

УДК 94(477.5):329.73"1946/47"

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**POLICY OF THE MANAGEMENT OF THE OUN'S CARPATHIAN AREA ON THE
STARVING ARRIVALS FROM UKRAINE'S EASTERN REGIONS
(1946 – 1947)**

In the article on the basis of unknown and little-known archival documents one of still insufficiently investigated aspects of policy of the management of the OUN's Carpathian area (Karpatskyi krai), namely, the initiative of Ukrainian national liberation movement to help the starving population who arrived from the Ukraine's Eastern regions in 1946 – 1947, is clarified. By concrete examples it has been demonstrated that both the West Ukrainian population on the whole and the representatives of the OUN and UPA in particular treated those arrivals without any inimical attitude whatsoever.

Keywords: *the OUN's Carpathian Area (Karpatskyi krai), starving people, Eastern regions of Ukraine.*

Ref. 15.

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**ПОЛІТИКА КЕРІВНИЦТВА КАРПАТСЬКОГО КРАЮ ОУН ЩОДО ГОЛОДУЮЧИХ
ІЗ СХІДНИХ ОБЛАСТЕЙ УКРАЇНИ
(1946 – 1947)**

У статті на основі невідомих і маловідомих архівних документів висвітлюється один із малодосліджених аспектів – політика допомоги керівництва українського національно-визвольного руху голодуючим прибулим із Східних областей України (1946 – 1947). Конкретними прикладами доводиться відсутність ворожого ставлення учасників як західноукраїнського населення загалом, так і представників ОУН і УПА зокрема.

Ключові слова: *Карпатський край ОУН, голодуючі, Східні області України.*

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**ПОЛИТИКА РУКОВОДСТВА КАРПАТСКОГО КРАЯ ОУН ПО ГОЛОДАЮЩИХ ИЗ
ВОСТОЧНЫХ ОБЛАСТЕЙ УКРАИНЫ
(1946 – 1947)**

В статье на основе неизвестных и малоизвестных архивных документов освещается один из малоисследованных аспектов – политика помощи руководства украинского национально-освободительного движения голодающим прибывшим с Восточных областей Украины (1946 – 1947). Конкретными примерами приходится отсутствие враждебного отношения участников как западноукраинского населения в целом, так и представителей ОУН и УПА в частности.

Ключевые слова: *Карпатский край ОУН, голодающие, Восточные области Украины.*

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Problem statement. For today just another Soviet propaganda myth, namely one stating that Ukrainian nationalism originated exclusively in the western regions, is completely refuted. Now both researches and various strata of readers know very well that the creators of the Ukrainian nationalism ideology, actually, were the natives of East Ukraine. At the same time, the question of practical support of the inhabitants of Eastern regions of Ukraine by participants of the Ukrainian liberation movement still remains almost uninvestigated. In particular, what concerns the policy of the management of the OUN's Carpathian area liberation movement on rendering assistance to the starving arrivals from Ukrainian East in 1946 – 1947.

The analysis of researches. There is an obvious lack of researches about the activity of Ukrainian liberation movement in Eastern Ukraine. Among the most thorough studies on the subject it is necessary to mention the works by Yu. Shchur in which the author discloses the basic actions for the creation of OUN's cells in the near-Dnieper regions [15]. V. Nikolskyi's work [14] is focused onto the creation of an underground network in Donbass area. Also, the due attention should be paid to O. Dobrovolskyi's research [11] into the OUN activities in the east of Ukraine. The scheme of distribution of national-liberation ideas found numerous reflections in V. Ilnytskyi's works [12; 13].

The **purpose** of our work concerns the necessity to disclose the grounds of aid policy of the management of the OUN's Carpathian area concerning the starving population of the regions of Eastern Ukraine in 1946 – 1947.

Presentation of the basic material. The OUN's management paid very great attention to the attraction of the inhabitants of Eastern Ukraine to the common struggle and, for this reason, searched for all possibilities to reach its purpose. The realisation of the direction of OUN's work concerning the organisation of nationalist move in Ukraine's east (in the underground it was called either «Orlyk» or «Kharkiv») was carried out even at the expense of weakening of positions in Ukraine's western regions. The creation of OUN cells throughout all Ukraine and their preparation for actions in case of war was a defined priority. At the same time, it was necessary to use all possibilities for conducting of enlightening conversations with the arrived eastern population, as well as for activization of nationalist activities in the east of Ukraine.

The campaign to help the starving people in the Eastern regions of Ukraine manifested another touch to the characteristic of the underground work in the OUN's Carpathian area. In the survived documents, particularly of 1946 – 1947, the question on the starving easterns was discussed perpetually. Thus, in the letter withdrawn from the leader of Stanislaviv county OUN section M. Khmil'-«Vsevolod», the following was emphasized: «The omens of hunger and poverty, with which Stalin chained the lands of Eastern and Central Ukraine, became the cause of mass departure of our brethren from-over the Dnieper into the western regions to beg for bread. With a special appeal we call the people of WUL (Western Ukraine's Lands) to give an active help to the needy and, simultaneously, we address the personnel to hold a firm course and initiative in giving them help. Let's share what remains we still have with them. Apart from all kinds of material support, let the arrivals be shown the way of rescue in the armed revolutionary struggle of all the people. It is necessary to unite the protest and discontent of the near-Dnieper dwellers with the grand All-Ukrainian liberation movement of OUN – UPA, whose mother country became West Ukrainian lands. It is indispensable to widely popularise among them our program, purpose and ideas of the Ukrainian nationalist revolution because it is our certain way of earning bread and it is our struggle for existence» [5, 131]. In the information report of 1.10.1946 – 31.03.1947 H. Lehkyi-«Borys» wrote as follows: «Already in the beginning of the current year the population on the lands of Horodenka and Kolomyia counties began to starve. First of all, it is the territory between the Prut river and Dniestr river that the hunger increases up-tempo. [...] in Kolo-

myia railway station some 20 people die of hunger every day. The people, who are starving to death, are also detected in the suburban villages of the town of Kolomyia. Those who die are the Ukrainians from the upper Dnieper lands and Bessarabia» [8, 133]. The local special service squads attempted, on occasion, to stop the streams the starving hurrying along in search of food. Thus, on July, 13, 1946, at the railway station of the town of Stryi, there crowded a significant amount of people, who arrived by train from the Eastern regions of Ukraine and attempted to go into town. Though the train was surrounded by the NKVD men and the the people were not let out, the embittered crowd broke through the encirclement and burst through outside the railway station boundaries [5, 21].

In the letter dd. March, 1947 Yury Janyshyn- the «Shah» specified so: «Now in my territory» there is a real pilgrimage of people: entire hordes of people from the Eastern regions in awfully poor condition are going to ask for bread. They are old men, children and women, but there also turn out the soldiers, who were demobilized from the Red Army. In the village «N» the people recognized one of the demobilized men who in 1945 lodged in their village and carefully searched for hides with a probe. When in one house someone pointed this out, the man immediately escaped from the village.

«Going from house to house, these suppliants ardently pray and sing church songs» [5, 59]. In connection with the occurrence of a great amount of those starving the «Shah» gave instructions to organise night's lodgings for them in the empty houses in villages. In accordance with the instructions, the empty houses should have been provided with wood and light. Among the arrived, though in a careful manner, the nationalist propaganda was spread [5, 59].

Another underground document contains detailed descriptions of the starving arrivals from the regions of Eastern Ukraine and their searches for a piece of bread: «The arrivals go in long flocks from door to door, from house to house. The dwellers may or may not let them in, because they themselves may have hardly anything to eat. Often they get but two potatoes, a spoon of some food, a piece of bread piece, or a rouble. [...] But for them there is no time to linger on one place as the day is short and somewhere far away hungry children, relatives, wives are waiting for them, as well as invalid husbands, who had returned from the war for Stalin more dead than alive and now, when they can serve him no more in any way, Stalin entirely forgot about them, and so, they at daytime wander among the populace, and at night sleep in some appropriate hole. And, thus, they live so during several weeks, somehow refresh themselves, and, having collected a bit of «paper money», dry bread, potatoes, grain, and flour, they have already the ground to return home. But they are not always successful in bringing home these treasures. It may easily happen, that during their transportation the NKVD dogs will take away their knapsacks with food or that they will be stolen by thieves, who will throw their dead bodies away into the snow nearby the railway. And then unfortunate are both their children and relatives, because their husband-invalid will never again see them and they in vain will entertain a hope that their father, mother or son will come back to them and bring them some bread from «the Western Ukraine» [9, 155].

The leader Drohobych county section of OUN I. Lavriv-«Nechai» in November, 1946 so specified on the work amongst the eastern Ukrainians who came to buy bread to Drohobych area of the OUN: «Make every use of the arrivals for bread from Eastern Ukraine areas. Start conversing with them on our common struggle and our ideas, inculcate in them the hatred to the Bolsheviks. Try all means to supply them with our propaganda literature as much as possible so, that they can have brought it into the East Ukrainian land» [4, 15]. The help to the starving Easterns consisted also in mass distribution of propaganda leaflets (like, for example, «The Brethren from-over the Dnieper») [2, 99–100]. In Drohobych county special reportings of conversations with the starving Easterns were recorded and examples of granting them versatile help were notified [7, 248]. The importance of the problem of starvation was testified by its multiple discussions in the leading articles of the newspaper of the OUN's local section «The Way to Victory» (1947. – Part I (17): «Terrible news come from the Eastern lands. Sad messages about the life of our brethren in Ukraine's Eastern lands come to us. In the lands of Dnieper Ukraine starvation devours one victim after another, and the extortionate Stalin clique already sells abroad the Ukrainian wheat, which is but still growing and ripening. In these letters which we have at hand, the cry of despair and hopelessness caused by hunger, which rages there, and from the Bolshevik oppression, which crushes Ukraine, breaks from of our brethren's mouths» [6, 252].

Providing help to the needy Eastern arrivals consisted not only in appeals, but also had a practical expression. Thus, in the «Monthly Information Report for January, February and March, 1947» it was noticed that «On 3.16.1947 in the village of Rarancha of Novoselytskyi district of Chernivtsi region the insurgents broke a collective-farm shop and a co-operative. All the bread and goods for mass use were distributed among the poor and needy population» [8, 250].

The nationalists considered the causation of artificial famine as «the meanest possible method» used by the Soviet repressive system against the Ukrainian people. The cynicism of secret services consisted also in the use of separate needy as agents for collecting intelligence on the disposition of underground activists. At the same time, the agents discovered from among the starving people were recommended to be delivered to the state security service (SS) for investigation. In this context the following remark is of interest: «It is necessary to interrogate the honest-minded people – those arrivals from Eastern Ukraine, who suffer from starvation, and most interesting ones, – about the general condition, mood, living conditions and circumstances of work of the people in the place of their residence. The information, obtained in this way, should be directed to the higher instances in accordance with the protocol prescriptions» [5, 130–131].

The appearance of the needy East Ukrainians had but one negative aspect. Indicative in this context is the following quote of an underground document dated July, 24, 1946: «We have learnt that in the district [that of Kalush. – V. I.] there are many groups of Eastern Ukrainians of the so-called SC (starving cadres) who, facing the threat of starvation, proceed into Western Ukraine. Among them there are many Georgians, Moldavians, and others, as well as Ukrainians who not only rob young children, but also butcher them and, then, eat them. Here is an example: in the town of Kalush two twelve-year-old children were killed, in the village of Kameni these so called SC killed a sixteen-year-old girl. [...] The village population is on full alert and is armed with pitchforks and axes, ready every minute to defend themselves» [3, 177–178]. The same document also ascertained the following: «The starving arrivals seize children, kill them, hide the bodies in sacks and send them to the East. Such cases of slaughter mainly occur during the time of fairs. When the villagers had a chance to have captured the tramps-cannibals, the power representatives then arrested those criminals, but in several days set them at liberty» [7, 219].

At the same time, the underground activists noted the difficult economic and moral-psychological condition of the society, particularly, in Chernivtsi region. In the «Report for the Month of November, 1946» this was written: «In many villages the inhabitants begin to starve, they go to the woods to collect acorns, which they dry and mill, then add a bit of mashed potatoes and whoever has a little flour bakes flat cakes of this mix. In the village of Dobrynivtsi (Zastavniansky district) the population got ill because of eating acorns. In the same area, in the village of Horoshivtsi many people swelled up from starvation. In Besarabiia in the villages of Khotyn, Herziv and Sokyriany districts swelling of people from starvation is everyday occurrence. The population, on the whole, is oriented towards us» [8, 233]. In the «Information Report for the months: January, February, March, 1947» the following was noted: «Very often there are cases of imposing dues on peasants who already starve with their whole families». Thus, for example, in the village of Chereshen'ka (Vyzhnytsia district) a head of the family with 9 children, who were dying from starvation, was forced to loan one and a half centner of potato. [...] In the woods in early spring live skeletons of children with small baskets in their hands can be seen everywhere picking up young nettle to survive from starvation. Unyik today's time in Bukovyna there are entire belts of villages in which the population starves almost totally. [...] The ghastly apparition of starvation hangs today over once rich villages of Bukovyna» [8, 252].

Another display of cynicism on behalf of the Soviet management was particularly noteworthy. In 1947, just in the height of hunger, they began a collectivisation process in Chernivtsi region. By the beginning of 1948 in the western regions of Ukraine, on average, 5,4 % of the population were collectivized, whereas in Chernivtsi region proper this figure made up 22,2 % [1, 212]. The policy of the Soviet administration resulted in terrible consequences as it forced people to give way to despair. And so, in the special message «On the use of human corpses as food in separate areas of the Ukrainian SSR» it was pointed out that that the MSC (Ministry of State Security) of the UkSSR had a chain of testimonies on the use of human corpses as food (in Izmail region – 7 cases, Zaporizhzhia region – 1,

and Chernivitsi – 1 [10, 195]). For example, on February 20, 1947, in the village of Stroinka (Novoselytsk district), a peasants' family, that consisted of a mother – Dominika Nahrudna – and her four children aged from three to 16 (their father was lost at the battle-front in the beginning of 1945) ate from the corpse of their 10-year-old son and brother, who had died from starvation [10, 196].

Inhabitants of poor Carpathian villages and members of the underground who themselves were short of foodstuff, gave possible help to the starving population of Eastern Ukraine and, hence, more and more limited themselves and their own families in victuals. This, obviously, is the true acknowledgement of the attitude of the people of Western Ukraine and nationalists to the population of Eastern Ukraine.

Conclusions. As has been evidently shown, the campaign to help the starving inhabitants of Eastern Ukraine adds a conspicuous feature to the characteristic of the Ukrainian liberation movement. It serves a vivid example of the absence of inimical feelings towards natives of Ukraine's eastern regions and the desire to attract them into the ranks of fighters for the Ukrainian independent and sovereign state. This is all the more conclusive, as the inhabitants of Carpathian villages and underground organization men who suffered food shortages themselves, provided help to the starving arrivals from Eastern Ukraine and, therefore, had to limit themselves and their own families in the use of foodstuff. At the same time, this is a definite and trustworthy proof of the real attitude of the people of Western Ukraine and nationalists to the needy inhabitants of Eastern Ukraine's regions.

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Статтю подано до редакції 04.11.2016 р.