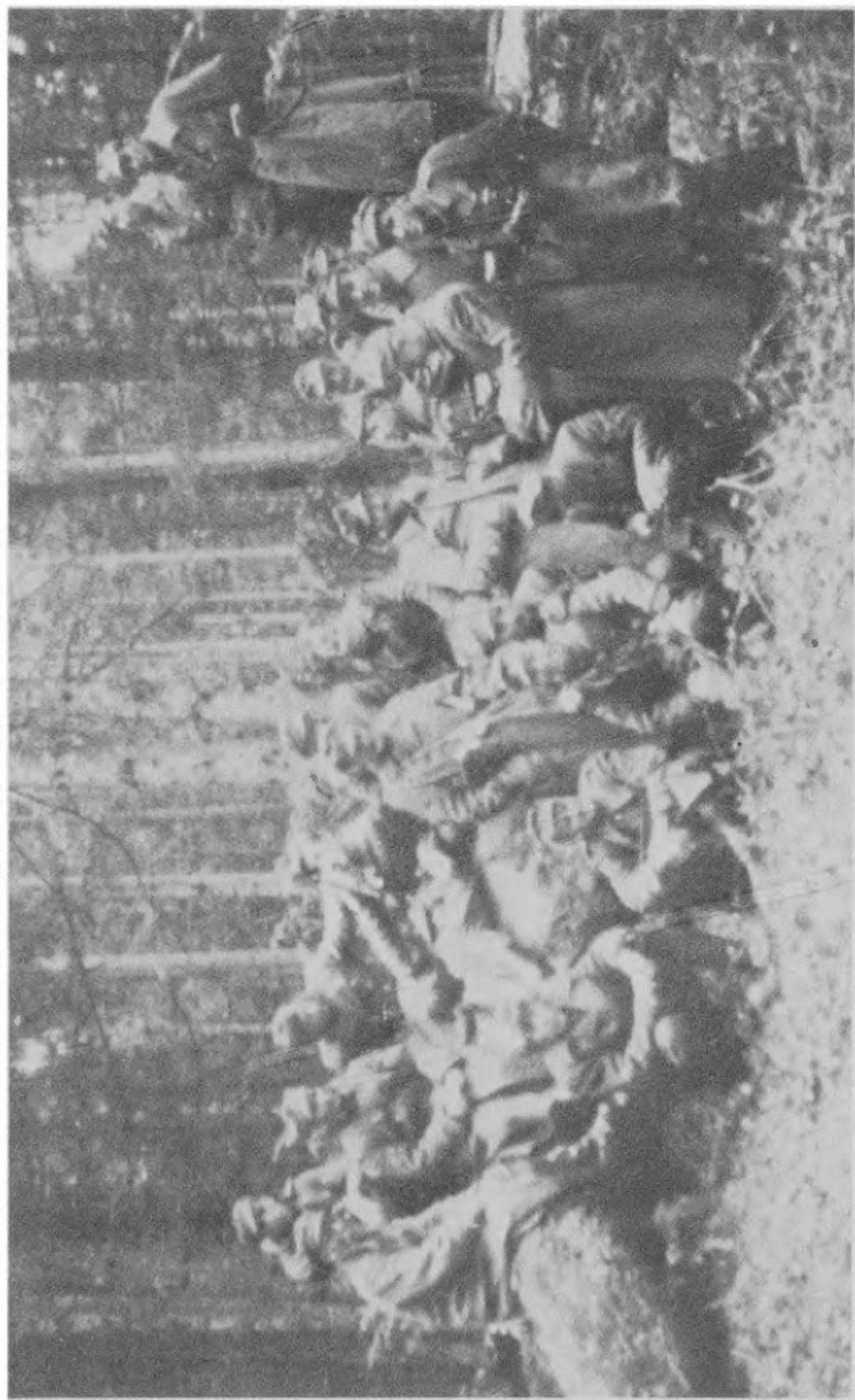


**A Polish soldier, captured by the UPA, is medically treated by an UPA doctor, Dr. Shuvar, on February 2, 1947 in the Zhuravo Forest near the City of Peremyshl. From left to right, are: Vlodko, Burkun, Luty and Bily.**



**UPA soldiers during a rest period in 1947 in Slovakia**





**“Officers’ Briefing” in the forest near the villages of Limna and Kraina, County Bircha near Peremyshl. From left to right: Rev. Kadylo-Plastun (Rev. Vasyl Shevchuk), Potap, SB (security service) chief of the district; Burkun (now in the U.S.A.); Skala (health service)—B. Huk, now in the U.S.A.); Captain Krylach, leader of the raion; Vernyvolia; Motria—health service; Dr. Shuvar—battalion doctor; Sokolenko (now in the U.S.A.); Capt. Lastivka, Commander Lisovyk, Commander Lahidny; dentist Zubchenko (now in the U.S.A.); Eugene, political instructor of the “Burlaka” Company; standing on the tree trunk: Commander Bily (now in the U.S.A.) and medical officer Kyvay; sitting: Stary, District SB security service chief; Dr. Siak (German) and Company Commander Hromenko. The group, known as “Kholodny Yar,” was photographed on April 19, 1947. (Photo: Commander Burlaka)**



**“Arms Holiday” 1946:** Sitting, left to right, are: **Capt. Burlaka, Col. Konyk and Political Officer Myron.** Standing, left to right: **Eugene, Political Officer of the Burlaka Company.** Behind Myron (with the automatic weapon) is **Medical Officer of the Burlaka Company, Kyvay.** Next to him (with binoculars) is **Sgt. Vanka,** and an unidentified fighter. **Medical Officer Kyvay was killed near the village of Meluza (Czecho-Slovakia) on July 31, 1947, while covering the crossing of a highway by his group.**



**Fall of 1946: Final briefing before the attack on the town of Bircha. From left to right: medical officer, Capt. Kyvay; platoon leader Vanka; Col. Konyk; Capt. Burlaka and Capt. Eugene**





**Lt. General Edward J. C. van Hote-gem, Dutch General, who escaped from a German POW camp in Ukraine and was given shelter by the UPA**



**Ivan Butkovsky  
UPA Colonel**



**A group of Dutch officers who were sheltered and helped to escape from a German POW camp in Ukraine in 1944 (January). Fifth from left is Lt. Gen. Edward J. C. van Hote-gem (white hat)**

**(Courtesy of Suchasnist, No. 12 (132), December, 1971, Munich, cf. "My Encounter with the UPA," by Lt. Gen. Edward J. C. van Hote-gem, appearing in Ukrainian)**

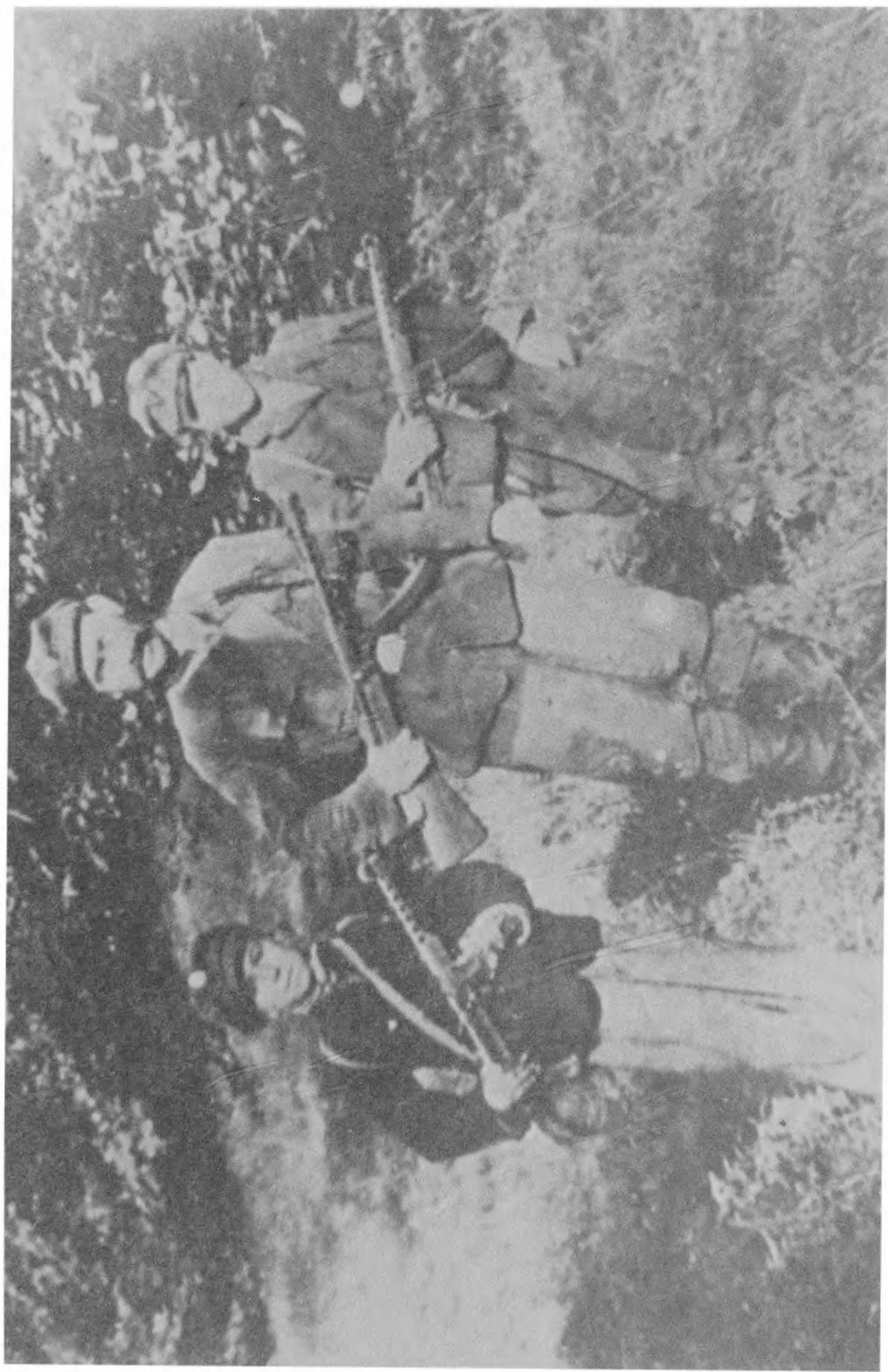


**Unexpected meeting of two UPA commanders**



**Group of "UPA – South" Officers in 1947**





**Youngest soldiers of the UPA in the Lemko area of Ukraine: Fighter Vasylo, 14 years (left) and Tarasyk, 15 years (right); in the center is a director of UPA tannery, Holub, 50 years old (spring, 1947)**



**Grave of Rostyslav Voloshyn-Pavlenko, member of the Supreme Ukrainian Liberation Council (UHVR) in the military zone of UPA-North, under the command of Commander Enei.**



**Detachment of UPA-North preparing a raid on enemy positions**





**“Easter Feast” on Easter Sunday in UPA hide-out in the Carpathian Mountains (1946)**



**Second group of UPA Officers School after completing training in 1945 and swearing loyalty to the UPA Command and its political leadership**



**UPA detachment of Commander Burlaka during a raid in Slovakia**





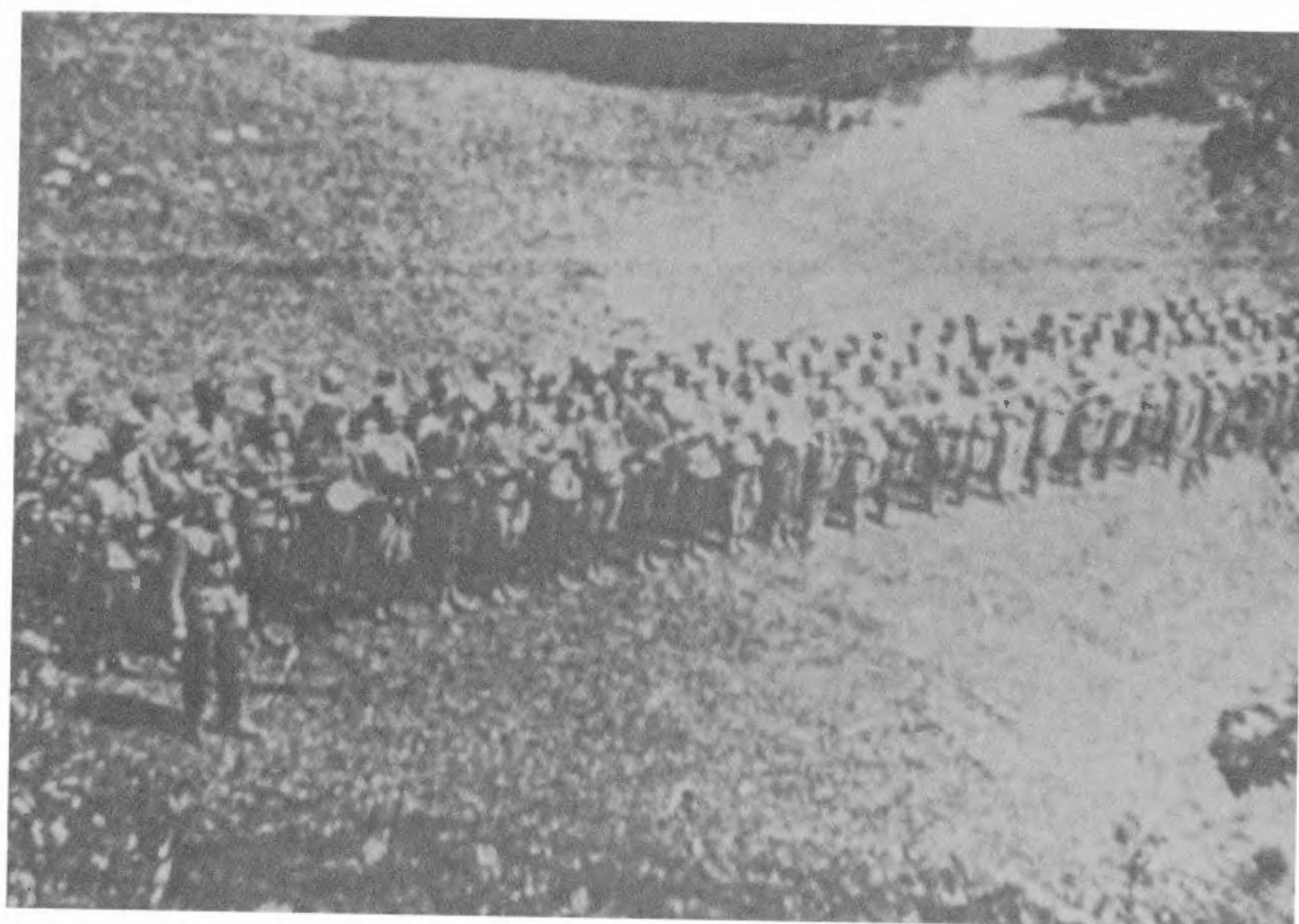
**Squad of UPA fighters, led by Chumak (group of Commander Burlaka)**



**First group of UPA fighters which succeeded in penetrating the Iron Curtain, arriving in West Germany on September 11, 1947. In the first row, center is Commander Lev Futala-Lahidny; Ivan Yovyk-Sokolenko, group commander, Zenoviy Hromenko and Mykhailo Zalizniak**



**UPA "Tarana" Detachment during a rest period**



**UPA Battalion, of the "Tury" group, during a field inspection**





**Ukrainian girls, serving in the Ukrainian Red Cross, who took care of wounded fighters of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army. Here four of them are resting in the Carpathian Mountains. Most of the time they worked in an underground (bunker) field dispensary**



**UPA Cavalry Reconnaissance Group in 1946**





**UPA detachment in Ukraine in 1944**



**UPA Group of Platoon Leader Kucheriavy in Slovakia after the group split from the Group of Commander Burlaka. From left to right, first row: Commander Zenko, Commander Burlaka and Platoon Leader Kucheriavy**



**Platoon of UPA fighters under the command of Lt. Marko  
(part of Commander Burlaka's group)**



**“Weapon cleaning” by UPA detachment in the forest in the area of UPA-West**



**UPA Officers School being sworn in, in 1944**



**UPA-North returns from combat operations  
for rest in a village under UPA jurisdiction**





**Group of UPA women fighters stands field inspection**



**UPA Field Gendarmerie (Military Police) attached to the group of Commander Burlaka**

## INDEX OF NAMES

- Alexander the Great, 121  
 Andrienko, UPA commander, 390  
 Armstrong, John A., 12  
 Arpad, UPA medic, 92  
 Artamanov, S.P., Soviet political commissar, 324  
 Atilla, vi  
 Antoniuk, see Sosenko
- Bach, Erich von dem (Zaleski), German general, 228, 229, 233, 239, 241, 242, 243, 256, 286  
 Baida, UPA commander, 62, 63, 94, 344, 366, 368, 369  
 Baidak, UPA soldier, 203  
 Bandera, Stepan, i, 19, 20, 24, 26, 35, 43 (fn.), 45, 76, 80, 225, 251, 356(fn.)  
 Batko, UPA commander before being unmasked as a Soviet agent, 229, 230, 287, 288; see also Hrabets  
 Behma, Soviet commander, 332  
 Belinsky, Russian writer, 292  
 Bereza, UPA commander, 241  
 Berkut, UPA commander, 366, 370  
 Berling, Polish general, 266  
 Bily, UPA leader, 391, 418, 419  
 Bir, UPA commander, 103, 367, 368, 369 (fn.), 417  
 Bis, UPA soldier, 377  
 Blahy, UPA commander, 71, 328  
 Blok, A., 292  
 Blum, Ignacy, 84(fn.), 89(fn.), 93, 351, 354(fn.), 358, 359, 360, 361 363 364, 366(fn.), 369, 370, 371, 373, 374
- Bogolubsky, Andrei, 292  
 Bor, UPA commander, 169, 172, 173, 174, 184, 360  
 Borsuk, UPA commander, 330, 331  
 Brandenburg, German captain, 256  
 Brezhnev, Leonid, 11  
 Brodiaha, UPA commander, 167  
 Brodych, UPA commander, 103, 360, 368, 391  
 Bryl, UPA commander, 333, 360, 362  
 Bueller, German official, 20  
 Buinyi, UPA corporal, 185, 200, 202  
 Bulba, Taras, *Otaman*, (*nom de guerre*), Ukrainian partisan leader, 19  
 Bur, UPA commander, 390  
 Burkun, UPA leader, 105, 391, 418, 419  
 Burlaka, UPA commander, 214, 360, 368, 369, 391, 393, 396, 419, 420, 421, 429, 430, 433  
 Buryi, K., UPA soldier, 169  
 Butkovsky, Ivan, UPA colonel, 422  
 Buvaly, UPA commander, 315, 319, 322  
 Bystry, UPA soldier, 159
- Caesar, Caius Julius, vi, 116, 121  
 Charles XII, of Sweden, 6, 271  
 Chavs, UPA commander, 360, 370  
 Chernyk (Yahoda), UPA commander, 135, 141, 142, 257, 344, 353  
 Chkheidze-Chapayev, Alexander, Soviet partisan intelligence chief, 287  
 Chmil, UPA commander, 377  
 Chornohora, UPA commander, 319  
 Chorny, UPA commander, 344

- Chorny, UPA company runner, 134  
 Chumak, UPA commander, 377, 430  
 Chuprynka, Taras, see Shukhevych  
 Churchill, Winston, 26  
 Chuyko, UPA medic, 413  
 Clausewitz, Karl von, vii, viii, 112, 122  
 Clay, UPA commander, 135  
 Crankshaw, Edward, 45(fn.)  
 Dalnych, UPA commander, 354  
 David, UPA commander, 360, 370  
 Denikin, Anthony, White Russian general, 10, 347  
 Didyk, UPA commander, 103, 382, 384, 387  
 Doks, UPA commander, 315, 319, 320, 322  
 Donsky, Dimitri, 275  
 Dora, OUN member, 92  
 Dorosh, UPA commander, 228, 259, 260  
 Dostoyevsky, Feodor, 275  
 Dovbenko, UPA commander, 315, 319, 322  
 Dub, UPA soldier, 377  
 Dubovy, UPA commander, 296, 297  
 Duda, UPA commander, 360, 370  
 Dunai, UPA commander, 301  
 Dyk, UPA commander, 315  
 Enei, UPA commander, 230, 296, 297, 426  
 Eugene, UPA commander, 344, 419, 420, 421  
 Fedorov, A. (Orlov), Soviet partisan commander, 245, 276, 277, 289, 301  
 Firley, Polish field commander, 119  
 Franco, Francisco, Spanish general, 347  
 Frank, Hans, German governor, 233  
 Frederick the Great, 121  
 Frolov, Polish major, 355, 356  
 Futala, Lev (Lahidny), 106, 378, 419, 430  
 Gerhard, Jan, 95(fn.), 108(fn.), 111(fn.), 172, 184(fn.)  
 Goebbels, Joseph, 45, 209  
 Gonzales, 81(fn.)  
 Gorczynski, Polish lieutenant, 184  
 Gypsy (*nom de guerre*), Ukrainian Red Cross member, 59  
 Hasyn, Oleksa (Lytsar), UPA commander, 311  
 Hawrysh (*nom de guerre*), UPA doctor, 95  
 Himmler, Heinrich, 239  
 Hintzler, German general, 238, 241  
 Hitler, Adolph, xi, 13, 15, 18, 20, 23, 25, 37, 43, 45, 77, 78, 209, 239, 252, 274  
 Holub, tannery director, 425  
 Holubenko, UPA commander before being unmasked as a Soviet agent, 62, 63, 287, 288  
 Holyi, UPA leader, 391  
 Homer, 115, 116  
 Horbovy, UPA sergeant, 417  
 Hordienko, Mykola, 59  
 Honcharenko, see Stupnytsky  
 Hornix, J.M.M., xi, xii(fn.)  
 Horyslav, UPA commander, 170  
 Hosek, Czech general, 391  
 Hostry, UPA commander, 297  
 Hotezem, Edward J. C. van, Dutch general, 422  
 Hrabets, Omelan (Batko), UPA commander, 229, 230, 287, 288; see also Batko  
 Hrad, UPA commander, 389  
 Hromenko, UPA commander, 333, 334, 344, 360, 368, 369, 377, 391, 419, 430  
 Hruzyn, UPA soldier, 179  
 Hrytsai, Dmytro, Major, Military Director of OUN Council (later General Perebyinis, UPA Chief of Staff), 21  
 Huk, Bohdan (Skala), UPA doctor, 96, 419  
 Hutsul, UPA major, 71, 170, 328  
 Ihor, UPA platoon leader, 223  
 Iskra, Soviet commander, 324  
 Ivan, UPA soldier, 178, 179  
 Ivan III, of Russia, 269  
 Ivan IV (Ivan the Terrible), of Russia, 270, 272, 275  
 Iwachiw, Vasyl (Sonar), UPA commander, 59  
 Kadylo-Plastun, Reverend, 419  
 Kalynovych, UPA commander, 360, 362, 370  
 Kamperer, UPA doctor, 95  
 Karmeliuk, UPA lieutenant, 82, 282, 283  
 Kerensky, Alexander, 8  
 Khan, Genghis, vi, 269, 270  
 Kharkivsky, Andriy, UPA soldier, 351, 364  
 Khasevych, Nil, Ukrainian woodcarver, 46

- Khmel, S.F., 168(fn.), 217(fn.)  
 Khmara, UPA commander, 390  
 Khmelnytsky, Bohdan, *Hetman*, viii, 6, 23, 119, 121  
 Khrin, Stepan, UPA commander, 81, 82 (fn.), 96, 103, 107, 108, 109, 134(fn.), 151(fn.), 172, 173, 174, 175, 184, 185, 198, 200, 204, 205, 214, 215, 216, 235, 285, 311, 333, 336(fn.), 345(fn.), 348, 360, 367, 368, 369(fn.), 377, 382, 384, 387  
 Khrushchev, Nikita S., ix, x, 11, 36, 40, 41, 45, 46, 76, 93, 175, 221, 247, 248, 275, 282, 294, 297, 300, 303, 304, 305, 307, 308, 310  
 Kiverski, Polish partisan colonel, 264  
 Kleist, Peter, German strategist, ii  
 Kliachkivsky, Roman (Okhrim, Klym, Savur), UPA colonel, 241, 243, 245  
 Klovov, V., 264(fn.)  
 Koch, Erich, 11, 25, 56, 59, 103, 142, 175, 176, 287, 291, 334  
 Kolodiazhny, NKVD colonel, 342  
 Konovalets, Eugene, Colonel, 11, 12, 186  
 Konyk, UPA commander, 168, 376, 378, 420, 421  
 Kora, UPA commander, 296, 297  
 Kosygin, Alexei, 11  
 Kotsylovsky, Josaphat, Ukrainian Catholic bishop, 376  
 Kovalsky, Julian, UPA commander, 59  
 Kovpak, Sydir, Soviet partisan general, vii, 41, 178, 226, 230, 245, 248, 252, 264, 276, 289, 290, 291  
 Kozak, UPA commander, 71  
 Kozyra, Polish captain, 355  
 Krokhmaliuk, Yuriy Tys-, i, xiii, 117(fn.), 248(fn.)  
 Kropyva, UPA commander, 257, 322, 330, 331, 353  
 Kruk, Bohdan (Melodia), UPA leader and director of the Ukrainian Red Cross, 75, 93(fn.), 235, 236, 257, 258, 282, 283, 360, 370, 415  
 Krupskaya, Nadezhda, 292  
 Krychevsky, Mykhailo, Colonel, 119, 121  
 Krylach, UPA commander, 360, 367, 368, 391, 419  
 Krylaty, UPA commander, 176  
 Kryvitsky, A., 272(fn.)  
 Kubik, UPA commander, 62, 63, 140, 176  
 Kucheriavy, UPA platoon leader, 433  
 Kula, UPA noncommissioned officer, 168  
 Kulgalin, I. S., Soviet commander, 324  
 Kulish, UPA commander, 344  
 Kum (*nom de guerre*), UPA doctor, 95  
 Kunicki, M., 221(fn.)  
 Kutuzov, Mikhail, Russian marshal  
 Kuznetsov, Nikolai Ivanovich, Soviet partisan, 247  
 Kyvay, captain, UPA medical officer, 414, 419, 420, 421  
 Lahidny, UPA commander (see Futala)  
 Laidaka, UPA commander, 296  
 Lange, W., German general, 234  
 Lastivka, UPA commander, 360, 367, 368, 391, 419  
 Lebed, Mykola, 233(fn.), 247(fn.), 286 (fn.)  
 Lenin, Vladimir I., viii, 8, 44, 252, 275, 277, 280, 292  
 Lenkin, Soviet soldier, 251  
 Leo XI, of Byzantium, 116  
 Letun, UPA commander, 168  
 Lisovyk, UPA commander, 419  
 Litvinov, S., 272  
 Lodychiv, 272  
 Lopatynsky, Yuriy, 221  
 Los (*nom de guerre*), Polish officer, 354  
 Luty, UPA fighter, 418  
 Lutze, Victor, German general, xi, 142, 175, 176, 227, 297  
 Lysenko, UPA soldier, 236  
 Lysyi, UPA commander, 140, 208  
 Lytvyn, UPA soldier, 235  
 McCormick, Anne O'Hare, 15  
 Machiavelli, Niccolo, 121  
 Mahan, Alfred T., American admiral and historian, 122, 123  
 Maksym, UPA commander, 158, 159, 222  
 Maksymovych (*nom de guerre*), UPA doctor, 95  
 Mamai, UPA commander, 315, 319, 320, 322  
 Manstein, Erich von, German field marshal, 78(fn.), 334  
 Mar, OUN leader, 368, 369(fn.), 382 (fn.), 391, 415  
 Maria, member of the OUN underground network and later a county leader of the Ukrainian Red Cross, 83

- Marko, UPA leader, 391, 434  
 Martyniuk, Soviet agent, 138  
 Marx, Karl, v  
 Mazepa, Ivan, *Hetman*, 6, 271  
 Mech, UPA commander, 301  
 Medvedev, D., Soviet partisan commander, vii, 246, 247  
 Melnyk, Andrew, Colonel, 19  
 Melodia, see Kruk  
 Mihailovich, Draja, Yugoslav general and *Chetnik* leader, 100  
 Mikhailov, Soviet partisan commander, 245, 246  
 Minin, Kuzma, 275  
 Mirchuk, Petro, 21(fn.), 62(fn.), 247(fn.), 252(fn.), 346(fn.), 347(fn.), 360  
 Model, Walther, German field marshal, 313  
 Moltke, Helmuth von, Count, Prussian field marshal, 104  
 Montecuccoli, Raimondo, Austrian general, 121  
 Moroz, UPA commander, 324  
 Mossora, Polish general, 365  
 Motria, UPA nurse, 419  
 Mria (*nom de guerre*), UPA soldier, 140  
 Mukha, UPA sergeant, 340  
 Mykytiuk, Volodymyr, Rev., UPA chaplain, 324  
 Myron, UPA warrant officer, 185, 387, 390, 420  
 Napoleon Bonaparte, 2, 122  
 Nazar(-Kryha), UPA commander, 140, 141  
 Nechai, UPA commander, 344  
 Nekhryst (*nom de guerre*), district leader of the OUN and director of the Ukrainian Red Cross, 95, 96, 413  
 Nevsky, Alexander, 275  
 Niepolulczycki, Franciszek, 363  
 Nowak, Polish corporal, 93, 94  
 Olen, UPA commander, 377  
 Oles, Ukrainian Red Cross assistant, 338  
 Olha, Princess, 6  
 Onyshkevych, Myroslav (Orest), OUN and UPA leader, 354, 373  
 Orach, UPA leader, 131, 132  
 Orest, UPA pharmaceutical officer, 92  
 Orlyk, UPA commander, 205  
 Orsky, UPA commander, 378  
 Ostap, UPA commander, 344  
 Osten, German first lieutenant, 251(fn.)  
 Ostroverkha, UPA commander, 81, 105(fn.), 108, 131, 132, 203, 212, 214(fn.), 215, 348, 377  
 Ostry, UPA commander, 331  
 Osubka-Morawski, Edward, Polish premier, 347  
 Osyp, UPA commander, 330, 331  
 Pas, UPA lieutenant, 202  
 Pasternak, Yaroslav, 5  
 Paulus, Friedrich, German field marshal, 36  
 Perebyinis, General, see Hrytsai, Dmytro  
 Peremoha, UPA commander, 110, 135, 222  
 Peter the Great (Peter I), of Russia, 5, 6, 7, 271, 272, 292  
 Petlura, Simon, 8  
 Petrov, V., 272  
 Piekh, 377  
 Pilsudski, Josef, Polish marshal, 10  
 Platle, German SS general, 228, 238  
 Pol, UPA commander, 71  
 Poltava, Peter, OUN officer and ideologist, 311  
 Popka, Polish colonel, 346  
 Potap, UPA leader, 131, 419  
 Prirva, UPA commander, 353, 390  
 Proflatov, I., Communist Party official in Ukraine, 221  
 Prut, UPA commander, 390  
 Prutzmann, Hans, German general, 229, 243, 245, 246  
 Ptashka, UPA commander, 241  
 Radkiewicz, Polish security chief, 376  
 Radziwill, Lithuanian *Hetman*, 119, 121  
 Rath, UPA doctor, 92  
 Redelis, Valdis, 232(fn.), 234  
 Reitlinger, Gerald, 27(fn.)  
 Ren, UPA commander, 344, 366, 368, 369  
 Rizun, UPA commander, 68, 71, 173, 175, 300, 324, 328  
 Rola-Zymierski, Polish marshal, 346, 376  
 Roman, UPA warrant officer, 198  
 Romashko, Dem., UPA soldier, 377  
 Romko, UPA commander, 135  
 Roosevelt, Franklin D., 26  
 Rozvazhny, UPA commander, 62  
 Rudyi, UPA commander, 59, 140, 141, 241



- Rybalka, UPA corporal, 198, 200
- Saburov, Soviet general, 199, 301, 303
- Sahaidachny, Peter Konashevych, *Hetman*, 117, 119
- Sahaidak, UPA leader, 391
- Savka, UPA soldier, 208
- Scharnhorst, Gerhard Johann David, Prussian general, 122
- Schlieffen, Alfred von, Prussian general, 123
- Seidlitz, Walter von, German general, 36
- Semeniuk, Soviet lieutenant, 138, 139, 140
- Shankowsky, Lew, 221, 228(fn.), 241(fn.), 247(fn.), 252(fn.), 262(fn.), 300(fn.), 328(fn.)
- Shavula, UPA commander, 296
- Shchuk, UPA commander, 62, 63, 64
- Shevchenko, Taras, 272
- Shevchuk, Vasyl, Reverend, 419
- Shramenko, UPA soldier, 205
- Shtyl, UPA commander, 135, 344
- Shukayev, Soviet partisan commander, 68, 71, 72, 73, 326, 328
- Shukhevych, Roman (Taras Chuprynka), General, UPA Commander-in-Chief, iii, 25, 35, 36, 38, 40, 43, 230, 310, 311
- Shum, Oleksiy, UPA commander, 176, 315, 320, 322, 360, 362
- Shumeyko, Soviet commander, 248
- Shumsky, UPA commander, 135, 344
- Shuvar, UPA doctor, 92, 418, 419
- Siak, UPA doctor, 419
- Sirko, UPA platoon leader, 108
- Skala, (see Huk)
- Skoropadsky, Paul, *Hetman*, 8
- Skorupsky, Maksym (Max), UPA soldier, 235, 287, 330
- Slav, UPA soldier, 207
- Slavic, Vaclav, 392, 393, 394, 395
- Slavko, UPA runner, 414
- Slepy, Soviet partisan specialist, 377, 378
- Sniatetsky, Semen, UPA commander, 59
- Sobieski, Jan, 117, 119
- Sokil, UPA commander, 301, 390
- Sokolenko, UPA fighter, 419, 430
- Soroka, UPA platoon leader, 184
- Sosenko (-Antoniuk), UPA commander, 138, 139, 140, 251(fn.)
- Stakh, UPA commander, 172, 173, 174, 184, 360, 367, 368, 369(fn.)
- Stalin, Joseph V., ix, 8, 11, 13, 19, 23, 37, 221, 247, 270, 271, 275, 277, 279, 288, 290, 292, 294, 299, 300
- Starukh, Yaroslav (Stiah), UPA commander, 354, 365, 366, 372, 373
- Stary, SB chief, 419
- Stenka, UPA platoon leader, 175
- Stetzko, Yaroslav, 20, 43(fn.)
- Stewart, John F., 46(fn.)
- Storchan, UPA commander, 315, 319, 320
- Stupnytsky, Leonid (Honcharenko), UPA colonel, 241, 249
- Stupnytsky, Yuriy, 249(fn.)
- Suvorov, Alexander, Russian marshal, 272, 275
- Swierczewski, Karol, Polish general, xiii, 347, 348, 354, 387
- Sydor, Vasyl (Shelest, Conrad, Zov), UPA Commander, 229, 230, 253, 311
- Symonenko, Vasyl, Ukrainian poet, iii
- Szombateli, Hungarian general, 26
- Szymanski, Polish private, 94
- Talbott, Strobe, 45(fn.)
- Tamara, Ukrainian Red Cross nurse, 338
- Tarasek, UPA partisan, 204
- Tarasyk, teenage UPA fighter, 425
- Teofilus (a monk), of Pskov, 269
- Tereshchuk, Petro, 262(fn.)
- Tetiana, UPA corporal, 185, 198, 200, 203, 215
- Toynbee, Arnold Joseph, British historian, 270
- Trotsky, Leon, 8
- Tsyhanka, see Gypsy
- Tucha, UPA commander, 360, 362, 370
- Tyshan, UPA commander, 259, 372
- Ukleya, UPA platoon leader, 174, 175
- Usach, Sashko, Soviet squad leader, 251
- Valuyev, Russian minister, 7
- Vanka, UPA commander, 315, 319, 420, 421
- Vasylko, teenage UPA fighter, 425
- Vatutin, Nikolai F., Soviet general, xiii, 248, 296, 297
- Vauban, Marquis de, French marshal, 121
- Vernyvolia, UPA fighter, 419
- Vershyhora, P., Soviet partisan commander, 137, 138, 139, 140, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 276, 289, 290

- Vlasov, Andrei, Soviet general, 46  
Vlodko, UPA fighter, 418  
Voloshyn-Pavlenko, Rostyslav, member of UHVR, 426  
Voron, UPA commander, 296  
Vovchak, UPA commander, 62, 63, 64, 175, 176  
  
Wierzbicki, Polish lieutenant, 172  
Wilson, Woodrow, 27  
Wojtczak, Polish lieutenant, 93  
Wowchuk, Ivan, iv  
  
Yar, UPA commander, 360, 370  
Yar, UPA soldier, 208  
Yarema, UPA commander, 62, 228, 259, 260, 296  
  
Yasen, UPA commander, 296, 315, 319, 320, 322, 390  
Yastrub, UPA commander, 320  
Yavorenko, Father, 417  
Yovyk-Sokolenko, Ivan (see Sokolenko)  
Yurchenko, UPA commander, 344  
Yurko, UPA commander, 330  
Yurko, UPA doctor, 92  
  
Zalizniak, UPA commander, 62, 315, 319, 320, 362, 366, 368, 369, 430  
Zalizny, UPA squad leader, 134  
Zena, UPA pharmacist, 96  
Zenko, UPA leader, 391, 433  
Zhukov, Georgi K., Soviet marshal, 223  
Zoriany, UPA soldier, 132  
Zozulia, UPA soldier, 377  
Zubchenko, UPA dentist, 419

## INDEX OF LOCALITIES

Andrushivka, 316, 319  
 Andrusiv (Treaty of), 6  
 Antonivka, 257, 258, 315, 316, 328, 330, 331  
 Bakhiv, 375  
 Baliarnia, 258  
 Balyhorod, 172, 173, 174, 343, 348, 354, 384, 387  
 Baturyn, 292  
 Berendovychi, 95  
 Bereziv, 255  
 Berlin, 272  
 Berzka, 375  
 Beskyd, 373  
 Bezmigowa, 344  
 Bibrka, 301  
 Bielen, 263  
 Bilhorai, 362  
 Bilychi, 342  
 Bircha, 96, 97, 376, 378, 387, 421  
 Birky Yanivski, 282  
 Bobly, 64  
 Bolekhiv, 71, 301, 328, 340  
 Borovnytsia, 375  
 Brest (Berest), 57, 175, 228, 242, 245, 262  
 Brest Litovsk (Treaty of), 8  
 Briaza, 73  
 Brody, 3, 73, 221, 285, 303, 306, 313, 332  
 Buda, 138, 139  
 Budapest, 26  
 Budky 319  
 Buk, 415  
 Bukachivtsi, 303

Bukivtsi, 174  
 Bushcha, 236, 257, 320, 322  
 Bystre, 174  
 Cheremkha, 367  
 Chernihiv, 40, 245  
 Chicago, 83 (fn.)  
 Cisna, 367  
 Constantinople, 117  
 Cracow, 73, 230, 363  
 Dalnych, 223  
 Dil, 336, 338  
 Dniepropetrovsk, 57  
 Dobra, 108, 367, 380  
 Dobrianka, 108  
 Dobromyl, 206  
 Dolyna, 66, 72, 73, 253  
 Dorohuisk, 263  
 Dovhobychiv, 351, 353, 371  
 Dovzhytsia, 174  
 Drohobych, 303, 340  
 Dubensky Maidan, 258  
 Dubno, 246, 257, 301  
 Duklia, 356  
 Dyniv, 214, 376, 379, 380  
 Gulske, 367  
 Habkovytsi, 172  
 Halych, 301  
 Havana, xiii  
 Hichva, 344  
 Hlumchi, 108  
 Hlybivka, 213

- Holoby, 263, 264  
 Holohorny, 222  
 Holovetske, 340  
 Horishnia, 367  
 Horokhiv, 227, 228  
 Hoshcha, 296  
 Hrabivka, 68, 324  
 Hradoslavytsi, 371  
 Hrebeniv, 71  
 Hrubeshiv, 343, 351, 353, 354, 363, 376  
 Hrybivka, 326  
 Hrynivka, 326  
 Hurby, 29, 299, 313, 319, 320, 322  
 Hust, 15  
 Hvozdets, 340  
  
 Iskan, 375  
 Ivanova Dolyna, 227  
  
 Kalna, 64, 68, 255  
 Kalush, 66  
 Kamianets Podilsky, 56, 229  
 Kamianka, 68, 71  
 Kamin Koshyrsky, 140, 242, 246  
 Kaminka Strumilova, 221, 222  
 Karpylivka, 296  
 Katyn, 292  
 Kernytsia, 178  
 Khnivka, 319  
 Khodoriv, 301  
 Kholm, 137, 343  
 Khorobriv, 353  
 Khotyn, 117  
 Khreshchata, 174  
 Khreshchata Kolonytsia, 175  
 Khyriv, 169  
 Kiev, 2, 6, 8, 15, 25, 40, 119, 252, 262, 292, 297, 322, 342, 387, 389  
 Klesiv, 246  
 Klevan, 175, 176, 303, 322  
 Klusk, 63  
 Kniazheluka, 338  
 Kolky, 57, 59  
 Kolomeya, 66, 253, 255, 313, 332  
 Kolomna, 119  
 Kolonitsa, 172  
 Komancha, 355, 367, 382  
 Konopne, 351  
 Korostopol, 57, 59, 60  
 Kortylisy, 142  
 Kosmach, 253, 255, 333, 336, 338  
 Kostopil (Kostopol), 228, 297  
  
 Kovel, 59, 60, 62, 63, 64, 137, 138, 226, 242, 246, 263, 264, 285, 297, 332  
 Kozhushne, 355  
 Kraina, 419  
 Krasne, 221  
 Krasnobrid, 390  
 Kremianets, 235, 236, 243, 246, 301, 306, 315, 316  
 Kropyvnyk, 64, 255  
 Krosno, 343  
 Krynytsia, 170, 386  
 Krystynopil, 135  
 Kryve, 83, 367  
 Kukurika, 137  
 Kulashyn, 367  
 Kureniv, 263  
 Kuznytsia, 367  
  
 Labova, 170  
 Leningrad, 18  
 Lesivka, 326  
 Liakhava, 214  
 Lidice, 228, 241  
 Limna, 96, 419  
 Lishchava, 367  
 Lishnia, 235, 236  
 Lisko, 343, 351, 367  
 Lityn, 263  
 Lomna, 367  
 London, 261  
 Lopatyn, 135  
 Lopianka, 68  
 Loyiv, 119, 121  
 Lūbachiv, 301, 343, 373, 376, 380  
 Lubasha, 59, 60  
 Lubeshiv, 245  
 Lublin, 351  
 Lubne, 172  
 Luboml, 264  
 Lubykh, 362, 376  
 Luh, 253  
 Lukavytsi, 367  
 Lupkiv, 355, 367, 382, 384, 386  
 Lutsik, 57, 135, 138, 228, 246  
 Luzhky, 73  
 Lviv, 2, 3, 4, 20, 22, 35(fn.), 41, 43(fn.), 45, 66, 73, 112, 135, 261, 262, 264, 282, 292, 313, 373  
 Lybokhory, 71  
 Lypa, 64, 68, 73, 255  
 Lyskiv, 340

- Maidan, 67, 255, 315, 319, 324  
 Makovysko, 93  
 Mala Moshanytsia, 315, 319  
 Maliava, 214, 367  
 Maniv, 172  
 Marianivka, 263  
 Medynychi, 301  
 Mel, 336, 338  
 Meluza, 420  
 Mikhailov, 117, 119  
 Mikhova Volya, 172, 355  
 Mikhove, 184  
 Mizoch, 256, 257, 316, 319  
 Mizun, 64, 68, 255  
 Mokre, 355, 382  
 Morochna, 245  
 Moscow, xiii, 2, 18, 76, 117, 119, 246, 252, 271, 286, 291, 342, 343, 347  
 Mosty, 319  
 Mosur, 138, 140  
 Munich, 360, 393  
 Mykolaiv, 179, 301, 303  
 Mysliv, 324  
  
 Nadvirna, 326  
 Nanchivka, 81  
 Nedilna, 253, 256  
 Nemochyn, 326  
 Nemovychi, 228, 259  
 Nesichne, 417  
 Nove Zahiria, 355  
 Novgorod, 273  
 Novyi Sanch (Sacz), 170  
 Novyi Vytziv, 135  
  
 Obhiv, 315, 316, 319, 320  
 Odessa, 57, 143  
 Olyka, 227  
 Orikhivtsi, 81  
 Osa, 138, 139  
 Ostriv, 249  
 Ostroh, 315, 316, 319  
 Ozhydiv, 221  
  
 Panasivka, 301  
 Paris, 12  
 Pavlokoma, 375  
 Peking, xiii  
 Peredrymikhy, 222  
 Perekinsko, 229  
 Perekop, 117  
 Pereluky, 215  
  
 Peremyshl, 2, 18, 81, 95, 134, 214, 343, 346, 367, 379, 386, 414, 416, 418, 419  
 Perevorsk, 368  
 Petrograd, 271  
 Pidhaitsi, 300  
 Piatkova, 375  
 Pidhorodno, 137  
 Pisky, 141  
 Podil, 338  
 Polianytsia, 72, 336  
 Poltava (Battle of), 6, 271  
 Posich, 67, 255  
 Prague, 391, 392, 393  
 Priashiv, 392  
 Priazna, 68  
 Prokury, 336  
 Prusika, 215  
 Pskov, 269, 270  
 Puziv, 263  
 Pysarovychi, 367  
  
 Rabe, 184  
 Radekhiv, 134, 135, 285, 303, 306  
 Radieva, 367  
 Radiyiv, 184  
 Radoshytsi, 355  
 Radovychi, 60, 62, 63, 113, 242  
 Rava, 285, 333  
 Rava Ruska, 382  
 Richka, 336  
 Richytsia, 119, 245  
 Rivne, 57, 59, 175, 242, 246, 259, 287, 291, 296, 297, 308, 315, 322  
 Rokitne, 245, 246  
 Rosokhach, 328  
 Rotterdam, 12  
 Rozdil, 179  
 Rozhnitiv, 338  
 Rudky, 303  
 Rudnyky, 178, 213  
 Rushov, 338  
 Rychovoly, 173  
 Rykiv, 328  
  
 Sadzava, 213  
 Sambir, 253, 256  
 Sarny, 59, 226, 245, 246, 259, 263, 299  
 Sasiv, 173  
 Sebechiv, 205  
 Shepetivka, 242, 297, 315  
 Shumsk, 316  
 Sian, 373

- Sianok, 343, 368, 382  
 Sieniawa, 362  
 Siurazh, 315  
 Skole, 67, 68, 71, 256, 324, 326  
 Sloboda, 73  
 Sloboda Bolekhivska, 64, 68, 255  
 Smolensk, 273  
 Smolnyk, 172, 173, 184  
 Sniatyn, 353  
 Sokal, 285, 303, 333  
 Sosnytsia, 362  
 Stalingrad, 26, 36, 179, 393  
 Stankova, 338  
 Stanowa, 344  
 Stanyslaviv, 66, 324, 338, 373  
 Staryi Sambir, 169, 340, 342  
 Stavky, 263  
 Stepanska Huta, 242  
 Stizhok, 235, 236, 238  
 Strilbychi, 342  
 Strilky, 340, 342  
 Strilyska, 301  
 Strutyn Nizhny, 338  
 Sukhi Riky, 417  
 Sukhodil, 253  
 Surokhiv, 362  
 Sviate, 319, 362  
 Sviatoslav, 67, 68  
 Svynaryna, 63, 64  
 Synevidsko, 71  
 Synevidsko Vyzhne, 68  
  
 Tarnawa, 344  
 Tartak, 257  
 Teniatyska, 382  
 Teremne, 328, 330, 332  
 Ternopil, 3, 66, 313, 373  
 Tomashiv, 343  
 Torchyn, 263  
 Tovmach, 162  
 Triitsia, 367  
 Trukhaniv, 95  
 Tsineva, 68  
 Tsuman, 227, 303  
 Turia Velyka, 338, 340  
 Turianske, 215  
 Turka, 324, 326, 328, 340  
 Turopin, 138  
 Turyisk, 64  
 Turyinka, 221  
 Tvorylne, 367  
  
 Tyliava, 216  
 Tysiv, 72  
 Tysna, 172, 173, 174, 348, 354  
  
 Uhniv, 362, 376  
 Uhryniv, 353, 371  
 Uliuch, 379  
 Uman, 229  
 Ustryky Horishni, 173, 343  
 Ustyhul, 263, 264  
  
 Valna, 338  
 Veldizh, 68  
 Verbkovychi, 354  
 Verkhiv, 315, 316, 319  
 Veryny, 222  
 Viazovnytsia, 378  
 Vilnius, 261  
 Vilshanka, 367  
 Volodymyr Volynsky, 251, 263, 301, 306, 313  
 Volodymyrets, 226  
 Volosan, 172, 173  
 Voloshyny, 342  
 Voyniliv, 301  
 Vynnytsia, 229, 292  
 Vysochany, 382  
 Vytvytsia, 338  
  
 Wariazh, 371  
 Warsaw, 10, 262, 264, 347, 354, 360, 390  
 Wola Michowa, 344  
 Wroclaw, 373  
  
 Yablinka, 367  
 Yabloniv, 136, 137, 336  
 Yablonytsia, 379  
 Yamna Dolishnia, 367, 376  
 Yamna Horishnia, 367  
 Yapolot, 59, 60, 259  
 Yaroslav, 343, 378  
 Yasin, 355  
 Yavirne, 172, 173  
 Yavirnyk, 376  
 Yavoriv, 333  
 Yavorny, 72  
  
 Zabolotnyshcha, 306  
 Zabolotsi, 221  
 Zahiria, 367  
 Zaliznytsia, 322  
 Zaliztsi, 301  
 Zaluzh, 367

Zamahura, 108	Zhovkva, 221, 222
Zamlynia, 263	Zhovtanetska Volya, 222
Zamostie, 343	Zhovtantsi, 221
Zasmyky, 60, 62, 64, 263	Zhubrache, 172
Zatvarnytsia, 415, 417	Zhuravno, 303
Zavadka, 328, 344	Zhytomyr, 56, 57, 389
Zaviy, 67, 255, 324, 338	Zibolky, 222
Zbarazh, 119, 315	Zilina, 391, 392
Zhabie, 336	Ziliv, 112

## INDEX OF GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

- Baliarnia Forest, 258  
 Baltic Sea, 2  
 Berda Mountain, 174  
 Bilhorod Forest, 390  
 Black Sea, 2, 261  
 Black Forest, 66, 67, 68, 253, 255, 291, 300, 324, 326, 328, 333  
 Boh River, 2  
 Brody Forest, 222  
 Buh River, 137, 245, 249, 251, 262, 263, 264, 353, 354  
 Carpathian Mountains, 2, 3, 41, 66, 67, 139, 143, 182, 226, 230, 231, 246(fn.), 248, 249(fn.), 252, 253, 256, 266, 276, 291, 299, 303, 306, 310, 313, 328, 334, 343, 344, 350, 368, 386, 390, 428, 432  
 Caspian Sea, 274  
 Charles Mountains, 158  
 Chornyi Mist, 178  
 Crimean Mountains, 2  
 Dnieper River, iii, 1, 2, 6, 230, 243, 252  
 Dniester River, 2, 204  
 Don River, 2  
 Durna Mountain, 174  
 Elbe River, 36  
 Great Tatra Mountain, 391  
 Herbut Mountain, 206  
 Hill 224, 176  
 Hill 324, 320  
 Hill 1173, 328  
 Horyn River, 226, 259, 297, 301  
 Hoverla, Mount, 2  
 Huchra Stream, 266  
 Ilomka River, 167  
 Kamianna Hora, 258  
 Kholodny Yar, 96, 229, 387  
 Khreshchata Forest, 172, 184, 384  
 Khreshchata, Mount, 92, 386, 387  
 Klyva Hill, 336, 338  
 Kruhlytsia Mount, 95, 172  
 Kryvania Forest, 184  
 Kurile Islands, 274  
 Kurmanytsky Forest, 414, 416  
 Lopata Mountain (Lopata Hora), 71, 72, 73, 326, 328  
 Lopinnyk Mountain, 174  
 Lower (Little) Tatra Mountain, 158, 391  
 Magura Forest, 184  
 Maidan Forest, 319, 324, 328  
 Nezhukhivka River, 178  
 Obhiv Forest, 319  
 Orava River, 328  
 Oslava River, 215  
 Porytsk Hills, 139  
 Prut River, 2  
 Prypiat River, 2, 245, 247  
 Radvan Forest, 221, 222,



- Radvansky Forest, 306  
"Runok" Forest, 170  
Sian River, 108, 373  
Siurazh Forest, 322, 328  
Sluch River, 40, 245, 246, 297, 299, 301  
Solynka Stream, 174  
Styr River, 246  
Sukhi Riky, 417  
Tarnytsia, Mount, 255  
Tsuman Forest, 285  
Turyinka Forest, 222  
Tutia Stream, 138  
Uhrynivsky Forest, 206  
Vah River, 391  
Vistula River, 2, 364  
Volga River, 273  
Western Caucasus Mountains, 2  
Yablanko Stream, 174  
Zabolotnyshcha Forest, 306  
Zalizhska Mountain, 235  
Zaluska Hora, 257  
Zavadka River, 328  
Zbytyinka River, 319  
Zhuravo Forest, 418  
Zibolky Forest, 222

In his book the author discusses Ukrainian partisan tactics, including their flexibility, methods of attack, defense, ambush, diversions, raids, etc. He also discusses Communist and Nazi offensive and defensive tactics used against the Ukrainian Partisan Army.

The content of the book, *UPA Warfare in Ukraine*, is especially interesting in light of the fact that the United States has just recently concluded a partisan war in Southeast Asia.

The years since World War II have shown us that partisan warfare is the conflict of the future and that the western world should be prepared.





*About the Author*

Yuriy Tys-Krokhmaliuk was born in 1904 in Ukraine. He received an engineering diploma from the University of Vienna.

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