Krakow and Ottawa, 1940: “A Tale of Two Cities” ... and two UCCs

Germany’s Ukrainian Central Committee (UCC)

Ottawa and Krakow were the capitals of two colonies: British Canada and Nazi-occupied Poland. In 1940, both governments created anticommitst Ukrainian groups to support their efforts. In Krakow, under Nazi Governor Hans Frank, Germany spawned the Ukrainian Central Committee. Meanwhile, in Canada, Mackenzie King’s Liberal government set up the Ukrainian Canadian Committee, now called the Ukrainian Canadian Congress. Describing it, Royal Military College historian Lubomyr Luciuk said: “Few outside government circles realized the degree to which the Committee could be labelled Made in Ottawa.”

Frank and King

While the governments of King and Frank were clearly very different, they did share some very extreme social phobias that were common among the white, power elites of European political, corporate, media and Christian institutions. They were, for example, all infected with virulent strains of antisemitism, Russophobia and anticommunism.

The Nazis banned the Communist Party in 1933 and within a few months had arrested “100,000 Communists, Social Democrats, union officials, and other ‘radicals.’” Canada’s government outlawed the Communist Party in 1940, as it had previously done in 1917. When the RCMP arrested hundreds of Red activists and leaders in 1940, leftwing émigré groups like the Association of United Ukrainian institutions. They were, for example, all infected with virulent strains of antisemitism, Russophobia and anticommunism.

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While millions of Jews, Poles and communists faced imminent genocide, the Nazis created a huge renaissance for Ukrainian nationalists. Thousands of émigrés, who had fled Soviet Ukraine, happily received homes, schools, businesses and other properties and possessions stolen by the Nazis from Polish Jews. The Ukrainians who profited from the Aryanisation/dejewificiation of Poland included Michael Chomiak, the maternal grandfather of Canada’s current deputy prime minister, Chrystia Freeland. His publishing office, printing presses, two apartments and their furnishing were all stolen from Polish Jews.

Uniting these émigrés was the Ukrainian Central Committee (UCC). It represented the Melyk faction of the fascist, antisemitic, anti-Soviet Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) which aided Germany throughout the war. When UCC president, Volodymyr Kubijovych, “the most senior Ukrainian collaborator with Nazi Germany,” urged Germany to create a Ukrainian unit to fight the Soviets, the Waffen SS Galicia was born. It recruited through the OUN command’s Ukrainian Central Committee (UCC). It represented the Melyk faction of the fascist, antisemitic, anti-Soviet Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) which aided Germany throughout the war. When UCC president, Volodymyr Kubijovych, “the most senior Ukrainian collaborator with Nazi Germany,” urged Germany to create a Ukrainian unit to fight the Soviets, the Waffen SS Galicia was born. It recruited through the OUN command’s

UCC president Volodymyr Kubijovych and Nazi Governor Hans Frank, “the Butcher of Poland,” who was executed at Nuremberg.

Pro-Nazi UCC newspapers, edited by Michael Chomiak, recruited for the Waffen SS Galicia. After WWII, Kubijovych began The Encyclopedia of Ukraine, which Chomiak and his granddaughter Chrystia Freeland worked on.

“... a shared building” in Krakow, says Polish historian Pawel Markiewicz: “The Ukrainians were headquartered there as well as the German military intelligence or Abwehr.”

When Nazi Col. Alfred Bisanz was arrested at war’s end, he described the UCC’s utter subservience to its Abwehr masters: Kubijovych’s UCC was created by the Abwehr in Krakow in 1940. From the first day of its existence, it was directly supervised by the Second Department of the Abwehrstelle-Krakow. As an assistant to the head of the Department, I was charged with directing UCC activity. Without the Abwehrstelle’s permission and my personal clearance, Kubijovych had no right to include any person in the Committee or take any action... [Financing the UCC was also carried out through me. Each month throughout 1940, I personally handed Kubijovych and UCC Sec.-General Hlibovitsky a sum of 50-60 thousand zlotys.]

The Abwehrstelle-Krakow was Abwehr HQ for occupied Poland. The UCC, being an asset of Abwehr’s “Second Department,” was responsible for “sabotage,” particularly the “direction of covert contacts” and “exploitation of discontented minority groups in foreign countries for intelligence purposes.” It also created two Nazi-trained, -armed and -led Ukrainian battalions (Roland and Nachtigall), which were set up by Stepan Bandera’s faction of the OUN. The latter battalion’s Ukrainian commander, war criminal Roman Shukhevych, is glorified as a freedom-fighting hero by Bandera-revering émigré groups that still receive very generous funding from Canada’s government.

References


Created in 1940, the UCC was a Nazi asset run by Abwehr Col. Alfred Bisanz

Standards Should be Applied when Deciding to Accept Funds?” April 15, 2015. bit.ly/BisanzUCC

Thanks to Nazi largesse, the UCC print shop in Krakow was worth selling. It printed millions of papers, magazines and books. Working under Kubijovych, Chomiak was the UCC’s chief news editor and oversaw Nazi propaganda. After WWII, Kubijovych began The Encyclopedia of Ukraine to rewrite nationalist histories. In 1976, Kubijovych went to Edmonton to sign a deal with the University of Alberta to publish his encyclopedia. Both Chomiak and Freeland worked on Kubijovych’s propaganda effort. (See p.57.)

During WWII, the Nazis controlled the UCC. It was housed in a “shared building” in Krakow, says Polish historian Pawel Markiewicz: “The Ukrainians were headquartered there as well as the German military intelligence or Abwehr.”

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References

In 1940, Mackenzie King’s Liberal government created the Ukrainian Canadian Committee (UCC). This alliance, claiming to speak for all Ukrainian émigrés, was an explicitly anticommunist front intent on squashing leftist groups then dominating the diaspora. Renamed the Ukrainian Canadian Congress in 1989, it unites businesses, credit unions, churches and groups for veterans, women, youth, the arts and education.

Immediately after WWII, 40,000 Ukrainian émigrés with extreme Russophobia/anti-Soviet biases, boosted the UCC and its member groups. They also brought the internal conflicts of the Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN). Formed in Vienna in 1929 by fascist Ukrainian groups, it engaged in assassinations against Polish and Soviet officials. Although united by eugenics, Christian antisemitism and toxic anti-communism, the OUN split apart in 1941. This rift is still seen in within the UCC.

Bandera’s OUN(B) and LUC

League of Ukrainian Canadians

The strongest faction, led by Stepan Bandera (the OUN-B), worked with the Nazis until 1941 when they dared to declare an “independent” fascist Ukrainian state. Their close support for the Nazis began again in 1943, when they formed what became the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc of Nations. The OUN (Banderites, led in Canada by the League of Ukrainian Canadians (LUC), have dominated UCC leadership for decades. One LUC affiliate, the Ukrainian Youth Association (UYA), like scouting outfits across the former British empire, is structured along military lines. LUC’s Bandera youth wear army-style uniforms, march in formation with WWII battle flags and venerate such leaders of the OUN(B) and its Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) as Bandera, Yaroslav Stetsko and Roman Shukhevych. (pp.48-51.)

Melnyk’s OUN(M) and the UNF

Ukrainian National Federation

The OUN(M) faction, led by Andriy Melnyk, was associated with the Ukrainian Central Committee. It led Ukrainian collaboration with the Nazis during WWII. Deputy PM Chrystia Freeland’s maternal grandfather, Michael Chomiak, was the chief editor and office manager for this Committee’s pro-Nazi newspapers. This OUN(M) heritage is represented in Canada by the Ukrainian National Federation (UNF) of Canada which was pivotal in creating the UCC. The UNF was founded, says its website, by OUN figures whose “influences and vision remain a vital part of the organization to this day.”

Ukrainian Catholic Brotherhood

The permanent leader of this key UNF member was Father Wasyl Kushnir who promoted antisemitic beliefs in the 1930s. In 1940, he became the first UCC president and filled that post for most of its next 30 years (1940-53 and 1959-71). Soon after WWII, Kushnir led UCC efforts to aid the Liberal government in bringing 40,000 largely anti-Soviet Ukrainian émigrés to Canada, including 2,000 vets of the Nazi’s Waffen SS Galicia.

14th Division Waffen SS Galicia

Formed in 1943, this division was created, trained, armed, funded and led by the Nazis. Its volunteers, who swore an oath to fight to the death for Adolph Hitler, battled the USSR’s Red Army and fought partisans in Ukraine, Slovakia, Yugoslavia and Austria. Recruitment was done by Nazi Germany, the Ukrainian churches (Catholic & Orthodox) and the Ukrainian Central Committee. Its papers, edited by Chomiak, told Ukrainians it was their duty to enlist. Proud of these SS vets in Canada and those of Bandera’s UPA, their associations were listed as member groups on the UCC website until mid-2016.

Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA)

The group representing UPA vets in Canada was also deeply engaged in the UCC. In 2010, when Ukraine’s pro-NATO president declared UPA vets as “Heroes of Ukraine,” he was praised by UCC president Paul Grod. (p.50.) Grod, a former UYA leader, then called on Canada’s government to change the law so that UPA vets who were still alive in Canada could receive military benefits.