

CHAPTER XIII

UKRAINE. 1914-1945

A. UKRAINE — 1914-1938

1. Since the nineteenth century, a national movement has been growing amongst the Ukrainian people for a free and independent Ukraine. The Ukrainian National Movement at the outbreak of the World War in 1914 had reached such importance that it had become a factor to be considered in the politics of Central Europe. When the Bolshevik Revolution of November, 1917, overthrew the provisional Russian Government, the Ukrainian National Central Council, on 22 January, 1918, proclaimed the Eastern Ukraine as an Independent National Republic.

2. After the break-up of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1918, Ukrainia in East Galicia organised a National Council and proclaimed the independence of the West Ukrainian National Republic which was to include all those areas of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire inhabited by Ukrainians. However, the so-called Ukrainian National Republic found little support for her claims because of economic and political pressures from other Central European countries, despite the fact that they had recognised the Republic by the Treaty of Brest Litovsk. As a result of the Polish attack on the Western frontier of the West Ukrainian Republic, the Eastern and Western Ukrainian Governments decided to unite the two Republics for self-protection; this was consummated on 22 January, 1919.

3. As a result of Russian influence in the Eastern Ukraine, it ultimately became incorporated into the Soviet Socialist Republic and was granted a small amount of autonomy. In the west, the Council of Ambassadors, in 1923, recognised the Polish Sovereignty over the Western Ukraine on the understanding that a certain amount of local autonomy be granted. In addition, certain large areas, such as Bukovina, were ceded to Rumania, as well as Bessarabia. The Carpatho-Ukraine was ceded to Czechoslovakia on similar terms, *i.e.* the granting of a measure of local autonomy. As a result of the above partitions, Ukraine was divided between four States, each with a certain amount of autonomous rule. This situation remained unchanged up to the time of Hitler's aggression in 1938.

B. UKRAINE — 1938-1945

4. The invasion of Czechoslovakia resulted in a reorganisation of the Czechoslovakian state of Carpatho-Ruthenia, which received full autonomy after having ceded part of its southern territory to Hungary. At this time, it officially adopted the title of Carpatho-Ukraine, and proclaimed for itself complete independence after the German occupation of the State of Slovakia in 1939. Its life, however, was short-lived as it was almost immediately overwhelmed by the Hungarian Army and incorporated into the Hungarian state. Soviet Russia, feeling this move to be a threat to its independence, occupied Volhynia and East Galicia immediately after the German forces had broken the back

of the Polish resistance. By later agreement, the Ukrainian areas of Poland were included into the U.S.S.R. Bessarabia and North Bukovina were ceded by Rumania to Russia. After the end of the War, Hungary ceded the Carpatho-Ukraine to the U.S.S.R. Thus, the entire Ukraine now became a part of the U.S.S.R. and is no longer divided amongst four different states.

C. UKRAINIAN POLITICAL AND MILITARY GROUPS

5. *Office for Ukrainian Affairs in Germany (Ukrainische Vertrauensstelle im Deutschen Reich).*

This office was an agency of the German police and Gestapo. Ukrainians residing in Germany were registered by it and issued with special identity cards. Its main task was to check and look after the Ukrainian population in Germany although it also served as a link between the Ukrainian and German authorities regarding prisoners of war, concentration camp victims, etc., etc.

6. *KUM (Ukrainian Youth Committee)*

This was a youth organisation which originated in Germany and was, shortly after its birth, incorporated into the Ukrainian Military Organisation.

7. *Ukrainian Military Organisation (U.W.O.) Ukrainiska Wyskowa Organizacja.*

The Ukrainian Military Organisation was formed by Konowalec in 1929. (He was killed in 1938.) In 1940 the movement was split into two groups: one comprising the followers of Bandera and the other composed of the adherents of Melnyk. Both groups were actively collaborating with Germans until 1941-42. In June 1941 Bandera attempted to proclaim the independence of the Ukraine in Lwow, but this attempt was resisted by the Germans. Because of German resistance to their plans both groups later became underground terrorist organisations. The Bandera group (UPA—Ukrainian Partisan Army), gained notoriety for the atrocities it committed especially in Galicia. For example the burning of Polish villages in Galicia is attributed to this group. (Bandera who is alleged to be living in the U.S. Zone of Germany is still exercising an influence on Ukrainians in Germany). A third terrorist group known as the Taras Bulba arose in Volhynia which also committed atrocities against the Poles. This later became a Soviet sponsored group.

8. *Ukrainian National Association (O.U.N.) Organizacja Ukrainiska Nacionalistiw.*

This association grew up in Germany between the two wars and was of a cultural rather than political nature. It existed until 1944 when its leaders were put into concentration camps.

9. *Ukrainian Aid Committee (Ukrainisches Hilfskomitee).*

This Committee was created in 1939 in Krakow with a branch at Lwow. It actively collaborated with the Germans and was recognised by them as an embryonic administration cadre for the Governing of the Ukraine. It was instrumental in the creation of the 14th Galician Waffen SS Division.

10. *The 14th Galician Waffen SS Division (Divisia Halychyna).*

The 14th Galician Waffen SS Division was composed of volunteers who fought under the German High Command. It was formed in April 1943 and announcements were made by the Ukrainian National Committee in May pointing out that it was the

beginning of the Ukrainian National Army. The popular mottoes used for recruiting were "if you are being given arms—take them" and "take advantage of your only opportunity to destroy communism and free your native land". The appeals were primarily directed to the Ukrainian war veterans of the 1918-1922 war struggle and it was these veterans who formed the nucleus of the unit.

11. After training in various parts of Czechoslovakia, it was assembled at Neuhammer in Western Poland. It was then incorporated into the Second Corps of the German Wehrmacht and on July 14, 1944, was sent to fight at the Battle of Brody where it was severely defeated. It was reformed at Neuhammer and (this Second Ukrainian Division) was renamed the First Ukrainian Division. It then moved to Slovakia where some Slovaks were recruited into it and thence to Austria (January 2, 1945) where it was used in mopping up operations against Tito's partisans. It fought a minor action against the Red Army at Feldbach on April 8, 1945. It surrendered to the British Army on May 8, 1945, at Klagenfurt in Austria. Its members were then moved to Rimini in Italy and from there to England where they are today except for a few who may have stayed behind in Germany, Austria and Italy.

D. ELIGIBILITY STATUS OF THE GROUPS OUTLINED ABOVE

12. Office for Ukrainian Affairs in Germany.

Members of this Committee are *prima facie* within the mandate of IRO unless voluntary assistance can be shown.

13. KUM (Ukrainian Youth Committee).

Ukrainian Military Organisation and National Organisation—members of these and allied organisations are *prima facie* outside the mandate if it is established that they voluntarily assisted the enemy forces by their actions.

14. 14th Galician Waffen SS Division (Divisia Halychyna).

Taken as a group the members of this Division are *prima facie* outside the mandate of IRO. It will be remembered, however, that as early as 1943 some Ukrainians were forced into the training base which was then located at Lemberg. After the Battle of Brody Ukrainians were conscripted into the Division.