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Soviet deportations of OUN family members from Western Ukraine in 1940–1952

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Abstract: The analysis of new archival records from the “KGB archives” in Ukraine, made it possible to further study the deportation policy of the USSR in occupied Western Ukraine in 1940–1952. Along with campaigns and operations, there is a need to single out such a method of persecution by the Soviet special services as day-to-day deportations. It can be verified that there were three such deportation campaigns carried out in Western Ukraine. The first and third campaigns were carried out to clear the territory from “hostile elements” of the Polish population and the local elites of the Second Polish Republic, as well as the class enemies of the communist regime – the kulaks (well-to-do farmers). The second campaign was launched in response to the activity of the OUN resistance. During 1941 and 1944–1952, two deportation operations were carried out (22 May 1941, and Operation “Zapad” (“West”), 21–23 October 1947), and two campaigns of deportation in the format of the day-to-day activity of the Soviet special services (1944–1946 and 1948–1952). During the deportation campaign against the OUN family members, 66,448 families (or 205,938 persons) were exiled from Western Ukraine. The main purpose of the forced expulsion was the complete elimination of the Ukrainian anti-Soviet insurgency.

Keywords: Soviet deportations, Western Ukraine, soviet secret services, NKVD, MGB, KGB archives, operation “Zapad” (“West”), Organization of Ukrainian Nationalist, Ukrainian Insurgent Army, OUN families.

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The first wave of the opening of Soviet archives in the late 1980s and early 1990s enabled more detailed research regarding forced expulsions as a method of persecution and counterinsurgency widely used by the Soviet communist regime. Results of such studies, including the ones on deportations from Western Ukraine, have been summarised in several sourcebooks, multiple articles, and monographs. By using available historical information, historians have outlined the main stages of the deportation policy, determined the general procedure applied to victims of persecution, and estimated the number of persons forcibly displaced to the “remote regions of the [USSR]”.¹

¹ Historiography reviews: WRÓBEL, Piotr: Class War or Ethnic Cleansing? Soviet Deportations of Polish Citizens from the Eastern Provinces of Poland, 1939–1941 In: *The*

At the same time, limited access to the archives of the Soviet Union's security agencies and its further restriction, especially in Russia after the 2000s, have left many unexplored topics and debatable research hypotheses.

The archival information on forced expulsions in the Soviet Union, unearthed and explored by the mid-2000s, has been compiled in a peculiar summary publication – a collection of documents “Stalinist Deportations. 1928–1953”, edited with the support of the Alexander Yakovlev Foundation (“Democracy” International Foundation) in 2005 as part of the “Russia. XX Century. Documents” series.

The methodological approaches used for compiling and designing this publication were largely based on the monograph by the Russian researcher Pavel Polian, published in Russian and English.² A striking example illustrating the gap in data, used as a foundation of this work, is the lack of any references to the largest post-War II deportation – operation “Zapad” (“West”), when 26,332 families (77,791 persons) were deported from Western Ukraine on 21–26 October 1947. Moreover, Polian's book omits 1947, as his section “Compensatory forced migrations in 1941–1946” is followed by the section “Ethnic and other deportations after the Second World War, 1949–1953”.³

The sourcebook “Stalinist Deportations. 1928–1953” already provides some evidence about deportations from Western Ukraine in 1947, albeit somewhat inaccurate. The data on the number of evictees (rather precise) is given for August-September, but not for October 1947.⁴

The situation with operation “Zapad” generally reflects the state of research concerning forced expulsions from Western Ukraine, especially in the final stages of World War II and in the post-war period. There are only a handful of articles describing this deportation operation and other forced expulsions⁵. There is little or no mentions of operation “Zapad” in

Polish Review. vol. 59, no. 2 (2014), pp. 24–25; ДОВБНЯ, Ольга: Депортації населення України (1920-ті – початок 1950-х рр.): історіографічний аспект Іп: *Київські історичні студії*. № 1 (6), 2018, с. 110–120.

² ПОЛЯН, Павел: *Не по своей воле: История и география принудительных миграций в СССР*. Москва : ОГИ, 2001, 326 с.; POLIAN, Pavel: *Against Their Will: The History and Geography of Forced Migrations in the USSR*. Budapest : Central European University Press, 2004, 444 p.

³ POLIAN, P.: *Against Their Will...*, p. 157–164.

⁴ ПОБОЛЬ, Николай – ПОЛЯН, Павел (eds.): *Сталинские депортации. 1928–1953*. Москва : МФД: Материк, 2005, с. 795.

⁵ БАЖАН, Олег: «...нам дорікнули у ЦК КП(б)У, що ми мало беремо...»: До 70-річчя масової депортації населення Західної України під кодовою назвою «Захід». Іп: *З архівів ВУЧК–ГПУ–НКВД–КГБ*. № 2, 2012, с. 182–240; БАЖАН, Олег: Операція «Захід»: до 75-річчя депортації населення Західної України у віддалені райони СРСР. Іп: *Україна ХХ ст.: культура, ідеологія, політика*. Вип. 18, 2013, с. 338–347; БАЖАН, Олег:

the English-language historiography. For example, A. Statiev's paper on countering the anti-communist insurgent movement in western parts of the Soviet Union mentions this operation as one of the reasons for the increase in cases of villagers joining the collective farms.⁶ At the same time, the subsequent deportation operations, such as "Vesna" ("Spring") in Lithuania on 22 May 1948, "Priboi" ("Surf") in the Baltic States on 29 January 1949, and "Sever" ("North") in Moldova on 1 April 1951 have been studied much more extensively⁷.

Meanwhile, the authors of "Stalin Deportations. 1928–1953" suggested a conceptual framework for the classification of deportation practices. In particular, Polian identified two types of measures that existed in the USSR for implementing the deportation policy – operations and campaigns. According to him, a deportation operation implies expulsion of a strictly categorized contingent of people, carried out within specified terms and on a fixed territory by forceful or coercive means and following premeditated scenario or plan, and usually formalized in official regulatory acts by state or communist party institutions. Such operations typically were very large and required additional resources – human (security, party, or military apparatus), logistical, and financial. These operations, according to Polian, were the main unit of the Soviet Union's deportation policy⁸.

Операція «Захід» – апогей депортаційних акцій радянських спецслужб на західноукраїнських землях (1940–1950-і роки). In: *Реабілітовані історією. У 27 томах. Львівська область. Книга 2: м. Борислав, Бродівський район*. Львів : Астролябія, 2014, с. 127–141; МАРЧУК, Ігор. Операція «Захід» на території Рівненської області. In: *Реабілітовані історією. Рівненська область. Кн. 7*. Кер. кол. упоряд. А.А. Жив'юк, Рівне, 2017, с. 219–228; МУСІЄНКО, Ірина: Депортації населення з території Північної Буковини та Хотинщини в 1941–1951 рр. In: *Український альманах*. Warszawa, 2010, s. 187–201; СОРОКА, Юрій: Насильницьке виселення населення західноукраїнських земель у 1940–1950-х роках In: *Вісник Київського національного університету імені Тараса Шевченка. Історія*. 91–92/2007, с. 124–125.

⁶ STATIEV, Alexander: *The Soviet Counterinsurgency in the Western Borderlands*. New York, Cambridge, 2010, p. 177–178.

⁷ FUȘTEI, Nicolae: *Persecutarea organizației religioase "Martorii lui Iehova". Operația "Sever" (1951) în RSSM*. Chișinău : Cuvântul-ABC, 2013, 260 p.; MÄLKSOO, Lauri: Soviet Genocide? Communist Mass Deportations in the Baltic States and International Law. In: *Leiden Journal of International Law*. 14 (2001), pp. 757–787; MERTELSMANN, Olaf – RAHI-TAMM, Aigi: Soviet mass violence in Estonia revisited. In: *Journal of Genocide Research*. 11:2–3 (2009), pp. 307–322; RAHI-TAMM, Aigi. – KAHAR, Andres: The Deportation Operation "Priboi" in 1949. In: *Estonia since 1944: Report of the Estonian International Commission for the Investigation of Crimes Against Humanity*. Tallinn : Estonian Foundation of Crimes against Humanity, 2009, pp. 361–389; STRODS, Heinrihs – KOTT, Matthew: The file on operation "Priboi": A re-assessment of the mass deportations of 1949. In: *Journal of Baltic Studies*. 33:1 (2002), pp. 1–36.

⁸ ПОЛЯН, Павел: Депортации и этничность. In: *Сталинские депортации. 1928–1953*. Сост. Н.Л. Поболь, П.М. Полян, Москва : МФД: Материк, 2005, с. 11.

Pavel Polian further viewed a deportation campaign as an all-around set of individual deportation operations, united by the similitude of deported contingents, sometimes separated in time and space⁹. Within the suggested approach, the historian outlined 130 deportation operations falling into 52 all-around campaigns. According to the authors of “Stalinist Deportations. 1928–1953”, such conceptualization should help better analyze the Soviet Union’s deportation policy and make further archival search more efficient and meaningful¹⁰.

Speaking of deportations from Western Ukraine, P. Polian and N. Pobol distinguished four campaigns and nine operations (see *Table 1* below).

The opening of Ukraine-based archives of the Soviet Union’s security agencies due to “decommunization” and adoption of a corresponding law on free access to the “KGB archives” enables further research of communist deportations using the entire complex of surviving archives.¹¹ These changes make it possible to examine the historical evidence of the Soviet Union’s deportation policy, to analyze goals, objectives, and forms of the communist regime’s expulsion practices throughout the active use of expulsions in 1920–1952.

The opening of the KGB archives in Ukraine also allows verification of Pavel Polian’s conceptual framework and provides for exploration of specific campaigns and operations carried out in Western Ukraine that he identified.

Key research issues include establishing interlinks between various operations of forced expulsion of families of the OUN members and the possibility of distinguishing them as a separate deportation campaign.

In broad terms, the history of deportations in Western Ukraine is extensive and diverse. At different times, forced expulsions targeted different social strata (classes) and ethnic (national) communities. As a result of annexation by the Soviet Union, the migration of the region’s population was rather dynamic. In addition to deportations per se as an element of persecution, one could observe other relocations of the population – repatriations, so-called voluntary exchanges between the Soviet Union and Germany, Romania, Czechoslovakia, and Poland, as well as resettlements (evacuations) to other regions of Soviet Ukraine and the Soviet

⁹ ПОЛЯН, П.: Депортации и этничность..., с. 11.

¹⁰ ПОЛЯН, П.: Депортации и этничность..., с. 11–12.

¹¹ Закон України «Про доступ до архівів репресивних органів комуністичного тоталітарного режиму 1917–1991 років». Online: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/316-19>.

See also for example: КОГУТ, Андрій: Депортаційна операція «Захід» у жовтні 1947 року (за документами Галузевого державного архіву Служби безпеки України). In: *Архіви України*. Вип. 4 (321), 2019, с. 118–128.

Table 1. Selection of deportation campaigns and operations in Western Ukraine, Soviet Union¹².

Index	Title and period	Date	Characteristics	Number (thousand persons)
XIV	Sovietization and clean-up of new western borders: former Polish and other foreign nationals (1940)	10 February 1940	Deportation of the Poles from western regions of the Ukrainian and Belorussian SSR to the north of the European part of the USSR, the Urals, and Siberia	Close to 140
		9 and 13 April 1940	Deportation of the Poles from western regions of the Ukrainian and Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republics to Qazaq and Uzbek SSR	61
		29 June 1940	Deportation of refugees from Poland and western regions of the Ukrainian and Belorussian SSR to the north of the European part of the USSR, the Urals, and Siberia	75
XVI	Sovietization and clean-up of north-western and south-western borders: the Baltic States, Western Ukraine, Western Belarus, Moldova (1941)	22 May 1941	Deportation of counterrevolutionaries and nationalists from Western Ukraine to South Qazaqstan oblast, Krasnoyarsk region, Omsk and Novosibirsk oblasts	11
		12-13 June 1941	Deportation of counterrevolutionaries and nationalists from Moldovan SSR, Chernivtsi and Izmail oblasts to Qazaq SSR, Komi ASSR, Krasnoyarsk region, Omsk and Novosibirsk oblasts	30
XXVI	Deportation of the OUN members and their families (April 1944 - October 1948)	April 1944	Deportation of families of the OUN members (until 1946 inclusive)	37
		August-September 1947	Deportation of the OUN members and families of the OUN activists	78
		October 1948	Deportation of the OUN members and families of the OUN activists	no data
XLIX	Deportation of kulaks from areas annexed in 1939-1940 (October-December 1951)	October 1951	Deportation of kulaks (well-to-do peasants) from the Baltic States, Moldova, Western Ukraine and Belarus to Krasnoyarsk region, Yakutsk ASSR, Tyumen oblast and Qazaq SSR	35

¹² ПОВОЛЬ, Н. – ПОЛЯН, П. (eds.): *Сталинские депортации. 1928–1953*, с. 789–798.

Union, such as removal of residents from the 800-meter wide border strip in 1940, with 20,524 households relocated as of 6 August 1940.¹³

Under the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, the Red Army crossed the USSR-Poland border in September 1939 and after few clashes with the Polish army and border guards, began its occupation of Western Ukraine and Western Belarus, which had previously been under Polish rule. The Sovietization of the newly annexed lands also involved the fight against the so-called “counterrevolutionary elements”, which had to be removed from the captured territory. Former representatives of the Polish administration, government officials, members of Polish, Ukrainian and Jewish political parties and public organizations, major landowners and entrepreneurs became victims of persecution aimed at “cleansing” the western part of the Soviet Union.

Preparations to repress the counterrevolutionaries began long before the occupation of Western Ukraine. As early as the mid-1920s, foreign sections of communist secret services started drafting lists of those to be arrested in the first place. After 17 September 1939 and before the operationalization of permanent NKVD structures, the task of elaborating such lists was assigned to special operative-Chekist groups. Lavrentiy Beria’s order No. 001064 on the formation of such groups to operate in the newly occupied territories, was issued on 8 September 1939.¹⁴ The NKVD directive No. 20177 of 15 September 1939, which specified objectives of these groups immediately after they entered Western Ukraine, clearly ordered the arrest of “the most reactionary representatives of the government administrations [...], governors [...], the leaders of counterrevolutionary parties”.¹⁵ The list of such parties also included Belarusian and Ukrainian ones, including the OUN. As a follow-up to identification and registration of opponents of the Bolshevik regime and repressions against them, on 5 November 1939 – one day before the formal establishment of NKVD agencies in the western regions of the Ukrainian SSR, the Soviet NKVD issued its order No. 0011353 “On fast-track measures for Western Ukraine and Western Belorussia”, which clearly defined their mission: “To expedite clearance of the territory... from hostile elements”.¹⁶

¹³ *Deportacje obywateli polskich z Zachodniej Ukrainy i Zachodniej Białorusi w 1940 roku.* Warszawa – Moskwa, 2003, s. 684.

¹⁴ Галузевий державний архів Служби безпеки України (hereinafter ГДА СБУ), фонд 16 «Секретаріат ДПУ УСРР–КДБ УРСР, мм. Харків, Київ» (hereinafter ф. 16), оп. 1, спр. 370, арк. 1–4.

¹⁵ ДАНИЛЕНКО, Василь – КОКІН, Сергій: *Радянські органи державної безпеки у 1939 – червні 1941 р.: документи ГДА СБ України. Ч. 1.* Київ : Видавничий дім «Києво-Могилянська академія», 2013, с. 47.

¹⁶ ГДА СБУ, фонд 9 «Нормативно-правові та розпорядчі документи ВНК–КДБ СРСР, ВУНК–КДБ УРСР та СБ України» (hereinafter ф. 9), оп. 1, спр. 6-сп, арк. 147.

In reality, the “clearance” process affected a much wider range of people. The NKVD order No. 001223 of 11 October 1939¹⁷, which introduced a unified system of operational tracking of “anti-Soviet elements”, also mentioned “family members of persons sentenced to [death] and lengthy (more than 10 years) terms of imprisonment for counterrevolutionary crimes”. A day earlier, on 10 October 1939, Beria issued the NKVD directive No. 793, instructing to register all Polish colonists (“osadniks”).¹⁸ In fact, these Polish military veterans and civilian settlers in Eastern Poland/Western Ukraine, as well as former employees of the Polish Forest Guard Service became victims of the first deportation operation. Overall, during the first Soviet occupation of Western Ukraine, the researchers distinguish four deportation operations in 1940–1941: (1) against colonists and foresters; (2) against the families of the persecuted ones; (3) against refugees; (4) against the “counterrevolutionary elements”.¹⁹

The analysis of archival fonds of the Branch State Archives of the Security Service of Ukraine (hereinafter the HDA) makes it possible to single out another forced expulsion – the deportation of prostitutes. At the same time, the last of the four expulsions initially had features of the deportation campaign. Therefore, we can talk about five deportation operations in 1940–1941 (see *Table 2*).²⁰

Table 2. Deportation operations in 1939–1941.

	Deportation operation	Dates	Number of deported	
			families	persons
1	Expulsion of colonists and foresters	10–11 February 1940	17,203	89,079
2	Expulsion of prostitutes	8–9 April 1940	–	737
3	Expulsion of families of the persecuted ones	13 April 1940	10,475	32,076
4	Expulsion of refugees	28–30 June 1940	37,932	83,207*
5	Expulsion of families of counterrevolutionaries (OUN members)	22 May 1941	3,079	11,329

¹⁷ ГДА СБУ, ф. 9, оп. 1, спр. 84-сп, арк. 146.

¹⁸ ПОБОЛЬ, Н. – ПОЛЯН, П. (eds.): *Сталинские депортации. 1928–1953*, с. 108.

¹⁹ WRÓBEL, P.: *Class War or Ethnic Cleansing?* p. 24–25.

²⁰ КОГУТ, Андрій: Операція «Захід» у контексті радянських депортацій із Західної України 1940-1950-ті рр. In: *Вирване коріння: дослідження, документи, свідчення*. Київ, 2020, с. 54–58.

* The number reported by NKVD up to July 2, 1940. However, a later document from September 6, 1940, mentions a much smaller number of displaced persons – 52,617 people. See in more detail: КОГУТ, А.: Операція «Захід» у контексті радянських депортацій із Західної України 1940-1950-ті рр. ..., с. 56.

The first four operations listed in Table 1 almost fully coincide with those identified in “Stalinist Deportation. 1928–1953”. Instead, a more detailed analysis of the last operation in May 1941 makes it possible to identify the families of specific counterrevolutionary organizations that were deported as a matter of priority.

Having “cleaned” Western Ukraine of the so-called Polish counterrevolutionary elements, the Soviet secret services refocused their attention on Ukrainian organizations and parties. The OUN underground resistance became one of the key NKVD’s adversaries. The OUN-led local rebellions first occurred in Western Ukraine in November 1939. Following the suppression of mass uprisings in the Drohobych and Ternopil oblasts, the Soviets launched mass arrests of the OUN activists and members of rebel units.²¹

Despite these reprisals, the OUN continued preparing new attempts of the anti-Soviet uprising. To prevent this, the Soviets conducted two large-scale operations in the spring and autumn of 1940, arresting many members of the OUN resistance.²² In December 1940, the Soviet secret services initiated another operation seeking to fully exterminate the OUN, with mass arrests continuing until January 1941. Meanwhile, on the back of previous operations, the leadership of Soviet secret services admitted that it was extremely difficult to defeat the resistance.²³ In his proposals for arranging anti-OUN activities, P. Meshyk, the People’s Commissar of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, suggested, among other things, to focus on measures that would help fracture and disorganize the nationalist underground resistance.²⁴

In the first half of 1941, the Soviet secret services yet again intensified their efforts against the underground and the OUN activists. In addition to six oblasts of Western Ukraine taken from Poland, the NKVD executive documents on countering the OUN started to include Chernivtsi oblast taken from Romania.

In late April 1941, P. Meshyk sent a letter to N. Khrushchev, then-Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine, and its copy to V. Merkulov, the People’s Commissar of State Security of the USSR, with a suggestion to combine arrests of the OUN members and those in the underground with the elimination of the “OUN base” – families of the underground fighters, “kulaks” and families of the persecuted

²¹ ПАТРИЛЯК, Іван: *«Встань і борись! Слухай і вір...»: українське націоналістичне підпілля та повстанський рух (1939–1960 рр.)*. Львів: Часопис, 2012, с. 62–63.

²² ПАТРИЛЯК, І.: *«Встань і борись! Слухай і вір...»*, с. 63–64, 66, 68–75.

²³ ПАТРИЛЯК, І.: *«Встань і борись! Слухай і вір...»*, с. 77–84.

²⁴ ДАНИЛЕНКО, В. – КОКІН, С.: *Радянські органи державної безпеки у 1939 – червні 1941 р...*, с. 347.

ones.²⁵ This, in fact, was a request for a deportation operation. On 24 April 1941, V. Merkulov issued an instruction regulating the actions of the NKVD and the NKGB concerning the expulsion of family members of the arrested underground fighters and members of “counterrevolutionary organizations” of Ukrainian, Belarusian and Polish nationalists into the remote northern regions of the USSR.²⁶ The document provided for the use of repression by exile not as a standalone operation but on an ongoing basis. A few weeks later, however, a special resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party and the Council of People’s Commissars of the USSR authorized a special deportation operation.

The resolution “On elimination of counterrevolutionary organizations in western oblasts of the Ukrainian SSR” No. 1299-526cc of 14 May 1941 stated that “in connection with the increased activity of counterrevolutionary “organizations of Ukrainian nationalists (OUN)” in western oblasts of the Ukrainian SSR... for the purpose of resolute suppression of criminal activity by the OUN members disrupting the peaceful work of collective farmers”, it deems necessary to continue arrests of the OUN members, as well as to expel families of the members of Ukrainian and Polish organizations for 20 years with confiscation of their property”.²⁷

The deportation operation began at 4 a.m. on 22 May 1941 and ended the same day. It was planned to remove 11,228 families. According to deportation plans, three categories of individuals were subject to resettlement: (1) families of the underground fighters; (2) persons sentenced to “a supreme measure of punishment” (execution); and (3) the clergy.²⁸ The first two categories were divided by ethnicity into Ukrainians, Poles, Jews, etc. The surviving documents on the course and results of this operation in the Volyn oblast indicate that the majority of the deportees were Ukrainians – 92.71% (families of underground fighters – 85.27%, of victims of persecution – 7.06%, and of priests – 0.37%), followed by Poles with 6.55% (families of underground fighters – 4.96% and of victims of persecution – 1.59%). The proportion of families of sentenced Jews was minuscule at 0.47%. As a result of this one-day operation, more than 11,100 people were ousted from Western Ukrainian regions.²⁹

²⁵ ГДА СБУ, ф. 16, оп. 1, спр. 516, арк. 247–250; ПОБОЛЬ, Н. – ПОЛЯН, П. (eds.): *Сталинские депортации. 1928–1953*, с. 189–190.

²⁶ ПОБОЛЬ, Н. – ПОЛЯН, П. (eds.): *Сталинские депортации. 1928–1953*, с. 191–193.

²⁷ ПОБОЛЬ, Н. – ПОЛЯН, П. (eds.): *Сталинские депортации. 1928–1953*, с. 193–194.

²⁸ ГДА СБУ, фонд 42 «Оперативно-статистична звітність ДПУ УСРР–КДБ УРСР» (hereinafter ф. 42), оп. 1, спр. 55, арк. 49.

²⁹ ТОКАРСЬКИЙ, Василь: Депортація «антирадянського елементу» із західних областей України: травень 1941 року. In: *Історичні студії Східноєвропейського національного університету імені Лесі Українки*. Вип. 9–10, 2013, с. 103.

Among other things, the six-month review of the results of NKVD's fight against "banditry in western regions of the Ukrainian SSR" also analyzed the outcomes of the deportation operation to banish the OUN's core operatives. The report highlighted the importance and efficiency of measures to "eliminate aiding and abetting". It was noted that during the period from January through June 1941, as many as 3,079 families (11,329 persons) of "socially dangerous elements" were evicted. Apart from the OUN members, it included all those displaced during the operation against members of the "counterrevolutionary organizations". The review noted that the use of forced evictions led active resistance members to surrender. For example, immediately after the deportation operation, 252 underground fighters turned themselves in as of 31 May.³⁰ The penultimate paragraph of this 14-page review concluded that the expulsion of families of underground fighters and persecution persons should be actively used to recruit "assets".³¹

The instructions to the heads of NKVD departments in Western Ukraine and Chernivtsi oblast of 31 May 1941 included a separate order to continue the expulsion operations against the families of the OUN members, deporting a family shortly after any of its members "would go underground".³² Therefore, the detection and deportation of families of the OUN activists continued in June 1941. For example, on 5 June 1941, Stanislav NKVD reported to its Kyiv office on the additional discovery of 64 such families (203 persons) and requested 11 train cars for their deportation.³³

The study of deportations from Chernivtsi oblast in 1941 reveals that the operation began on 23 May, and in addition to the OUN members' families (13 out of 181 planned for the deportation), the contingent included families of former members of the Romanian parties, as well as those involved in the illegal crossing of the new USSR-Romania border.³⁴ The targets of the next operation on 13 June 1941, which took place in Chernivtsi oblast as well as in Izmail oblast and Moldova included large landowners, former police officers, families of Romanian and Polish servicemen and members of "counterrevolutionary parties". In total, 2,279 families (7,720 persons) were exiled.³⁵

Deportations in Western Ukraine were halted by the outbreak of the German-Soviet war. However, forced evictions have resumed with the

³⁰ ГДА СБУ, ф. 16, оп. 1, спр. 509, арк. 6.

³¹ ГДА СБУ, ф. 16, оп. 1, спр. 509, арк. 16.

³² ГДА СБУ, ф. 9, оп. 2, спр. 43, арк. 98.

³³ ГДА СБУ, ф. 16, оп. 1, спр. 506, арк. 253.

³⁴ МУСІЄНКО, І.: Депортації населення з території Північної Буковини... с. 190–191.

³⁵ МУСІЄНКО, І.: Депортації населення з території Північної Буковини... с. 191.

return of the Red Army to Western Ukraine in 1944. It is worth mentioning that this process was fully in line with the restoration of the Soviet control over the rest of Ukrainian territory.

Repressions in the form of forced resettlement resumed at the time when the frontline was crossing the territory of Western Ukraine. When fighting between the Red Army and the Wehrmacht still raged in the region, on 31 March 1944, the Soviet NKVD issued the directive No. 122,³⁶ which became the key regulatory act for the forced deportation of families of the Ukrainian resistance fighters and of those who supported Ukrainian liberation movement until 1946.

In the HDA found 29 regulatory acts illustrating the specifics and dynamics of the deportation campaign of 1944–1946.³⁷ After analyzing them it is safe to say that forced expulsions were used as a daily counterinsurgency method, affecting the families of both Ukrainian resistance fighters and supporters of the Ukrainian liberation movement.

The families of Ukrainian rebels – those who were actively involved in resistance, those already killed in the guerrilla warfare and those convicted for it – were subject to deportation. The expulsions also applied to those who assisted the Ukrainian anti-Soviet resistance, as well as to the “kulaks”. The latter *a priori* were viewed as sympathizers of anti-communist movement.

Five out of eight regulations of the communist secret services for 1944, found in the archives, directly relate to forced expulsions. The other three counterinsurgency acts emphasize the need to use deportations as an effective method for suppressing the anti-Soviet movement.

According to the NKVD statistics, a total of 4,724 families or 12,762 persons were forcibly removed during 1944. Deportations from Volyn, Rivne, and Lviv oblasts were the largest.³⁸

All 13 decisions in 1945 that directly concerned forced expulsions or prescribed this method as an element of counterinsurgency struggle or operational activity of communist secret services were issued at the republican level. Eight of these acts are concerned forced expulsions directly, and five others provide for the use of deportations as a method of action in Western Ukraine to one degree or another. Three documents were issued in connection with flaws in the deportation efforts.

³⁶ ГДА СБУ, фонд 2 «Управління боротьби з бандитизмом НКВС – Управління 2-Н МДБ, 4-ге управління НКВС-КДБ УРСР, м. Київ» (hereinafter ф. 2), оп. 1, спр. 674, арк. 4–5.

³⁷ КОНУТ, Andrij: *Deportácie „ounovských rodín“ zo západnej Ukrajiny v predvečer operácie „Západ“*. In: *Ozbrojený protikomunistický odpor v krajinách strednej a východnej Európy (1945–1953)*. Ed. Michal Šmigel'. Banská Bystrica : Belianum, 2019, s. 292–315.

³⁸ ГДА СБУ, фонд 13 «Друковані видання ВНК-КДБ СРСР, ВУНК-КДБ УРСР» (hereinafter ф. 13), спр. 372, т. 74, арк. 165.

A total of 7,393 families, or 17,497 people, were deported in 1945. The most numerous were deportations from Stanislav, Volyn and Rivne oblasts.³⁹

Six of eight identified regulations for 1946 focused on the shortcomings, insufficient quality, and limited scale of deportation efforts by the communist secret services in the western regions of Ukraine. One explanation concerned the possibility of transporting persons, who turned themselves in, to their resettled families; another directive provided for the use of expulsions among other counterinsurgency methods.

The results of the 1946 forced expulsions were inferior to each of the previous two years. In total, 2,612 families, or 6,350 people were deported. Most people were removed from Drohobych and Lviv oblasts. According to Soviet statistics, no families were deported from Volyn region in 1946.⁴⁰

Despite some slowdown in the rate of deportations, the leadership of the regional and national secret services praised the use of deportations of the “OUN families”. In the letter to the Minister of State Security of the USSR (document No. 2179/oc of 24 May 1947), S. Ogoltsov, the Deputy Minister of State Security of the USSR, and S. Savchenko, the Minister of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, stated that “expulsion of families of the OUN members and bandits proved to be a rather effective method of combating the OUN resistance...”⁴¹. In total, according to the directive No. 122 of 31 March 1944, as many as 14,729 families, or 36,609 persons were forcibly removed during 1944–1946. In the same letter, both generals requested permission to continue deportations in 1947. This letter is considered the basis for initiating operation “Zapad”.⁴²

They started preparing this operation in mid-May 1947. The first regulatory act that stipulated preparations for future mass deportation was signed on 14 May 1947 – the directive No. 50 of the Ministry of State Security (MGB) of the Ukrainian SSR.⁴³ This ordinance is the most frequently cited rationale for the activities of MGB officers aimed at preparing, planning, organizing, and conducting the deportation.⁴⁴ According to this directive, an order of 1 June 1947 appointed offices of

³⁹ ГДА СБУ, ф. 2, оп. 1, спр. 285, арк. 13.

⁴⁰ ГДА СБУ, ф. 13, спр. 372, т. 74, арк. 165.

⁴¹ ГДА СБУ, ф. 2, оп. 1, спр. 674, арк. 2.

⁴² БАЖАН, О.: Операція «Захід», с. 340.

⁴³ ГДА СБУ, ф. 9, оп. 2, спр. 124, арк. 28–29.

⁴⁴ КОГУТ, Андрій: Витоки депортаційної операції «Запад». Ін: *Український альманах*. Warszawa, 2019, s. 180–181.

MGB (Department 2-N) in western regions of Soviet Ukraine responsible for identifying “families of active members of the OUN and UPA”, as well as for preparing personal files for their expulsion. A special group within these departments of MGB was also set up to review cases, draw conclusions, monitor the entire process, and submit documents to the Special Counsel (OSO)⁴⁵.

The preparation for deportation continued from early June 1947, intensifying significantly after the issuance of the MGB USSR order “On expulsions of families of convicted, killed and active underground nationalists and bandits from the territory of the western regions of Ukraine” No. 00430 of 22 August 1947, signed by the Minister of State Security V. Abakumov.⁴⁶ This act authorized the operation and set its timeframe – from 10 October to 20 October 1947. The order also included several appendices and direct instructions on the mechanisms of the future operation. Additional internal troops of the MGB and cadets of the Saratov school of the MGB were deployed for the operation. Moreover, it was planned to send 3,500 MGB operatives from all over the Soviet Union to Western Ukraine. Specifically, MGB officers from Moldova, Armenia, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Chechnya, Dagestan, Rostov, and other Russian regions, as well as from different parts of the Ukrainian SSR were involved in the deportation of Ukrainians.

The statement of 20 October 1947 on forces and facilities necessary to secure operation “Zapad”, which was issued on the eve of the deportation, stated that it was planned to enlist 70,151 persons for the operation, including 6,859 of MGB operational personnel, 33,620 of MGB internal troops, security guards and army drivers, 4,603 of MGB personnel and border guards, 9,513 of destruction battalion fighters (“istrebki”), and 15,556 of communist party activists. It was also planned to bring 2,483 vehicles for transporting families from their homes to 90 loading stations. Therefore, 44 echelons of 2,548 rail cars had to be formed, including 2,372 cars for deportees⁴⁷.

The operation began at 2 a.m. on 21 October 1947 in Lviv. It was planned to be carried out in one day, but due to bad weather in the Carpathians, it lasted until 23 October. The last echelon No. 20040 with the deported families left Zabolotiv station in Stanislav (now Ivano-Frankivsk) oblast at 4:05 p.m. on 26 October 1947.⁴⁸

In six days, 26,332 families (77,791 persons) were deported from Volyn, Drohobych, Lviv, Rivne, Stanislav, Ternopil, and Chernivtsi oblasts

⁴⁵ ГДА СБУ, ф. 2, оп. 1, спр. 595, арк. 63–64.

⁴⁶ ГДА СБУ, ф. 2, оп. 1, спр. 674, арк. 12–15.

⁴⁷ ГДА СБУ, ф. 2, оп. 1, спр. 727, арк. 47.

⁴⁸ ГДА СБУ, ф. 2, оп. 1, спр. 727, арк. 78.

to Qazaqstan and Siberia. Men made only a quarter of the deportees (18,866 persons); the remaining were women (35,685) and children under 15 (23,240).

The initial appraisals of the results of operation “Zapad” were extremely optimistic: “The Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolshevik) of Ukraine reports that due to the actions taken by units of the Ukrainian MGB and the regional committees of the Communist Party of Ukraine in the western regions of the Ukrainian SSR, the Ukrainian-German nationalists and armed bandit groups are crushed and disorganized”⁴⁹.

Shortly after this report, the MGB admitted that its assessment was a mistake and that the deportation even produced the opposite effect. On 9 December 1947, V. Drozdov, the Deputy Minister of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, reported to N. Khrushchev that “after the expulsion of families of bandits and nationalists from the western regions of the Ukrainian SSR, Ukrainian-German nationalists sharply intensified their bandit activities, primarily seeking to disrupt the party and the government’s collectivization initiatives and preparations for the election to the councils of workers’ deputies”.⁵⁰ The Soviets failed to completely defeat the Ukrainian resistance by means of the deportation operation.

Nonetheless, they decided to continue expulsions of families to neutralize the Ukrainian resistance. The request for renewal of deportations of the “OUN family members” was submitted by the MGB of the Ukrainian SSR on 6 February 1948.⁵¹

The new order of the MGB USSR No. 00386 of 20 October 1948 specified that expulsions should be carried out as an ongoing counterinsurgency work in response to terrorist or sabotage actions by the Ukrainian resistance⁵². This document required the MGB to maintain permanent records of families who supported the Ukrainian underground and whose members were directly involved in the OUN and UPA.

The number of families subject to repression by forced expulsion in settlements, where the rebels staged actions, has been determined based on the instructions of the Minister of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR or his deputy. For example, in communities where the rebels were located during or after anti-Soviet actions, only families of close relatives or brothers-in-arms were subject to expulsion⁵³. The fact that a particular family was deported because of insurgent activity had to be presented by security officers at the time of eviction.

⁴⁹ ГДА СБУ, ф. 2, оп. 1, спр. 727, арк. 69.

⁵⁰ ГДА СБУ, ф. 2, оп. 1, спр. 598, арк. 38.

⁵¹ ГДА СБУ, ф. 16, оп. 1, спр. 674, арк. 10.

⁵² ГДА СБУ, ф. 9, оп. 1, спр. 163-сп, арк. 5–6.

⁵³ ГДА СБУ, ф. 9, оп. 1, спр. 163-сп, арк. 12–13.

In terms of organizational arrangements, the campaign for deporting families of the OUN members in 1948–1952 was conducted at a totally new logistic level compared with the 1944–1946 campaign. Special assembly points were set up in each of the six Western Ukrainian oblasts. The order of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the USSR No. 001396 of 23 November 1948 prescribed the reception of deported families from the MGB authorities in six cities: Lviv, Kopychyntsi, Stryi, Kostopil, Kolomyia, and Kovel.⁵⁴ Later, given a large number of displaced families, additional assembly points were opened, with nine of them operating in 1950 in Kovel, Boryslav, Lviv (two points), Klevan, Kolomyia, Broshniv, Kopychyntsi, and Berezhany.⁵⁵

Under the order No. 00386, a total of 22,308 families (or 80,209 persons) were deported from Western Ukraine over four years.⁵⁶ More than two-thirds of deportees were women and children. In addition to families of the Ukrainian insurgents, forcibly expelled contingent also included “kulaks” and other persons with generally anti-Soviet views. All of them were deported in response to the active operations of the Ukrainian rebels.

“Kulaks” formed a separate category of people subject to resettlement. These well-to-do peasant families were automatically regarded as hostile to communist rule. Until 1948, they were largely deported together with families of the OUN members. For example, 1,929 families were expelled during operation “Zapad”; additionally, 1,757 families – in October 1947, and 172 families were deported “in retaliation” (as of September 15, 1949).⁵⁷ Until 1950, their evictions were typically carried out as part of the deportation campaign against the families of the OUN members, which began in 1948.

However, in 1950, the issue of deportation of “kulaks” was singled out. Early in the year, the Soviet Ukrainian leadership, including the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine and the Head of the Council of Ministers of the Ukrainian SSR, had sent a joint letter to the Council of Ministers of the USSR requesting the expulsion of “kulaks” from Western Ukraine with the confiscation of their property. Such a deportation was to create more favorable conditions for the “socialist restructuring of agriculture and strengthening of collective farms”⁵⁸.

⁵⁴ ГДА СБУ, ф. 2, оп. 1, спр. 1000, арк. 11.

⁵⁵ ГДА СБУ, ф. 2, оп. 1, спр. 1905, арк. 3.

⁵⁶ ГДА СБУ, ф. 2, оп. 1, спр. 1905, арк. 389.

⁵⁷ ГДА СБУ, ф. 2, оп. 1, спр. 1464, арк. 75.

⁵⁸ СОРОКА, Ю.: Насильницьке виселення населення західноукраїнських земель у 1940–1950-х роках... с. 124–125.

In 1988, the KGB prepared a note for V. Shcherbytsky, the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Ukrainian SSR, regarding persons displaced to “remote areas of the country”. It stated that 12,135 people among 65,906 deported families (or 203,662 persons) were members of “kulak” households⁵⁹. Banishments of these families occurred within different deportation measures – against “bandit collaborators”, against “kulaks” *per se*, and within the operation “Troika”.

“Troika” was the last deportation operation conducted in Western Ukraine. Its name probably derives from the number of target groups subject to deportation: (1) the “kulak” families; (2) the Jehovah’s Witnesses; and (3) Anders Army fighters (soldiers of the Polish Army under W. Anders, who returned to live in Ukraine).

Notably, in Moldova, this operation was called “Sever”. The fact that this is one and the same operation can be confirmed by the analysis of the published plan for the Moldavian SSR on the provision of special-purpose rail cars under the “Sever” case.⁶⁰ The new cryptonym was handwritten over the top of typed letters “Troika”. Unlike Ukraine, only the Jehovah’s Witness families were deported from Moldova. Also, “Sever” was conducted a few days earlier, on 1 April 1951.

During operation “Troika” on 8 April 1951, the Soviets ousted 2,487 families from Western Ukraine – 8,984 persons, including 2,704 men, 3,664 women, and 2,616 children.⁶¹

The analysis of the deportation practices of the Soviet regime in Western Ukraine in 1944–1952 suggests that, along with deportation campaigns and operations, there existed the third type of measures for implementing the Soviet deportation policy. The NKVD–MGB acts in 1944–1946 and in 1948–1952 indicate that no special deportation operation or multiple operations were conducted at that period. Along with human intelligence, operational and investigative, military and other areas of the Chekist activities, deportations of families of the OUN members were part of routine activities of the Soviet secret services, primarily aimed at combating the insurgency and more broadly – at Sovietising the western regions of Ukraine. According to Pavel Polian’s scheme, we may want to add one more element – the deportation work.

The use of expulsion as Chekists’ routine deportation action was governed by special regulations and executive directives, which outlined the purpose and circumstances of its application in everyday work of Soviet

⁵⁹ ГДА СБУ, ф. 16, оп. 1, спр. 1267, арк. 28.

⁶⁰ FUȘTEI, N.: Persecutarea organizației religioase “Martorii lui Iehova”. Operația “Sever”, s. 256.

⁶¹ ГДА СБУ, ф. 42, оп. 1, спр. 129, т. 1, арк. 259.

secret services and determined the contingent, which this instrument of prosecution could apply to. It should be noted that security officers in their reports largely used the term “operation” to describe an action of deportation – a set of activities related to relocation of one or more families (persons). Therefore, it is important to distinguish the term “deportation operation”, used by researchers, from the terminology found in the documents of the Soviet security agencies.

Therefore, by expanding the interpretation suggested by P. Polian, it can be stated that the permanent use of expulsions as one a method of counterinsurgency, along with the deportation (mass) operations, was a component of deportation campaigns.

Summarising the results of deportation activity in Western Ukraine from March 1944 until 1952, when as many as 203,593 persons were deported, one can distinguish five deportation actions, including two mass deportation operations (“Zapad” in October 1947 and “Troika” in April 1951) and three deportation campaigns (see *Table 3* below). Two of these campaigns directly affected “families of the OUN members” and the third one concerned “kulaks”. Most of those forcibly expelled were Ukrainians. It is difficult to make conclusions about other ethnic groups due to the lack of statistics.

Soviet deportations from Western Ukraine lasted for 10 years with interruption caused by the German-Soviet War: at least 420,021 persons were subjected to expulsions during the period from 1940 to 1941 and from 1944 to 1952.

Table 3. Deportation operations and campaigns in Western Ukraine in 1944–1952.

	Deportation operation/campaign	Date	Number of deported	
			families	persons
1	Deportation campaign against the families of the OUN members	31 March 1944–1946	14,729	36,609
2	Operation “Zapad”	21–23 October 1947	26,332	77,791
3	Deportation campaign against the families of the OUN members	1948–1952	22,308	80,209
4	Deportation campaign against “kulaks”	1947–1951	4,529	–
5	Operation “Troika”	8 April 1951	2,487	8,984

The first period of deportations from Western Ukraine was characterized by expulsions in the form of mass operations. The first four of them were clearly proactive, aiming to ensure the rapid Sovietisation of the territories that the Soviet Union occupied during the initial phase of

World War II. Another specific feature of these operations was their attachment to a much broader deportation activity that focused on both Western Ukraine and Western Belarus.

The last – fifth – operation in 1941 was clearly reactive. It is important to note that it began in the manner typical for the deportation operation and should have been continued as a day-to-day deportation work. It was driven by the need to fight the OUN, while the families of the Ukrainian resistance made a key contingent of the deportees. Moreover, it set an example and impetus for similar operations against other “counter-revolutionary organizations” in Western Belarus and the Baltic States.

These peculiarities of the fifth deportation operation make it similar to the Soviet deportation practices that emerged in the final stage of World War II in 1944 and extended into the “post-war war” period – the guerrilla war of the Ukrainian resistance consisting of the UPA fighters, the OUN members and their supporters.

The deportation operation of 22 May 1941, the deportation campaigns of 1944–1946 and 1948–1952, as well as operation “Zapad” on 21–23 October 1947 can be considered as parts of a long-running campaign against the families of the OUN members as means of counterinsurgency.

The analysis of repressions against the families of the OUN members via forced expulsions makes it possible to assume that separate multi-year campaigns could have been a part of longer campaigns, which can be yet another addition to Pavel Polian’s conceptual framework of deportation practices. Such a long-term campaign could combine a variety of deportation practices (campaigns and operations). Further studies of Soviet deportations will enable verification of this hypothesis and perhaps offer a more effective conceptual framework of the Soviet Union’s deportation policy.

While verifying the conceptual framework, proposed by P. Polian and N. Pobol’, it can be stated that the analysis of information from the “KGB archives” in Ukraine also points to the need for further research. In particular, the exact number of persons ousted during some deportations (refugees) remains unclear, while the campaign against “kulaks” requires more in-depth analysis and exploration of the Communist Party archives and oblast state archives. The questions remain regarding the format and code names of “Troika-Sever” operations that were conducted in the Baltic States and the Belorussian SSR.

In the course of a decade (1940–1941 and 1944–1952), seven deportation operations and three multi-year deportation campaigns were conducted in Western Ukraine. These deportation practices have become part of three major campaigns:

1. A one-year deportation campaign (four operations) for clearing the newly occupied territories from the “hostile elements”.

2. A nine-year campaign aimed at the deportation of families of those involved in the Ukrainian anti-Soviet Resistance Movement, or the “families of the OUN members”, as they are mostly defined in the documents of the Soviet secret services.

3. A multi-year campaign against “kulaks”, which continued as a part of the above-mentioned (anti-OUN) campaign, and also within “Troika” operation.

The long-running campaign against the “families of the OUN members” lasted for nine years. It started in 1941 as a means of combating “counterrevolutionary organizations” in Western Ukraine and resumed in 1944 as an important element of counterinsurgency measures aimed at defeating the Ukrainian national liberation movement. It culminated in operation “Zapad” in October 1947. It is estimated that 66,448 families – or 205,938 people – were expelled during this long-lasting campaign.

Zhrnutie:

Sovietska kampaň deportácií „ounovských rodín“ zo západnej Ukrajiny v rokoch 1940 – 1952

Analýza nových archívnych dokumentov, sprístupnených vďaka otvoreniu archívov na Ukrajine v procese dekomunizácie, umožňuje pokračovať vo výskume sovietskych deportácií. Overovanie existujúcich koncepčných prístupov k formám vykonávania deportačnej politiky ZSSR na území okupovanej západnej Ukrajiny v rokoch 1940 – 1952 svedčí o potrebe typizovania – spolu s kampaňami a operáciami – aj takého spôsobu represívnej činnosti sovietskych špeciálnych služieb, ako je denná deportačná práca. V dôsledku výskumu nových archívnych zdrojov je možné konštatovať, že sa na západnej Ukrajine uskutočnili tri deportačné kampane. Prvá a tretia kampaň boli zamerané na vyčistenie západných území od „nepriateľského elementu“, resp. poľského obyvateľstva a miestnych elit II. Poľskej republiky, ako aj triednych nepriateľov komunistického režimu – kulakov. Druhá kampaň sa začala v reakcii na aktívnu činnosť podzemia Organizácie ukrajinských nacionalistov (OUN). Počas deviatich rokov (1941, 1944 – 1952) sa uskutočnili dve deportačné operácie (22. mája 1941 a operácia Západ 21. – 23. októbra 1947) a dve kampane uplatňovania represívneho vystaňovania vo forme denných aktivít špeciálnych sovietskych služieb (1944 – 1946 a 1948 – 1952). Počas deportačnej kampane proti „ounovským rodinám“ (t. j. rodinám príslušníkov OUN, resp. ukrajinských povstalcov) bolo zo západnej Ukrajiny deportovaných 66 438 rodín – 205 938 ľudí. Hlavným cieľom nútených vysídlení bola úplná likvidácia ukrajinského antisovietskeho hnutia odporu v povojnovom ZSSR.