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Understanding the Ukrainian SS Galicia Division Helps explain UK and Canadian support for Ukraine - A Son of the New American Revolution

8-10 minutes

If you want to understand why the UK and Canada are so hard over in their support for Ukraine, you have to look back to the end of World War II. Ukrainians were recruited and inducted into the Waffen-SS Division “Galicia”, which was formed by the Nazis in mid-1943 in World War II in order to support the failing regime of Adolf Hitler. The Ukrainian Central Committee supported this idea with enthusiasm despite the cost of collaboration with the totalitarian [regime and its criminal nature](#).

Galicia’s governor-general, Otto Wachter, approached Himmler with a proposal to create a frontline combat division from Galician recruits. After speaking with Hitler, Himmler gave Wachter the go-ahead and ordered the creation of the 14th Waffen-SS Grenadier Division Galicia. Despite Himmler’s position as the head of the SS, he encountered opposition to the idea. Erich Koch, Karl Wolfe (Waffen-SS liaison officer on Hitler’s staff) and SS General Kurt Daleuge (Reich Protector of Bohemia and Moravia) believed that the weapons supplied to such a unit would be turned on the

Germans. Himmler stood firm, though, and the Galicia division was established. He had two reasons for doing so: the loss of manpower after the defeat at Stalingrad meant the Reich desperately needed new formations; and he had a fear that disaffected Ukrainian youths would join the underground movement, i.e. the UPA.

I discussed this previously in my post, [What Our Fathers Did—A NAZI Legacy in Ukraine](#). Otto von Wachter was the head Nazi governing Ukraine. His counterpart, Hans Frank, presided over Poland and set up the extermination camps that murdered at least 50% of the Jews exterminated during the Holocaust. Ukrainians, primarily from the the western part of current Ukraine, joined and formed a SS Division.

[As early as July 1943, the Waffen-SS Division “Galicia”](#) was sent to the front, where it was defeated at the battle of Brody; after that, a part of the division (survivors) was reformatted and sent to Slovakia, where the soldiers took part in hostilities against the participants of the Slovak uprising, as well as in Poland, against the Home Army. After another reformatting the unit found itself in Austria, now as the 1st Ukrainian Division of the Ukrainian National Army; it was there that the division soldiers laid down their arms in the Western occupation zone. Most of them lived abroad afterwards.

Another [account elaborates](#):

The 14th Waffen-SS Grenadier Division was formed in mid-1943 from 80,000 applicants. The best 13,000 were selected and the rest were used to form police regiments. From its inception, UPA members infiltrated the unit. Despite this, it was trained and

equipped and passed out with a strength of 18,000 men. Like other Slav units, the division's commander, SS-Brigadeführer Fritz Freitag, and his officers were all German. In June 1944, the division was part of Army Group North when it was committed to its first and only major battle – in the Brody-Tarnow Pocket – which almost destroyed it. Following this engagement, the division numbered only 3000 men. After a period of rest and refitting, the division participated in several half-hearted anti-partisan operations in Slovakia and Slovenia before surrendering in Austria in May 1945.

So, what happened to the survivors? The Pope intervened at the end of the war and ensured the remnants of the Ukrainian SS Division were not surrendered to the Russians. Instead of going to the Russian Gulags, many of the survivors emigrated to the UK and Canada. These [Ukrainians had a dark](#) history:

There is unequivocal evidence that that some units of the Galician Division in Slovakia did commit war crimes during their service for the Nazis and that there were serious problems with their discipline and conduct during their suppression of the Slovak National Uprising. Some of the Galician units were involved in terrible atrocities throughout their existence, in Brody district, in Poland and in Slovakia.

Many of the personnel volunteered to serve in Slovakia, hoping to find friends and relatives among a large group of refugees from Galicia that had been admitted to Slovakia shortly before the uprising.^{[23]:62} The first unit, a battlegroup formed from one battalion of the 29th regiment with auxiliary units, arrived 28 September 1944. Eventually all divisional units were transferred to

Slovakia. From 15 October 1944 they formed two Kampfgruppe, Wittenmayer and Wildner. (Both of approx reinforced battalion strength)The division operated in coordination with a kampfgruppe from the [SS Division Horst Wessel](#), whilst on paper the [SS-Sturmbrigade Dirlewanger](#) was subordinated directly to it but its commander ignored all instructions he received and continued to act indendently, the [Vlasov detachment](#) and other SS and SD formations until 5 February 1945.^[24]^[page needed]^[25] According to Slovak historian K. Fremal, the division’s “members were helping in anti-partisan, repressive, and terrorist actions and committed murders and other excesses” ^[23]:

The Morning Star provides more insight into the creation and end of the [Galizia Division](#):

For example, following the announcement of the Galizia Division’s formation, Volodymyr Kubiyovych, head of the Ukrainian Central Committee in nazi-occupied Krakow, wrote: “Today, for Ukrainians in Galicia, is a very historic day, because in today’s Act of State one of the most coveted wishes of the Ukrainian people is realised — to fight against Bolshevism with weapons in our hands... This wish was the result of the deeper conviction, that it is our duty not to stay neutral in the great fight for building the new European order, and what we can do for the victory of the new Europe... This historic day was made possible by the conditions to create a worthy opportunity for the Ukrainians of Galicia, to fight arm in arm with the heroic German soldiers of the army and the Waffen-SS against Bolshevism, your and our deadly enemy. We thank you from our heart. Of course we ought to thank the Great Fuehrer of the united Europe for recognising our participation in the war, that he approved your initiative and agreed to the creation of the

Galicia division.”

Canada’s Deputy Prime Minister, Chrystia Freeland, is the grand daughter of a man who collaborated with the Nazis:

In Jan. 26, 2022, in the midst of Russia’s preparations to invade Ukraine, Canada’s Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland issued a [statement](#) outlining why Canada—home to the largest Ukrainian diaspora outside Russia—would support Ukraine unconditionally, outlining a Manichean view of a “struggle between democracy and authoritarianism.” “Canadians—our own parents and grandparents—fought and died,” she continued, “to establish a rules-based international order during and after the Second World War.”

Freeland’s Ukrainian grandfather on her mother’s side, Michael Chomiak, did nothing of the sort. During the War, he edited *Krakivski Visti*, a Nazi propaganda rag in occupied Krakow that was printed on a press [confiscated](#) from a Jewish newspaper.

Grandpa Chomiak’s collaboration with the [Nazis is indisputable](#):

Chomiak’s records show he was trained in Vienna for German espionage and propaganda operations, then promoted to run the German press machine for the Galician region of Ukraine and Poland during the 4-year occupation. So high-ranking and active in the [Nazi](#) cause was Chomiak that the Polish intelligence services were actively hunting for Chomiak until the 1980s – without knowing he had fled for safety to an Alberta farm in [Canada](#).

The Nazi legacy in the Ukraine lives on in the UK and Canada. The grandchildren of those men have not rejected the sordid history of their ancestors, they have embraced it. Keep this in mind

when you consider the exhortations from Great Britain and Canada to embrace the Ukrainian cause. There is a Nazi lineage behind it.

Reader Interactions