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Ya. Antoniuk, PhD, Staff member

Branch State Archive of Security Service of Ukraine, Kyiv, Ukraine

UVO AND OUN UNDERGROUND ACTIVITY IN THE TERRITORY OF POLISSYA VOIVODESHIP (1928 – 1939)

The article examines characteristic features of Ukrainian Military (UVO) and Ukrainian Nationalists Organizations (OUN) cells creation and activity in the territory of Polissia voivodeship, the Second Polish Republic. That is to say, on the lands which now belong to Belorussia. It is proved that local indigenous population – 'Polishchuks' – actively supported the Ukrainian national liberation movement. The first UMO cells emerged there almost simultaneously with the neighboring Volyn. Moreover, Kovel district became the spread center of Ukrainian nationalists influence on the north. At that time the main OUN means of activity was 'dark-blue line' tactic, when they achieved the influence on legal Ukrainian organizations and propaganda spreading.

The strong position among communist underground organizations, which were the main rivals of Ukrainian nationalists, was the regional peculiarity of the locality. It was ascertained that Polissia district leadership's flexibility of UNO allowed to conclude a temporary truce with them and to form the largest anti-Poland rebellion unit in the West part of Ukraine, called 'Polissia Lozovi Cossaks'. Afterwards, it appeared as the precursor of transformation of liberation movement to more extensive level and rise of the first Ukrainian Rebellion Army subordinate units in the territory of Polissia district.

Key words: underground, Ukrainian nationalists, Polish police, communists, boundary.

Recent events in Ukraine indicate that the national liberation struggle for our freedom is not over yet and also every achievement has to be defended under arms. It is evidently that enemy to us mass media arbitrarily interpret the international agreements striving to occupy entire regions of the sovereign state. They irreverently claim on their rights for taking under their care territories where the population speak the same language as they use. At the same time, they do forget that in the course of historical events part of ancient Ukrainian territories had come into so called 'neighbor's possession'. The question about their repatriation has never been raised on the official level, basing on authority of the international security system. Due to this fact there has appeared the necessity to examine the Ukrainian liberation movement development on these territories.

One of them is Beresteyskychyna, which now belongs to Belarus. The local indigenous Russified population 'Polishchuks', who are still living on those lands nowadays, are a part of Ukrainian nation. Their nationalistic consciousness and participation in the liberation struggle was not inferior to that of the other Ukrainian regions. The vivid example to that is the underground Ukrainian Military and Ukrainian Nationalists Organizations activity in the Polissia voivodeship¹, the Second Polish Republic territory.

This historical phenomenon is still less studied. The only works, which took into consideration highlighted events dated up to spring of 1939, are publications of the State Archive documents in the Beresteyskiy district. These publications were made by Belorussian scientist Olexsandr Illin from Pinsk. The other historians, who explored Polissia Lozovi Cossaks activity (that organization had been existing only for one month), are Petro Mirchuk, Mykola Posivnych, Ivan Pyschuk, Yuriy Kaliberda and Yuriy Lenartovych.

The first UMO cells in Polissia voivodeship were made of the former UNR army members [25, p. 20]. There is not so much information left about them. Thus, according to the police report for the 3rd quarter of 1928 in Stolynskiy county, "the UMO fives" were shaped by the former colonel "petliurivets" Olexander Nehrebskiy [15, p. 27]. Lawyer Vasyl Krynytskyi² and former UNR Justice Minister

Oryshevskiy secretly supported contacts with UVO in the city of Brest. Their connection with the headship was provided by the former lieutenant-colonel Rytchenko, who was engaged in the icons selling. Rytchenko attended apartment of Ivan Bludenko³, who was an engineer, or Mykola Kryzhanivskiy⁴, who was a lawyer, when he arrived to Brest. They discussed organizational matters under the cover of a card game. The lieutenant-colonel Rytchenko travelled from Brest to Kovel where he met a priest Ivan Guba⁵ [19, p. 563, 565]. Moreover, the connection between cells of UMO in Polissia was made and maintained through the sellers of "Hutsulian" carpets. They legally traveled on the territory of the voivodeship and propagated Ukrainian nationalistic ideas. In particular, the county headman of Brest wrote a notice to the police about carpet seller Yirii

Vasyl was in charge of 'Prosvita Polissya'. He maintained connection with UMO. Krynytskyi was arrested in 1940 by NKVD authorities and released from prison by Germans on June 22 1941. During occupation he worked as a judge in Brest. Vasyl Gnatovych immigrated to the West in spring 1944.

³ Bludenko Ivan was born in 1897, Hlukhiv town, Chernihiv region. He was a cornet of the UNR Army and sotnyk of the infantry. Ivan graduated from Ukrainian economic academy in Poděbrady (Czechoslovakia) in 1928. Ivan Bludenko worked as a hydraulic engineer. Starting from 1938 had been in charge of the Ukrainian Central Committee in Brest.

⁴ Kryzhanivskiy Mykola Klymovych was born in Tulchyn Vinnytsia region in 1876. He received a law degree at the University of Kyiv. He worked as a chief of the zemstvo in Brest. What is more, Mykola Klymovych was in charge of the court administrative department. He was presiding over 'Prosvita in Polissia' for a while. Arrested in 1940 by NKVD authorities of the Brest region, he died in prison.

⁵ Guba Ivan Semenovich was born on 21.06.1885 in village Bandurivka, Alexandria district of Kirovohrad region. He served in the UNR army. Guba graduated from pastoral courses at the Faculty of Theology, Kamenetz-Podilsk University. He worked as a priest in the village Dubove, Kovel district, Volyn region. In 1928 Guba organized restoration of the damaged in the First World War the Annunciation Cathedral of Kovel. Ivan was ordained as the Metropolitan Dionysius in Pinsk, Brest region, under the name of Archpriest Igor. He headed the UMO cell and UNO afterwards in Kovel. Ivan Semenovich was in the illegal state (autumn 1939 – spring 1941). He was tonsured, on 10 February 1942 in Pinsk, as a monk. Ivan Guba was appointed as the Uman Bishop of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church (UAOC). After a while – as the Archbishop of Poltava and Kremenchuh Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church (the newly opened diocese). Due to the German authorities prohibition he could not proceed with his duties. In July 1942 Ivan Guba takes Bila-Tserkva diocese after Manuil (Tarnavskiy). From December 1943 he became one of underground bishops of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. In spring 1944 the bishop moved to town Karlsruhe (territories of Baden-Württemberg, Germany). He was a bishop in Augsburg (Germany), from 1951 at the church of the Holy Trinity in New-York city (the USA). The priest belonged to the Orthodox confession of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church in exile (the Constantinople Patriarchate), headed by the Metropolitan Palladii (Vidybida-Rudenko). From 1961 he moved to Nykonor Metropolitan. In 1957 the priest became paralyzed. He died on 24.11.1966 in New-York city.

¹ Polissia voivodeship of the Second Polish Republic (Poland) was existing from 1919 to 1939. It was settled in the area by 36.668 square kilometers size. The population was 1.132.200 people. The voivodeship consisted of 9 districts: Brest, Drohychynskyy, Kobrin, Kosovo, Lunynets, Pinsk, Pruzhanskyi (territory of modern Belorussia), Stolynskiy (Vysotska and Berezynska gminas belong to Ukraine and all others to Belorussia), Kamini-Kashyrs'kyi (Ukraine).

² Krynytskyi Vasyl Gnatovych was born in 1888. His native village is Tyshovtsi, Tomashiv-Liubelskiy county. He worked as a lawyer in Brest.

Burdz⁶ [12, p. 76] settled on the street of Lublin union, 46, at his own house and lead 'luxurious life'. In that document was mentioned that the suspected one carpets seller keeps in touch with Ukrainian nationalists [20, p. 159].

According to the police report on 11 June 1932, in the Grykvovychi village, Pinsk county, the primary school teacher Maria Skulska lead correspondence with members of the UMO underground Semen Masnyi⁷ and also brothers Ivan⁸ and Roman⁹ Mytsyky [2, p. 6]. In Kobryn village the school teacher Vira Birusivna corresponded with onnivets Ivan Phita¹⁰ dweller of village Adamivka, Kovelskyi county, who at that time was studying at the Higher Trade School in Lviv [8, p. 21]. Maria Chernov-Zehovska, who lived in the village Telekhany, Kosiv-Podilsk county, was in correspondence with her brothers (OUN members) Yurko, Taras and Myroslav the Onyshkevychi¹¹ [3, p. 28].

It is known that at those times the UVO structure was based on territorial principle. The 'district' with the head of the 'district council' embraced borders of voivodeship, 'kurins' – couple of counties, 'sotnia' – a county, 'chiota' – gmina [15, p. 29-31]. It is more probable that not numerous UVO cells of Polissia voivodeship were parts of the Kovel kurin "District V" (Volyn voivodeship) structure.

Ukrainian nationalists had stronger positions in south counties of Polissia voivodeship, where they could get support

⁶ Burdz Yuriy Yuriyovych was born on 1882 in village Stari Kruty, Kosiv county (Lesser Poland). During the First World War he evacuated together with the Russian army. He received a certificate of salesman № 5406 on 7 September 1924.

⁷ Masnyi Semen Mykolaiovych was born 1908 in village Verkhne Syniovydne, Strytskyi county. He was a member of UMO and arrested in May 1929 by the investigator of the town Stryi administration. Semab Mykolaiovych was arrested for the attempt upon professor's Yatskevych live. He was convicted by the Circuit Lviv Court to eight years of imprisonment. In 1930 Masnyi was suspected in an arson of labor barracks of the 'Doddula' business house. He was arrested in Autumn 1939 by the NKVC authorities. His further life is unknown.

⁸ Mytsyk Ivan Danylovych was born on 1912 in village Verhnie Syniovydne, Strytskyi county. He studied at Stryi high school. Ivan Danylovych was a member of UMO and 'Plast'. He was arrested in 1928 by the police of Skole town and in May 1929 was imprisoned for the attempt upon professor's Yatskevych live by the town Stryi investigating administration. Mytsyk was convicted by the Circuit Lviv Court to a month term. In June 1931 he was arrested by the Lviv police for the Polish police officer, Eugen Berezytskyi, murder. He was convicted to 15 years of imprisonment and served his sentence in the jail of Drohobych town.

⁹ Mytsyk Roman Danylovych was born in 1909, Verhnie Syniovydne village of Stryi county. He was a member of UMO and arrested by police for unsuccessful mailman mugging on 6 of May 1929 in Lviv. Roman was convicted by the Circuit Court to 8 years sentence. He spent his imprisonment in Drohobych.

¹⁰ Phita Ivan, his alias 'Boruta', was born in 1910, Zaturtsi village Lohachynskyi district, lived in Adamky settlement Turiyskyi district, Volyn region. He worked as a policeman at Turiyskyi district (on summer 1940). Ivan was a SB boivka referent of the Kovel over-district of OUN. Phita lost his life on 21 of November 1944 in the battle with NKVS troops near to Syniavka village Turiyskyi district.

¹¹ Onyshkevych Myroslav Hryhorovych, alias 'White', 'Bohdan', 'Furius', 'Oleg', 'Orest', 'Cherniava'. He was born on 26 January 1911 in Ugniv town, Sokalskyi district, Lviv region. Myroslav was from a bank clerk family. He studied at Kovel land surveying school. In 1930 Onyshkevych was a co-founder of the first UNO fifth situated in Kovel town. He became an attendant of the Kovel UNO fifth (from August to September 1931). He was called up to the Poland military service and there arrested in 23 September 1931 by police. On November 5, 1932 Myroslav was convicted by the Lutsk Circuit Court to a year sentence. The police arrested him on November 5, 1932 again. The prisoner was released due to the amnesty after Józef Piłsudski death in 1935. He returned to Ugov where worked at the attorneys office. In 1938 Myroslav moved to Lviv with his family, there started to work at the local shop. He was a member of the UNO underground group in the east part of Ukraine (July 1941- 1942). From 1942 to 1943 Onyshkevych was a military assistant of Lviv region. From 1943 to April 1945 he was a chief of military stuff and a deputy commander of the 'Buh' military district. Myroslav Onyshkevych was the first deputy commander of the UNO kurin 'Galaïda' military stuff from March to April 1944. The OUN mace and flag man (26 January 1944), UPA warrantor (15 April 1945). Onyshkevych was withdrawn from the military district 'Buh' on April 28 1945 and assigned as a head of 'Sian' military district. He was executed by a firing squad as the prison Monteliupah (Warsaw city) court sentenced on July 6 1950.

from the well-developed underground groups in Kovel county [17, p. 182]. In fact, three dwellers of Velykyi Obshyr village: Kindrat Makarchuk, Trohym Kalaputs¹², Trohym Glushchuk; and three others from Kamin-Kashyrsk town: Eugen Karanovych¹³, Ivan Paradyshchuk and Petro Babiaka were suspected in connection with UVO in 1931 [7, p. 26]. On August 18 1933, while making a search, the police found a communication center of the underground in Kiverts town, Lutsk county. It was called 'Kamin-Kashyrskiy town, Mykola Kropyvnytskyi, postbox № 115'. The center was situated in the apartment of Ukrainian nationalist Konstiantyn Petronchuk¹⁴ and discovered among other secret addresses.

There is no coincidence, that Volodymyr Gaskevych, a local church sexton, created the first UVO "provid" ("chota") at Krymne village Kamin-Kashyrskiy county at the beginning of summer 1933. This provid had sub-units for youth in Liubeshiv and Chervusha (10 people) and also other villages of Khotchivska gmina (approximately 50 people) [4, p. 29]. Oleksandr Fedorchuk (the chief), Seman Movetyniuk (the secretary), Fedir Moniuk and Anatoliy Getmanchuk (military messengers) were the local residents consisted in the organization leadership. Nazar Rudchyk, Roman Boiko, Andrii Shakhno, Efym Mykolaievych, Dmytro Sydorchuk, Ivan Prodyschuk (the former communist), Andrii Fedchuk (the village soltis), Filimon and Andrii Vlasius were just the ordinary members. Nevertheless, Gaskevych stayed an unofficial chief of the 'provid'.

The 'provid' meetings took part at a small village Hmelivka in Moniuk apartment. The members decided to accumulate arms at the first such gathering on Jun 22 1933 and sent 22 zlotys, collected by them previously, to the editorial office of the 'Borotba' newspaper in Lviv. Such a gesture was done in order to help 'Ukrainian political prisoners'.

The next meeting occurred in four days. The members discussed tasks which the UVO underground needed to resolve. Although, they took into consideration an unsatisfactory connection with the leadership. That was a reason to entrust to Anatoliy Getmanchuk matters related to adjusting the line of the underground connection with Lutsk through Velykyi Obzyr village.

At the third time the 'provid' cell met on July 9 1933. This time the subject of their agenda was a necessity to attract new members. Gaskevych and Moniuk urged to increase propaganda actions. They advised the underground members to practice self-education and read books about Ukrainian history. According to instructions received from Lviv, which were based on the affiliated branches of UMO in Hotesliv gmina, was planned the creation of a new 'provid'.

¹² Trohym Kalaputs (his son was Kalaputs Kyrylo Trokhymovych) had an aliases 'Zarichnyi', 'Eagle', was born in 1916, Khoteshiv village, Kamin-Kashyrskiy district, Volyn region. He was a mobilization-organizational assistant of the UNO Ratniv district provid from 1943. From 1944 Kyrylo became an attendant of Kamin-Kashyrskiy over-district of the UNO. He was a member of the UNO Brest district provid. He died in 1946 while fighting with operational group of the NKVS Ratniv district department.

¹³ Karanovych Eugen Panteleimonovych, alias 'Caravan', was born in 1901 Sokal town Lviv region. He graduated from Medicine Faculty of Jagellon University in Kraków and worked at the Ukrainian National Lviv Hospital. He was a member of the Ukrainian doctors community from 1930 and from 1931 dwelled and worked as a doctor in Kamin-Kashyrskiy town. Starting from the summer of 1941 he became the main district doctor. From the spring 1943 headed the UIA hospital in Khoteshiv village Kamin-Kashyrskiy district. From September 1943 Eugen was the chief doctor of BO "Tury". Karanovych died on July 25 1944 together with 70 UPA soldiers in an ambush organized by the Soviet partisan detachment of special purpose 'The Hunters' near Pisky-Richytski village Ratniv district Volyn region. Karanovych Eugen was buried in a cemetery near the church of Hotesliv village.

¹⁴ Petronchuk Konstiantyn Hnatovych was a native citizen of Prylutske village, Kiverts district, Volyn region. He originated from the family of a circuit court servant in Lutsk city. Konstiantyn became a member of 'Plast' from 1930. He was a county military reconnaissance representative of Lutsk county OUN leadership from 1933. Petronchuk was arrested and served his sentence in Sedletska prison (Poland) (August 1939).

On August 19 1933 during another meeting the members resolved to send collected funds to Zdolbuniv county in order to help the underground members arrested by police. They decided to pay for Ukrainian periodicals subscription by the other part of money, in order to provide the underground members of the Liubeshiv commune with those publications. In addition to that, Gaskevych reported about his trip to Lviv and, at the same time, criticized Krymne village cell activity. During his speech he made the Gorohiv county underground as a notable example, by his words: 'people there feel no regrets to sacrifice their blood and property for Ukraine'. They decided to accelerate gaining weapons which they had to preserve confidently and also to begin preparation to sabotage in communes where population did not support the underground. Andrii Shahno claimed regarding the above mentioned issue that he was ready to explode a bridge or a train as far as he was not afraid of dying if it would help his children to live better.

The 'provid' meeting on September 3 1933 was devoted to discussion of the letter from the underground member Terentii Sai, who served in the Polish armed forces on the Silesia territory. He informed that in a short period of time the great rebellion would break out. The Polish armed forces would refuse to put it down since 'they would have a possibility to rebel as well'. He recommended that the members of the cell armed themselves and waited for a favorable opportunity to rise. The underground member Gnat Chervysch replied that he could gather up to ten lads 'who are ready to any actions'. What is more, there were three carbines and also ten hand grenades prepared for that matter. At the end of the meeting all participants received Ukrainian nationalistic brochures [5, p. 29-30].

The Galicia re-settlers were an important support for creation of the Polissia underground OUN set of cells. The mainstream of them moved to those territories to find some better luck because there they could buy cheaper land and find more prestigious job. At those territories they restored the Greek-Catholic church which was a long time forgotten by the Orthodox population. The newly arrived 'uniat' priests were those who one of the first developed Ukrainian nationalist ideas propaganda in Polissia. As a vivid example, there was a priest by the name Geleziy¹⁵, who had arrived to the Merlinski hamlets Stolinskyi county from the Studite Brethren Univ monastery (Ternopil voivodeship), as he was invited by the Greek Catholic community on November 7 1933. He established Ukrainian as a language for the masses right after his coming, although, he organized Ukrainian church choir and school. The local Orthodox population rapidly got into his influence owing to his active measures [5, p. 13]. The priests Jozefat Kowalchuk and Andrii Abrahamov arrived from the Univ monastery to help him soon after [13, p. 37]. The Galicia priests' influence was strong to such an extent that in September 1935 the Pinsk county diocese had to occur under the leadership of Burba diocesan. The Polissia police considered that the most part of its members were under the influence of OUN [10, p. 68].

The communists were strong competitors and ideological enemies for UNO in the Polissia voivodeship. The propaganda was the only one opposition to their impact. A good few of Communist Party of Western Belarus (CPWB) members and 'Selrob' members sympathized with nationalistic ideas and switched to UNO side. On December 1934 the police arrested former district committee CPWB adviser Victor Jeremeichyck¹⁶ in Luninets town because he was suspected in ties with UNO. The circuit court sentenced

him to imprisonment in the Bereza Kartuska jail. Jeremeichyck returned to his parental home, which is situated on Fabrychna street number 10, in a month after that. At the same time the police intercepted his letter dated on February 24 1934 and addressed to Ounivets Oleksandr Kudrya from Stepan village, Kostopil county, who had just been released from the prison. Jeremeichyck left away into unknown direction in order to avoid next arrest at the beginning of January 1935 [17, p. 313, 318].

The meticulous propaganda and organizational work yield its results. Gradually the independent 'circuit provid' had appeared from the isolated OUN cells in the territory of Podilia voivodeship. Onyskyi was the first assigned leader of it. The Polish police assumed him to be one of the Onystski¹⁷ cousins from Ratne town [17, p. 144]. The Polish agent 'Gural'¹⁸ denounced on the 1st of December 1934 that the following people were members of the Brest county OUN 'provid': Mykola Kryzhanivskyi, Ivan Bludenko and the judge Mykola Yakovenko. Every of the above mentioned was a head of 'five'. There was stated that the OUN 'provid' of Kobryn county and Pruzhanskyi county as well, consisted of such members: a lieutenant in reserve Volodymyr Volohodskyi, major lieutenant lustyn Gnoianko and a building technician Kramarenko. Each of them stood at the head of OUN 'three' [19, p. 566-567].

The OUN organization influence was spread also on Stolypinskyi and Pinskyi counties. The police reports mentioned the following people as 'Ukrainian nationalists': Roman Shynkar, the resident of Lutynsk village Vysotska gmina, and also residents of Korotychi village Horostska gmina by the names Andrii, Stepan¹⁹ and Maria Strubyski (they originated from Babyn village, Sambirskyi county) [7, p. 30].

The OUN headship planned creation of a separate Polissiya Kraiova Ekzekutyva in spring 1936. It should have included Grubeshiv county Lublin voivodeship as well [17, p. 96]. Volodymyr Viitiuk²⁰, the district head guide, was

¹⁷ Onysko Mykola Tomasovych, born on 6.12.1892 in Ratne town Kovel county. He was at service in the Russian army as a lieutenant (1918). Mykola was in touch with the head of post administration in Ratne, who was a teacher by the name Mysechko from Velymche village Datyn gmina.

Onysko Fedot Vakulovych born on 3.05.1897 in Ratne town. He worked as a teacher in Kovel county. Together with his brother Mykola they organized a group of volunteers in Ratne 1918 to depart for Lviv. He was a member of Communists Western Ukrainian Party (KPZU). He had half and a year imprisonment for that activity.

¹⁸ Bek-Babiev Dzheval, by the agent's nickname 'Gural', 15.05.1890, was born in Ubezhangskaya stanytsa, Labinsk district (North Caucasus), Circassian. Dzheval was a descendant of Crimean Khans, Sultan-Giray dynasty. In Poland he pretended to be a Kuban Cossacks colonel. Gural created 'Cossacks stanytsa' in the name of Kaledin in 1931, Pinsk and lead it as an otaman. He collected endowments from individuals and international organizations for the 'Free Cossacks' organization. Although, the agent supported close contacts with the OUN headship in Brest, Kholm, Pidliashia and Ghorodnenshchyna districts. In 1932 Bek-Babiev was recruited by the Polish secret service. He got from 5 to 20 zloty for each spy report. The activist was arrested in 1934 by the Polish police for fraud and sentenced to a suspended imprisonment term.

¹⁹ Strubyskyi Stepan Ivanovych was born on 18.07.1908 in Babyn village Sambir county. He studied at Sambir Pedagogical Seminary. Stepan was a member of youth organization 'Plast'. From 1929 became an OUN member. Stepan distributed the underground leaflets in Babyn, Pyniany and Gorodnia gminas on 2nd of May 1932 and 4th of November 1933. Strubyskyi was arrested by the police and expelled from the 3rd year of the seminary for such an activity. He moved to Lviv on 3rd of March 1934. At the beginning of January 1936 he settled on Kostelna street in Dorogochyn town at the draftsman Sergii Trofymchuk apartment.

²⁰ Viitiuk Volodymyr Petrovych, alias 'Chase', 'Black', was born in 1913, Nagima village Dorogochynskyi district Brest region. He was an OUN member starting from 1930. Volodymyr served as a minor lieutenant in the Polish army. Viitiuk was a head of the OUN Polissia county provid. He was a Polissia Lozove Cossacks commander at lieutenant rank (1939). Viitiuk was assigned as a military instructor and a deputy of Ivan Klymiv (1940). He crossed the border from Krakow to Lviv and was arrested by the NKVS forces on 30th of March 1940, sentenced on 29 of October 1940 to fusillade. His sentence was executed on 10th of November 1940 in the prison number 1 at Lonskogo street in Lviv.

¹⁵ Semenius Grygoriy was born on 2.09.1895 in Pechenizhyn village, Kolomyia county.

¹⁶ Jeremeichyck Viktor Pylypovych was born on 12.12.1908 in Lunynets town.

in charge of organizational actions realization [1, p. 167-191]. At that period of time the main efforts were concentrated on the cooperation with legal organizations and nationally conscious Ukrainian priest [18, p. 137].

The head guides were recommended to employ the 'blue line tactics' (the intelligence one), according to discovered near Lutsk instructions for head guides of Brest, Kobryn, Pinsk and other counties of the Polissia voivodship. Such tactics was used instead of the 'red line' (the battle one) because it was considered at that time more reasonable. It was needed to distribute the periodical press among the adult population using legal ways. Their periodicals were as follows: 'Avangard', 'New village', 'Announcer', 'Ukrainian voice', 'Our cry', 'SelfEducator', 'Cheap book'. For children and youth they had 'Little friends', 'Child's world', 'Young generation'. For women there were 'New house', 'Women's freedom', 'Women's fate' [16, p. 106].

Furthermore, sometimes the subversive OUN groups, which arrived from Galicia, concealed in the Polissia territory. For example, in July 1935 such 'boivka' was situated near Maloryta. It was waiting for an order from the headship to move to the place of conducting revenge demarche for 'pacification' [10, p. 88].

It is worth considering, there were two legal organizations in Polissia voivodship under the strong OUN influence. First of all it was 'Prosvita' headed by Volodymyr Krynytskyi, with a secretary Andrii Grynevych, a treasurer Pavlo Artemiuk and a member of the headship Gnat Olesiuk. 80 % of the 29 members in Brest county were supporters of UNDO and 20% of OUN [11, p. 92]. In particular, the police shutted down 'Prosvita' cells in Orikhove village Brest county and Bolota village Kobryn county due to the fact that they supported Ukrainian nationalists in 1933 [24, p. 140]. Subsequently, those were the very settlements where the OUN cells arose afterwards.

The Ukrainian bank, leaded by Vasul Krynytskyi, with a deputy Andrii Grynevych, a secretary Mykola Kryzhanivskiy, council members Anton Kushniruk and Ivan Kobylko, took a bit less part. From 1074 members there were 40% of UNDO supporters, 20% – OUN, others – 'ugodiivtsi', 'petliurivtsi' [11, p. 92].

The part of Orthodox priests who were the supporters of church Ukranization arranged cooperation with OUN and called OUN members to work for them. The OUN member Grygorii Skoniuk²¹ had arrived for such a reason to Antopil town Kobryn county in order to become there a sexton of the Orthodox parish in August 1937. The gmina vogt Kursarskyi complained to the police that Grygorii always wore an embroidered shirt and he was taken as an example for all church choir. What is more, he asked local woodworker to produce some wooden frames for Ukrainian poets and writers portraits. He promised to vogt that choir would sing only Polish songs during the annual 'Sea day' celebration at Prypiat shore. Nevertheless, there were two folk Ukrainian songs performed after an anthem, the 'Poland has not perished yet'. That performance puzzled the Polish population of the little town [14, p. 21]. The member of district OUN executive Anatolii Borkovskiy²² had arrived from Kostopil town, by the

invitation of Mykola Petrovych, the priest of Olholm village Chartoryiska gmina Stolinskyi county, in order to become a sexton on June 6 1938 [9, p. 33].

"Student trips" on boats were one of the OUN members penetration methods to the Polissia, during 1938. Under the guise of the tourists, they moved along Bilozersky and Korolivsky canals to Pinsk. They were getting acquainted with the area and transporting the underground literature. In addition to that, in August 1938, the police were spying on the river tourists Borys Witoszynskiy, Roman Kulyniak, Liubomyr Pelenskyi, Stepura Taras and his sister Oksana²³, who soon after led Polissia district OUN provid [6b p. 22-23].

Ivan Klymiv²⁴ intended to create Volyn National OUN Council in spring of 1939. Its activity should have embraced Volyn, Kholmshchyna, Pidlashia and Polissya territories [18, p. 137].

The creation of first combat units was planned on the territory of the last above mentioned region. Semen Levytskyi²⁵ and Andrii Mandzi²⁶ were a group of

'Fatherland'. He was a member of the OUN District Executive (village Zvydzhe). After its being suppressed by police, Anatolii was visiting arrested members of OUN in the Kostopil town prison.

²³ Stepura-Pelenska Oksana Hryhorivna, alias "River", was born in 1916, her native village is Zhvanets, situated in Kamianetz-Podilskyi district of Khmelnytsk region. She lived in Lutsk, was a member of the OUN from 1932, graduated from Lutsk high school, Faculty of History at Warsaw University (1939). Oksana was married to a lawyer Liubomyr Pelenskyi. She was a part of Polissia county OUN provid. Stepura-Pelenska was a participant of the Polissia Lozovi Cossacks. She headed a subdivision (boivkas) of 15 people. On the road to Lviv she was captured on September 22, 1939 by an ambush divisions of retreating Polish army there the captive was brutally tortured to death.

²⁴ Klymiv Ivan Stepanovych, aliases are '555', 'Aridnyk', 'Harmash', 'Hryts', 'Demian', 'Dmytriv', 'Euhen', 'Zaozernyi', 'Kuliba', 'Legend', 'Marmash', 'Prymorka', 'Semen', was born in 29.10.1909, his native village was Silets Belzkyi, Sokal district, Lviv region. Ivan was from a village family of a local vogt. From 1921 he studied at the school of Sokal. Klymiv became a member of "Plast" (9th battalion (kurin) named after Petro Doroshenko) and UVO. From 1929 he studied at the Law Faculty of the Lviv University. Ivan entered the UNO. Klymiv was arrested by the police and remained in prison (May 1932 – end of 1932). He was an attendant of the Sokal district OUN provid and a member of the regional OUN and PZUZ Executive (1935 – 1937). The second time Ivan was arrested by police in Lutsk. He was imprisoned and kept in the Bereza Kartuzka jail (August 1935 – January 1936). The third time he was arrested by the police and jailed in Sedletska prison (near Warsaw) (February 1937 – September 1939). He returned home but under a threat of arrest from the NKVD side, that was a reason for him to move to Krakow (Poland) secretly. He passed three months training in the sergeant major school of Eugene Konovalets. He actively supported the revolutionary leadership of the OUN called after Stepan Bandera. He was appointed as a representative of the OUN government in the OUN and PZUZ regional executive. Since May 1940, he was an attendant of the OUN regional Executive in Lviv. Since December 1940, Ivan Klymiv became an attendant of the OUN regional Executive in Volyn. Starting from June 30, 1941 he was a minister of political coordination in Ukrainian State Government. Since July 1, 1941 he was a principal commandant of the Ukrainian National Revolutionary Army. What is more, he was the OUN attendant in Kiev region. In addition to that since 1942, Ivan Stepanovych was the head of the OUN military attendance organizational department. Ivan was an organizer of the first OUN military formations in Volyn. He was removed from his position as well as from the structures of the OUN provid in April 1942 at the OUN(B) conference, in the village of Novo Yarychiv Kamianka-Buh district, Lviv region, due to the fact that he attempted to make a coup and seize a power over the organization. Klymiv was arrested on December 4, 1942 in Lviv Gestapo and tortured in prison on Lontskoho Street. In October 14, 1952 the General Command of the UPA promoted him posthumously to the rank of UPA general-colonel and awarded the Golden Cross of Merit.

²⁵ Levytskyi Semen Semenovich, by aliases "Tick", "Falcon", "Rat", was born in 6.5.1916, village Byshky, Kozivskyi district, Ternopil region. He was a member of OUN since 1932. Simon was an organizer and performer of several military acts. He was Polish political prisoner (1933, September 1935 – January 1936). In addition to that, he was one of the organizers and leaders of Polissia Lozovi Cossacks. Levytskyi destroyed Polish cavalry unit near to Dorohychyn town, Brest region. He had immigrated to Poland territories, before the Red Army arrival. Semen was a head of the OUN Berezahany powiat provid (autumn 1939 – spring 1940). He illegally crossed the Soviet border with German in May 1940. Semen was a head of OUN Berezahany powiat provid (summer – autumn 1941). He was an employee of the OUN district provid (end of 1941 – autumn 1942). He was a head of OUN Peremyshl regional provid (autumn 1942 – April 1943). Levytskyi was a prisoner of the German concentration camps Auschwitz and Oswiecim. He was liberated in May 5, 1945 from the Ebensee concentration camp (Austria).

²¹ Skopiuk Grygorii Volodymyrovych was born 25.03.1912 in Lutsk town. He graduated from the priests seminary. Grygorii serviced as a private in the 63rd infantry regiment of the Poland army in Torun, he was an OUN member. On November 11 1936 the police conducted a search in his Lutsk apartment; however, they had not found any proofs of his involvement into the underground activity.

²² Borkovskiy Anatolii Mykolaivovych was born 21.09.1914 in Kolodno village Zaruddia gmina Kremenets county. He lived in Medvezhe village Chartoryiska gmina Lutsk county and Studyn village Kostopil county. Anatolii studied at Polytechnic school of Vilno town where he was a member of Ukrainian-students committee. He was subscribed to periodicals 'Voice' and

experienced underground members who had arrived from Berezhane to Polissia for that purpose [23, p. 589]. These are local residents who joined to their activity: Sylvester and Petro Matskevyches, a teacher Semen Los, a wealthy owner Kindrat Adamyskiy, who lived on a farm near Skybychi village Dorohychynskiy county [26, p. 226]. They declared themselves as successors for leading the Ukrainian battalion activities. The battalion was created in 1919, Kobryn for a campaign against the Polish [21, p. 38]. The underground group planned to organize an attack on the prison in Bereza Kartuska and attempt to kill Governor Janusp Kostek-Biernatskiy [26, p. 226].

In July 1939, the OUN District Executive sent Petro Baschuk (he was appointed as a district head)²⁷, Vasyl Zahakailo²⁸ and Hovailo – 'Romashivskiy' from Lviv, in order to help Polissia district provid [21, p. 38]. When they had arrived to Polissia, they found out that the real state of matters did not allow realizing their intended targets. Apart from that, soon was beginning changed their plans substantially [28, p. 52]. Therefore, Pelenska in the village Liubiaz, Liubeshiv gmina passed organization leading to Baschuk and went for getting some help to Lviv with the underground group of 6 people [26, p. 227].

The other members of the "district provid" arrived to Adamyskiy's hamlet, which became their headquarters. In addition to that, riflemen 'Kost' and 'Countryman' and couriers 'Sasha', 'Wolf' and 'Kolias' dwelt there. They had on their service a few out-of-date rifles, sawn-off rifles and three guns (like FN-6.35 and FN-7.65) with the 27 bullets for them, and a hunting knife [21, p. 39].

At the same time, the main underground group instruments were a small library, a typewriter and printing press. Baschuk together with the other provid members personally agitated 'sympathizers', also they were preparing them to rebellion. They published a leaflet with an exhortation not to go to the Polish army and join the OUN. Those measures had an unexpected result. The volunteers

group had been recruited to a military detachment of Lozovi Cossacks almost immediately. Thereafter, their number increased each time [26, p. 227, 231].

The increased OUN activity focused local communists underground attention on it, that was a reason for communists to decide establishing a temporary alliance with the nationalists [21, p. 40]. The meeting took place at the end of July 1938 in the forest near Klenky village. OUN was represented by Baschuk. The communists were represented by – Zemliak, Baida, Fedir from Yanov town (he was a former second secretary of KPZB in Polissia voivodeship), Lopachuk and Prokopovych, and also, delegates from Dorohychyn, Pinschyna and Sarnenschn territories. The parties committed themselves to provide people under a single command. Fedir joined the 'district provid'. Furthermore, the insurgent group was called as Polissia losovi Cossaks as communist suggested [28, p. 52-54].

In future Baschuk faced a serious problem of weapons shortage. The only possibility to get some weapon was to take it away from the Polish soldiers [21, p. 40]. The underground group discovered that military air defense 'stanytsias' were situated in villages Klenky and Klischi. The last mentioned one was situated in the forest district and was protected only by a dozen of officers. Being surprised, they did not resist and gave away 18 rifles, 6 pistols, 2 boxes of bullets, a box of grenades and 2 boxes with zlotys. 15 rifles, 3 pistols, a box of bullets and 10 grenades from all gained were sent to Fedir [26, p. 245].

The success of the operation agitated 20 more volunteers to join the rebellions. Armed and refilled, group of 'lozovyky' disarmed two more military 'stanytsias' near Ivanov town the same night. The revolt spread at lightning speed on all other the surroundings from that place. 'Boivkas' named 'Via' and 'Eagle' made an armed rebellion in Dorohychyn county. In three days the military 'stanytsias' and the police office were disarmed in the environs of Skybych, Motolia and other villages. They took a significant amount of rifles, a machine gun and bullets. The armed groups were created also in Gutov, Dorohychyn, Klenky, Okdymyr, Strilnyi and Ivanovo [21, p. 40]. Taking the rebellion development into consideration, 'lozovyky' formed military headquarters, headed by Baschuk [26, p. 245].

Despite the great rebellions success, the amount of whom had increased rapidly up to 218 people. It was caused not because of their well preparations and weapons equipment but because of retreating Polish army confusion. [21, p. 41]. That is why, Polissia Lozovi Cossacks found themselves in a difficult situation when the Red Army crossed a border with Poland in September 17, 1939. On the one side there were many Communists among rebellions; on the other side, OUN members understood their weakness in that area. Polissia OUN district provid leadership decided to evacuate [27, p. 8]. Some OUN weapons and gained possessions were distributed among local underground groups, and another part was taken with them to Volyn and Galicia [22, p. 124].

To sum it up, in the territory of Polissia voivodeship UVO and OUN underground development had the same level as in many other Western Ukraine regions. The leading role always belonged to the local underground members, despite of a notable percentage of non-native, especially Galician people, among the founders of the first cells. The main attention in the organization activity methods was focused on promoting and gaining influence on the Ukrainian legal organizations. The main peculiarity of Ukrainian nationalist underground organizations on Polissya was a strong competition with the communists.

He immigrated to Canada and lived in Toronto. He took active participation in the Ukrainian diaspora activity. He was an author of memoirs.

²⁶ Mandziy Andrii, pseudonym "Baida", was born in Berezhany district, Ternopil region. He was a member of UNO.

²⁷ Baschuk Petro Ivanovych, alias "Chok" was born in 26.11.1911, in Pyvovschyna, Sokal district, Lviv region. He was an OUN member since the beginning of the 1930s. He studied at the school of Redemptorist Priests in Lviv. He graduated from state Przemyśl high school with where studied in the Ukrainian language (1933). Petro was a member of 'Secret Plast'. He was a student of Journalism faculty at Warsaw University (1933 – 1934). Baschuk was a political prisoner in Bereza Kartuska jail (August 1934 – March 1935). After being released he worked at 'Cheap Book' publishing house in Lviv (1935 – 1936) and also at the affiliated branch of 'Native School' organization in Sokal (1936 – 1937). Petro Baschuk was a member of the OUN district provid in Sokal. He was one of the leaders of OUN military groups called 'Wolves'. He was arrested again by the police in August 1937. He escaped from prison Brygidky in Lviv, June 16, 1939. The fugitive was directed by "Lopatynskyi" to Polissia. He was a head of the OUN Polissia County (August – September 1939). He was a head in Belz OUN County (1940 – 1941). He was an employee of the OUN and PZUZ district executives. By the OUN order Petro worked as a manager of transitional stations for captives. He became a political prisoner of the Auschwitz concentration camp (January 1943 – December 1944). Baschuk lived in the West Germany, and from 1949 in Winnipeg (Canada). He was an active participant in social and political life of the Ukrainian diaspora. He was a member of the Terenoviy OUN provid (b) in Canada. He died on May 29, 1995 in Winnipeg.

²⁸ Zahakailo Vasyl Ilkovych, alias 'Birch', 'White', 'Bug', 'Green', was born 01.11.1918. His native village is Pobuk, Skoliv district, Lviv region. Vasyl was a member of OUN from 1936 and graduated from high school in Stryi (1938). There was a 'roiovyi' of the 3rd OUN moving group, which directed to Sumy (July 1941). From 1942 he worked as an attendant of the Sambir district OUN provid. Later after that he started to work as an assistant of the OUN youth in Drohobych district OUN provid. He was arrested in 1943 by the Gestapo. Vasyl was in Drohobych. The prisoner was kidnapped out of the jail by the OUN Security Service 'boivka' in April 9, 1943 owing to the underground agents in the police. Zahakailo was an organizational assistant of Drohobych district OUN provid. He perished on June 30, 1944 in the battle with 'Vlasivets' near the village of Verkhne Syniovydne, Skolivsk district, Lviv region.

Many of them later joined the OUN owing to the skillful agitation. In addition to that, the flexibility of Ukrainian nationalist position in Brest allowed them to form the largest insurgent unit among the other regions. Subsequently, it was taken as an example for appearance of the first Ukrainian Insurgent Army 'hundred' in Polissia.

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Я. Антонюк, канд. іст. наук, науковий співроб.
Галузевий державний архів Служби безпеки України, Київ

ПІДПІЛЬНА ДІЯЛЬНІСТЬ УВО ТА ОУН НА ТЕРИТОРІЇ ПОЛІСЬКОГО ВОЄВОДСТВА (1928 – 1939)

У статті розглядаються характерні особливості створення та діяльності осередків Української військової організації (УВО) і Організації українських націоналістів (ОУН) на території Поліського воєводства Другої Польської Республіки, тобто, на землях, які тепер належать Білорусії. Доведено, що місцеве корінне населення – "поліщуки" – активно підтримувало український національно-визвольний рух. Перші осередки УВО з'явилися там майже одночасно з сусідньої Волині. Крім того, Ковельський повіт центром поширення українських націоналістичних впливів на північ. У той час основною метою діяльності ОУН було досягнення впливу на легальні українські організації для пропаганди своїх ідей. Регіональною особливістю були сильні позиції комуністичних підпільних організацій, які були основними суперниками українських націоналістів в даній місцевості. Встановлено, що гнучка тактика керівництва УВО на Поліссі дозволила досягнути тимчасового перемир'я з ними та сформувати найбільший антипольський повстанський підрозділ в західній частині України, що називається "Поліське Лозове козацтво". Він став попередником визвольного руху більш широкого рівня, що став підґрунтям для появи Української повстанської армії на Поліссі.

Ключові слова: підпілля, українські націоналісти, польська поліція, комуністи, кордон.