

PART 7.
TRAGEDY OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA
AND CARPATHIAN UKRAINE

On March 15, Hitler started to implement a plan to completely eradicate Czechoslovakia. By the way, the plan of the military operation “Grun” was approved by the German General Staff on October 21, 1938. In particular, it stated: “Solving the issue of the rest of the Czech Republic. It has to be a possibility to defeat the rest of the Czech Republic at any time if, for example, it starts a policy hostile to Germany. The preparatory activities that the Wehrmacht should carry out for this purpose will be considerably smaller in scope than for the “Grun” plan in its time; but they must, therefore, in the absence of planned mobilization activities, ensure constant and substantially greater readiness. The organization, deployment and the level of readiness of the connections envisaged for this purpose in peacetime should be targeted for attack in such a way as to deprive the Czech Republic of even any possibility of systematic defense. The aim is to quickly occupy the Czech Republic and isolate Slovakia. Preparatory activities should be carried out in such a way that the plan “Border Protection in the West” could be implemented at the same time”⁶⁴⁰.

On March 6, 1939 Hitler decided to finally liquidate Czechoslovakia. “After the planned territorial changes,” said E. Kleist, German Foreign Ministry adviser, “we will have in our hands Hungary, Romania and Yugoslavia”⁶⁴¹. On March 13, J. Tiso was called to Berlin to meet with Hitler. The conversation was attended by J. Ribbentrop, who later conveyed its content: “My then-addressed remark to Tiso, that it was not a matter of days, but hours during which Slovakia had to make a decision, was caused by the announcement during the conversation of the transfer of Hungarian

⁶⁴⁰ Безыменский Л. Гитлер и Сталин перед схваткой. М.: Вече, 2002. С. 212-213.

⁶⁴¹ Документы и материалы кануна второй мировой войны. Т.2. Январь – август 1939 г. М.: Политиздат, 1981. С. 36.

troops on the Slovak border and in the near future Hungary's invasion to Carpathian Ukraine, which, as it is known, followed on the 14th of March. It was necessary to prevent a military conflict of Czechs and Slovaks with Hungary. When Tiso returned to Bratislava, the Slovak landtag declared the independence of Slovakia in the morning of the 14th of March. The next day, on March 15, Tiso sent a request to Hitler to take the Slovak state under his protection. This defense treaty was ratified on March, 23⁶⁴². However, everything was not as simple as described by J. Ribbentrop. The threats also took place. On March 13, Hitler told J. Tiso that his country would be given to Hungary if he continues to hesitate⁶⁴³.

In the same way, Hitler acted with President E. Hacha. "I visited Hacha," recalled J. Ribbentrop, "immediately after his arrival in Berlin and heard from him: he is convinced that the fate of Czechoslovakia is in the hands of the Fuhrer, and he believes that it is protected in his hands. Then Hacha was admitted to the Imperial Chancellery at night, and Adolf Hitler explained to him that he intended to occupy Bohemia and Moravia. I had a lengthy conversation with Foreign Minister Chvalkowsky, who, realizing the course of events, joined our view. In addition, prior to signing the agreement, Hacha got a permission by phone from his government. There was no protest from the Czech side, and Hacha gave an instruction to meet the German army in a friendly manner. The entry of German troops and the occupation took place without any incident"⁶⁴⁴.

On March 12, Berlin agreed Hungary's occupation of all Transcarpathia. M. Horthy immediately sent a greeting telegram to Hitler, in which he thanked for the gift, "because this life-giving territory for Hungary... is actually a matter of life"⁶⁴⁵. On March 14, A. Voloshyn declared independence of Carpathian Ukraine, announcing his decision to the German Foreign Ministry. Such a

⁶⁴² Риббентроп И. Тайная дипломатия III Рейха. Смоленск: «Русич», 1999. С. 157.

⁶⁴³ Волков А., Славин С. Адмирал Канарис – «железный» адмирал. Москва – Смоленск: «Олимп» – «Русич», 1999. С. 324.

⁶⁴⁴ Риббентроп И. Тайная дипломатия III Рейха. Смоленск: «Русич», 1999. С. 158.

⁶⁴⁵ Венгрия и вторая мировая война: Секретные дипломатические документы по истории кануна и периода войны. М.: Наука, 1962. С. 158.

decision was influenced by factors of an international nature, in particular, the deployment of Hungarian troops on the borders with Carpathian Ukraine and the declaration of independence by Slovakia, which testified to the state breakup of the Czechoslovak Republic. “For every political observer,” V. Shandor wrote, “it should have been clear at the time... that in case of declaration of complete independence of Slovakia the fate of the federation was doomed and Carpathian Ukraine could again be under Hungarian occupation”⁶⁴⁶. The tragedy of Czechoslovakia started the tragedy of Carpathian Ukraine. Thus, the Soim of Carpathian Ukraine began its work when the fate of the country had already been resolved. In a letter to French Foreign Minister J. Bonnet, French ambassador to Germany R. Coulondre said that “Transcarpathian Rus’... has asked Berlin for protection. However, Hitler’s leaders remain deaf to the calls of this country, which has associated all their hopes with them... Transcarpathian Ukraine is occupied by Hungarian troops”⁶⁴⁷.

According to the plan of the attack, the Hungarian troops attacked in three directions. The group of troops “East” moved to Korolevo–Khust–Rakhiv–Yasinia, the group of troops “Center” – to Irshava–Bilky–Dovhe–Neresnytsia–Svalyava–Nyzhni Veretsky, and the group “West” – to Perechyn–Velyky Bereznyi–Uzhok. Part of the forces was transferred to the Turian Valley–Turia Remety–Poroshkovo⁶⁴⁸. Due to the efficiency of the Hungarian secret service, Budapest had a fairly clear vision of the location of Czech military units, equipment and even mountain divisions⁶⁴⁹. The Hungarian General Staff prepared the “Economic, Social and Geographical Information on Transcarpathia”, which indicated the national and age composition of the population, the system of government, the national composition of the military units, the settlements in which the Hungarian language is

⁶⁴⁶ Шандор В. «...Читайте нашу будуччину в нашій долі»: Русини-українці і словаки. *Пам’ятки України*. 1992. № 1. С. 93.

⁶⁴⁷ Документы и материалы кануна второй мировой войны. Т. 2. Январь – август 1939 г. М.: Политиздат, 1981. С. 44-45.

⁶⁴⁸ Гранчак І.М., Гапоненко І.С. Окупація Карпатської України військами Угорщини. *Нариси історії Закарпаття*. Т. II. (1918–1945). Ужгород, 1995. С. 330-331.

⁶⁴⁹ *Nadtorteneti Leveltar*. K–184, tetel 3733, 18 old.

used⁶⁵⁰. On the eve of the invasion, a detailed plan for securing the rear of the advancing Hungarian troops was developed.

According to P. Stercho, “in total for the battle in Carpathian Ukraine 12 divisions were prepared, of which on March 12 three infantry brigades, two cavalry brigades and one brigade of motorized units were already concentrated in the Mukachevo-Uzhgorod stretch... In addition, two brigades of infantry were also concentrated west of Uzhgorod, near the Slovak border... At the same time, the Poles were concentrating their three divisions”⁶⁵¹. The preparation and the course of the military operation in Carpathian Ukraine was directly led by the commander of the garrison in Uzhgorod, General Olojos Byldy, under the command of Lieutenant-General Ferenc Szombathelyi, commander of the 7th Hungarian Army. The 12th Bicycle Battalion, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Ontol Bendy was the first to attack on March 14, 1939⁶⁵².

Hungarian archival material testifies to the great moral uplift that prevailed in military units on the eve of the invasion. Major Ivan Njari wrote in a report to the Hungarian Ministry of Defense on the progress of the “March operation”: “We all felt that a new life was beginning. It was still dark, but a happy day of Hungarian history began beneath the walls of the castle (Mukachevo – Aut.). Trianon swayed. It is symbolic that the order to start the attack has just come. The Hungarian hearts filled with joy when the glorious knight Oloyos Byldy announced the alarm and issued orders... The main direction of the heroic road was to run along the lowland of Latorica to the Veretsky Pass, where the holy millennial Hungarian border was located. Selected Hungarian units were preparing to fight...”⁶⁵³.

Hungarian troops went on the offensive throughout the demarcation line. Despite the high discipline that prevailed in the Czech armed forces, the Hungarian attack was somewhat unexpected for the STOS detachments, although it is difficult to agree with the

⁶⁵⁰ Hadtorteneti Leveltar. K-184, tetel 3733, 21 old.

⁶⁵¹ Стерчо П. Карпато-Українська держава: 3 історії визвольної боротьби карпатських українців у 1919–1939 роках. Торонто, 1965. С. 212-213.

⁶⁵² Orszagos Leveltar. T. gy, 3095, Nov. naplo, 60/88, 1–3 old..

⁶⁵³ Orszagos Leveltar. K-184, tetel 3733, 25 old.

statement that “the Czech army proved incapable”⁶⁵⁴. One of the STOS officers reported: “As threats about the capture of Subcarpathian Rus’ by Hungary – which were orally expressed by the Hungarian border guards to the soldiers of the STOS, and which were spreaded in the leaflets – were so many that no one has taken them seriously. Even the dates of the Magyars’ attack were indicated, but they were never fulfilled. That is why no one believed such “news”... At the Rakoshino Company section, a few days before the occupation began, Hungarian officers, accompanied by the patrol service, often inspected the demarcation line between Horonda and Rosvigovo. In November the leaflets were circulated in which the local population was urged to be prepared for the entry of the Hungarian troops in order to occupy the territory until the river Latorica. Messages of this kind were repeated daily, so they were treated as part of a propaganda campaign aimed at demoralizing the local population and undermining the positions of the then authorities of Subcarpathian Rus’. It was illogical for the enemy to announce their aggressive intentions in advance. Therefore, we only responded to all this with increased attention. It can be supposed that the main command did not have accurate data on the planned operation, so events in both Subcarpathian Rus’ and Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Moravia developed so quickly that they became a real surprise”⁶⁵⁵.

The Hungarian invasion has been postponed so many times that the order for an offensive was somewhat unexpected even for Horthy’s army. Lieutenant-Colonel O. Bendy complained about how to go on the offensive when 35% of his battalion’s personnel had only six weeks of military training⁶⁵⁶. Moreover, such a state of affairs was in the vast majority of Hungarian military units. M. Horthy also drew attention to this in a letter to Hitler. The suddenness of the announcement of the order of attack is evidenced by the fact that “Hungarian troops, stationed in the former barracks of the 36th Infantry Regiment in Uzhgorod, which are directly on the demarcation line, left the building on a white day on the eyes of

⁶⁵⁴ Гранчак І.М., Гапоненко І.С. Окупація Карпатської України військами Угорщини. *Нариси історії Закарпаття*. Т.ІІ. (1918–1945). Ужгород, 1995. С. 328.

⁶⁵⁵ Vojensky Historicky Archiv, Praha. i.c. 5349. karton 23.

⁶⁵⁶ Orszagos Leveltar. K–184, tetel 3733, 28 old.

STOS soldiers on the day of attack, retreated to the bridge, and were there preparing for the attack”⁶⁵⁷. The close distance to Czechoslovakian positions did not allow the Hungarians to act unnoticed. This was later confessed by the Hungarian Colonel V. Andor, who commanded the 24th Infantry Brigade, stationed in Uzhgorod⁶⁵⁸.

After learning about the beginning of the Hungarian offensive, General of the 12th Czechoslovak Division L. Prchala appealed to Budapest demanding the immediate suspension of the advance of the Hungarian troops to Carpathian Ukraine. The Hungarian government replied that it was technically impossible to fulfill this requirement. According to Polish Ambassador to the USSR V. Gzhibowski, “Hungarian troops were supposed to reach the Polish border last night (March 15 – Aut.)”⁶⁵⁹. Ambassador V. Gzhibowski’s testimony is largely confirmed by Hungarian sources. On March 14, the Hungarian army, without meeting strong resistance from the Czechs, was approaching the Verechansky Pass. The advance of the troops, according to the participant of the campaign, “was interfered with by snow, which in some places reached 20-30 cm, but also the fact that we were at an altitude of 250 meters above sea level. It slowed us down a lot because every 7 km we had to stop for rest... Half a regiment reached the pass”⁶⁶⁰. These losses can only be explained by adverse climatic conditions and a large number of militarily inexperienced recruits. The Czech army did not resist. On March 15, 1939, at 2 pm, Hungarian troops entered Nyzhni Vorota, where they were met by a “group of people... (undoubtedly, supporters of Hungary – Aut.) with tears of joy in their eyes”⁶⁶¹. They welcomed the “Hungarian liberation honveds”. At about 15 o’clock “we went out to Verechansky Pass and set the Hungarian flag. There was an honorable Polish guard on the pass, who saluted us... We intended to engrave in gold letters the names of all who came to the border and

⁶⁵⁷ Orszagos Leveltar. K-184, tetel 3733, 25 old.

⁶⁵⁸ Orszagos Leveltar. K-184, tetel 3733, 27 old.

⁶⁵⁹ Документы по истории Мюнхенского сговора. 1937–1939. М.: Политиздат, 1979. С. 424.

⁶⁶⁰ Orszagos Leveltar. K-184, tetel 3733, 29 old.

⁶⁶¹ Orszagos Leveltar. K-184, tetel 3733, 30 old.

took their eternal territory”⁶⁶² – an eyewitness wrote. This is how the Hungarian-Polish border, which Budapest and Warsaw sought to achieve, was established, though it was short-lived.

The situation on the demarcation line Sharkad-Lalovo-Kolchyno-Rosvygovo-Seredne-Domanyntsi was quite different. These boundaries were protected by the STOS companies “Domanyntsi”, “Rakoshyno”, “Kolchyno”, platoons “Pidmonastyr-Monastyr”, “Lalovo”, “Zaluzh”, “Makarivovo”, “Sharkad”⁶⁶³, which were well armed. The first encounters with the aggressor indicated that the Czech troops were fully combat-ready and ready to repel a hostile attack. In particular, on March 14, between 6 and 7 am, the Magyars attacked in the direction of the villages of Horonda – Strabichovo, as well as the eastern part of the village of Chomonyn... The advantage was 4 times on the Hungarian side, not considering the large number of terrorists. Platoon Commander Zaichek and his men defended themselves in Chomonyn as well as the Senior Warden Volny in Strabichovo, and in Horonda – Senior Warden Radil. The interaction between them was such that the positions were managed to hold on all day long, and only the lack of ammunition made them retreat beyond the Latorica River in the evening”⁶⁶⁴.

At about 6 o’clock, the Magyars attacked in the direction of Rosvigovo-Pidmonastyr-Monastyr. The posts and patrols went beyond the walls of the monastery, which was well prepared for protection. This platoon was already on alert as it was aware of the Magyars’ attack in Pidhoriany. The Hungarian infantry attacked the monastery from the west and south and came within range of hand grenades. They were thrown into it and it suffered great losses. All, who did not lie down, escaped, as a result, the attack was stopped for 2 hours”⁶⁶⁵. On March 15, the “Sharkad” platoon, although it was isolated from the rest of the troops, “captured 11 Hungarian soldiers, with a machine-gun fire killing part of the Hungarian platoon (machine gun Vanga)”. Hungarians have suffered heavy losses in the

⁶⁶² Orszagos Leveltar. K-184, tetel 3733, 30 old.

⁶⁶³ Vojensky Historicky Archiv, Praha. i.c. 5597. karton 24.

⁶⁶⁴ Ibid. Vojensky Historicky Archiv, Praha. i.c. 5597. karton 24.

⁶⁶⁵ Ibid. Vojensky Historicky Archiv, Praha. i.c. 5597. karton 24.

villages of Lavky, Pistrilovo and Romochevytsia⁶⁶⁶. The Hungarian troops failed to capture the villages of Dravtsi, Baranyntsi, Chaslivtsi and Koritnyany for the first time. 80 Hungarian cavalymen who attacked the village Lalovo, were also thrown back. In the Perechyn area, Czech border guards hit a Hungarian tank. Near Nevyske, a small detachment of the STOS organized a circular defense, so the Horthy's soldiers had to use heavy artillery against it. The fight lasted until three in the morning⁶⁶⁷.

This state of affairs lasted until 5:30 pm, March 14, that is, until General L. Prchala announced an order to “evacuate Czech troops and civil servants from Subcarpathian Rus”⁶⁶⁸. Since then, Czech troops have in fact ceased resistance, leaving one locality after another. For the sake of historical truth, it should be noted that their retreat was cleverly organized and disciplined. The situation was further complicated by the fact that on March 15, at 5 pm, appeared the news of German troops entering Prague⁶⁶⁹. This testified to the fact that Czechoslovakia as a state organism ceased to exist, that is, there was nothing to defend. Czech troops thought of leaving the territory of the region as soon as possible. In Perechyn on March 15, “a Czech officer requested that we (the Hungarians – Aut.) temporarily stopped war actions until 10 pm. It was clear to us that they wanted to win the time. It was important for them not from a military point of view. The Czechs tried to take out more things with them... Of course, we could not accept their request. The attack continued...”⁶⁷⁰. The reports of STOS commanders indicate that the Czechs burned military documentation, exported ammunition, weapons, money. And this was done when the Carpathian Sich found itself face-to-face in front of the dominant forces of aggressor.

It seemed that the Czech army would not resist. On March 14, 1939, Hungarian General O. Byldy met with Major of the Czech Army T. Melicher behind Mukachevo on the river Latorica. “When

⁶⁶⁶ Гранчак І.М., Гапоненко І.С. Окупація Карпатської України військами Угорщини. *Нариси історії Закарпаття*. Т.ІІ. (1918–1945). Ужгород, 1995. С. 331.

⁶⁶⁷ Orszagos Leveltar. K–184, tetel 3733, 30-31 old.

⁶⁶⁸ Vojensky Historicky Archiv, Praha. i.c. 5597. karton 24.

⁶⁶⁹ Orszagos Leveltar. K–184, tetel 3733, 37 old.

⁶⁷⁰ Orszagos Leveltar. K–184, tetel 3733, 40 old.

the two commanders saw each other,” the eyewitness recalls, “they hugged each other tightly and shook hands. We have heard that the two commanders were classmates in the Winnerstadt Military Academy during the time of the Monarchy. It was the fact that our further advance did not meet resistance from the Czechs”⁶⁷¹. Soldiers of STOS squadrons and platoons departed from Carpathian Ukraine in three directions: most of them through Slovakia, from the Polish border from Uzhok to Volovets – through Poland, and parts, located east of Svalyava, moved through Khust and Tiachevo – to Romania⁶⁷².

On March 14, 1939 A. Voloshyn sent three telegrams to Berlin asking to help him defend Carpathian Ukraine⁶⁷³. No answers followed. On the same day, at about 7 pm, the Hungarians handed to the representative of Carpathian Ukraine in Prague V. Shandor an ultimatum, which demanded: “1) to release the Magyars who were interned in Carpathian Ukraine (Ruthenia); 2) to stop the persecution of Magyars in Carpathian Ukraine and allow them to organize freely; 3) to give weapons to the Hungarian local guard; 4) to make a way for the Czech-Moravian army to depart from Carpathian Ukraine within 24 hours; 5) to guarantee full protection of the life and freedom of the Magyars in Carpathian Ukraine”⁶⁷⁴. A. Voloshyn’s government rejected an ultimatum. The Prime Minister of Carpathian Ukraine was convinced that the Hungarians had invaded the territory without the permission of Germany. By the way, Prague also rejected the Hungarian ultimatum, explaining its decision by the fact that Carpathian Ukraine became an independent state on March 14.

On March 15, German Consul H. Hoffman handed A. Voloshyn a statement from the German Foreign Ministry, which stated that Berlin “advises not to resist to the advancing military units of Hungary on the broad front against Carpathian Ukraine. In this case the German government is, unfortunately, unable to take care of the defense”⁶⁷⁵.

⁶⁷¹ Orszagos Leveltar. K–184, tetel 3733, 42 old.

⁶⁷² Vojensky Historicky Archiv, Praha. i.c. 5597. karton 24.

⁶⁷³ Шандор В. Спомини. Т. 1. Карпатська Україна. 1938-1939. Ужгород: МПП «Гражда»; Карпатський Союз, 1996. С. 338.

⁶⁷⁴ Ibid. С. 339-340.

⁶⁷⁵ Ibid. С. 338-339.

The commissioner for German affairs in Prague A. Henke also advised “not to resist to the Magyars, because the German army moves to the borders of Carpathian Ukraine and will fix everything”⁶⁷⁶. At the end of the day on March 15, A. Voloshyn left Khust, and without ordering an armed struggle, he emigrated abroad. He wanted to resolve the conflict through negotiation. This fact dictated his telegrams to the governments of Germany, the United States, Romania, appeals to all democratic states. His attempts were unsuccessful.

The Hungarian army was opposed by the Carpathian Sich, the leadership of which had some changes⁶⁷⁷. In the absence of

⁶⁷⁶ Ibid. С. 340.

⁶⁷⁷ Худанич В. Виникнення, структура і діяльність Карпатської Січі. *Дмитро Климпуш – головний комендант «Карпатської Січі»*. Документи, спогади, статті, вірші / Упорядники О. Д. Довганич, М. І. Кухта. Ужгород, 1997. С. 33-40; Худанич В. Виникнення, структура і діяльність Карпатської січі. *Книга Пам'яті України. Закарпатська область: У 2-х томах*. Т. 2. Ужгород: Карпати, 1998. С. 39-45; Худанич В. Готуючись до оборони краю. *Дмитро Климпуш – головний комендант «Карпатської Січі»: Документи, спогади, статті, вірші* / Упор. О.Д.Довганич, М.І.Кухта. Ужгород, 1997. С. 45–55; Худанич В. Карпатська Україна – пролог відновлення Української держави. *Історія України*. 2003. № 17. С. 11-14; № 19. С. 12-14; Худанич В. Карпатська Україна – пролог відродження української держави. *Карпатський край*. 1999. №30. С. 20-24; Худанич В. Карпатська Україна в європейській політичній кризі 1938–1939 рр. *Проблеми регіональної політики*. Львів, 1995. С. 213-219; Худанич В. Карпатська Україна і Карпатська Січ. *Карпатська Україна і Карпатська Січ*. Ужгород, 1996. С. 8-17; Худанич В. Михайло Колодзінський – шеф генерального штабу Карпатської Січі. *Самостійна Україна*. 1999. С.19-25; Худанич В. Міжвоєнний період в історії Закарпаття. *Українські Карпати: етнос, історія, культура*. Матеріали міжнародної наукової конференції. Ужгород, 1993. С.538-546; Худанич В. Розчленування Чехословаччини й окупація Закарпаття Угорщиною, 1938-39 рр. *Закарпаття під Угорщиною. 1938-1944 / Упорядкування та передмова Василя Маркуся та Василя Худанича*. Ужгород: Карпати – Гражда, 1999. С. 7-12; Худанич В.І. Історіографія Карпатської України. *Проблеми історіографії*: Матеріали Всеукраїнської наукової конференції, присвяченої 30-річчю Українського Історичного Товариства і журналу «Український історик». 2 березня 1996 р. Мукачево: Елара, 1996. С. 89-96; Худанич В.І. Особливості формування політичної думки на Закарпатті напередодні Другої світової війни. *Політологічний вісник*: Матеріали Всеукраїнської наукової історичної конференції «Політична думка в Україні: минуле і сучасність». К., 1993. С.25-27; Худанич В.І., Боднар В.Л. Карпатська Україна в 1938–1939 рр. *Тези доповідей наукової конференції*

D. Klympush, Minister of War of Carpathian Ukraine S. Klochurak appointed Colonel S. Yefremov as the commander of the Carpathian Sich. As for S. Klochurak, the order on his appointment to the post of Minister of War has not been revealed in the archives. It is known that on March 16, 1939 the newspaper “Nova Svoboda” published the composition of the government of Carpathian Ukraine, in which S. Klochurak held the post of Minister of Economic Affairs. It is possible that the lack of archival materials is explained by the fact that the situation in the region has changed dramatically and the government didn’t have time to deal with such formalities. Contemporary biographer of S. Klochurak, M. Mushynka, believes that his appointment as a Minister of War was natural and logical⁶⁷⁸. It is necessary to agree with this statement, since S. Klochurak had a military officer’s rank, and during the period of existence of the Hutsul Republic he made considerable efforts to create a capable armed forces. However, in the current situation, it was impossible to save the situation.

On March 15, as the Hungarian troops of the group “East” moved towards Khust, it became clear that the previous headquarters was inactive and they had to start from the very beginning. This also applies to the new headquarters, which, according to the contemporary, “did not exist during the fighting against the Magyars”⁶⁷⁹. The only exception was Colonel M. Kolodzinskyi, who began hastily forming Sich units. According to his order, “units in the strength of one regiment... occupy the position of the beaten road on the Krasne pole (Beautiful Field) and further along the railway

«Суспільно-політичні відносини на Закарпатті в 20–30-х рр. XX ст.». Ужгород, 1992. С. 122-123.

⁶⁷⁸ Мушинка М. Лицар волі. Життя і політично-громадська діяльність Степана Клочурака. Ужгород, 1995. С. 104.

⁶⁷⁹ Сарвадій Й. Змова проти уряду Карпатської України. Карпатський Союз, 1984. С. 29; Сарвадій І. Хто спричинив трагедію? *Дмитро Климпуш – головний комендант «Карпатської Січі»*. Документи, спогади, статті, вірші / Упорядники О. Д. Довганич, М. І. Кухта. Ужгород, 1997. С. 77-81; Сарвадій Й. Могікани Діаспори. *Карпатський край*. 1994. №7-12. С. 22-31; Сарвадій Й. Хто спричинив трагедію? *Карпатський край*. 1995. № 5–8. С. 38–40.

embankment”⁶⁸⁰. An eyewitness and an active participant in those events J. Sarvadiy wrote that “about 1600 young men took part in the fight... at the Krasne Pole”⁶⁸¹. In fact, the students of gymnasiums, who were brought to Krasne Pole by their teacher Ya. Holota. They were unable to stop the advance of the enemy. There was also no reinforcement because the mobilization call came to some districts with great delay. Inhabitant of the village V. Lozianske in the Mizhhirya region, V. Pylypchynets said that only on the evening of March 15, the local team of the Carpathian Sich learned about the hostile invasion. “After a short defense (half an hour),” wrote Ya. Holota, “the Sich Riflemen retreated to the line Kopanya-station and the bridge on the Tysa. Meanwhile, the Magyars were attacking the village of Kopanya. At about 12 o’clock one hundred of Sich Riflemen came from Khust to help and, together with those who were in the line, went on the counterattack. However, they were repulsed, mainly by artillery fire... The main offensive of the Magyars was on the way in the direction of Khust”⁶⁸². Gymnasium student V. Poshtak wrote that “the Magyars captured many seminarians. Jud, and ten others. Everyone was shot...”⁶⁸³.

On March 16, 1939 the Hungarian attack on Korolevo began at 5 am. “I defended my position,” recalled Lieutenant I. Chuchka, “but Korolevo fell at 10 o’clock. The rest of the living riflemen under the command of prof. Holota returned from Korolevo, and I already had about 150 riflemen and placed 15 riflemen, 1 shotgun on the right wing, Rokosovo; 15 riflemen, 1 shotgun on the left wing, a railway bridge over the Tysa (Korolevo), the rest was placed along the Rokosovo-Korolevo railway. The Magyars were advancing very strongly. We were also fired by planes and artillery. I asked for help from Khust almost every hour, and I was promised that there was help along the way... At 2 pm, the Magyars caught us on both sides and I was forced to order a retreat in the direction of Khust... Before Khust I secured the bridges, and at that time I received an order to

⁶⁸⁰ Сарвадій Й. Хто спричинив трагедію? *Карпатський край*. 1995. № 5–8. С. 38–40.

⁶⁸¹ *Ibid.* С. 31; Жіноча воля. 1939. Ч. 4; На переломі. 1939. Ч. 6.

⁶⁸² Карпатська Україна в боротьбі. Відень, 1939. С. 140.

⁶⁸³ *Ibid.* С. 139.

hold for 24 hours. I understood that it is impossible”⁶⁸⁴. The fights on separate sections of the front were described by I. Rohach and M. Chumalivskiy⁶⁸⁵.

The Sich Riflemen, weakened in the battle, retreated. On March 17-18 the remains of the detachments left the territory of Carpathian Ukraine. E. Stakhiv, a participant in the events, wrote that they were “morally broken, hungry, walked depressed, about 600–700 fighters. They crossed near Maramoros – Sighet in the morning, at 5 o’clock, on Saturday, March 17, 1939”⁶⁸⁶. The Romanian authorities handed them over to the Hungarians. Lieutenant of the Carpathian Sich, O. Voliansky, wrote that 273 people were handed over by Romanians, including six officers⁶⁸⁷. Similar events were described by Yu. Khymynets⁶⁸⁸. However, there is considerable evidence that Romanians treated favorably the retreating Sich Riflemen. The management of the Trade Academy, headed by A. Shtefan, decided to cross the Slovak border.

The published and oral memoirs of eyewitnesses prove the cruelty of the Horthy’s men in the occupied territory. Some of them contain a list of victims of Hungarian terror. It should be noted that there were often significant exaggerations. J. Terelia writes that near the Torun Pass only the Poles shot 3421 Sich Riflemen. And it was made during July 21, 1939⁶⁸⁹. Such a statement is not supported by eyewitnesses to those events. According to Hungarian sources, in the course of March 16–17, 1939, the Sich Riflemen lost about 200 people killed and

⁶⁸⁴ Ibid. С. 134-135.

⁶⁸⁵ Ibid. С. 121-122.

⁶⁸⁶ Стахів Є. Спогади колишнього січовика. *Закарпатська правда*. 1990. 24 березня.

⁶⁸⁷ Карпатська Україна в боротьбі. Відень, 1939. С. 11.

⁶⁸⁸ Химинець Ю. Закарпаття – земля української держави. Ужгород, 1992. С. 104; Химинець Ю. За кордоном. *Заповіт Срібної землі*. Карпатська Україна в боротьбі за незалежність / Серія «Подвижники національної ідеї». Львів: Світ, 2001. С. 36-41; Химинець Ю. Закарпаття – жертва фашистської Німеччини. *Українські Карпати: етнос, історія, культура*. Матеріали міжнародної наукової конференції. Ужгород, 1993. С. 500-514; Химинець Ю. Мої спостереження із Закарпаття. Нью-Йорк, 1984. 188 с; Химинець Ю. Тернистий шлях до України. Ужгород: МПП «Гражда», 1996. 396 с.

⁶⁸⁹ Карпатська Україна – 50. Торонто, 1988. С. 5.

nearly 400 were injured. About 300 defenders were captured. The loss of the Hungarians – 37 killed and 134 wounded⁶⁹⁰.

Modern researchers H. Bozhuk and V. Zilhalov believe that the total losses of the defenders of Carpathian Ukraine are estimated in the range of 3 to 5 thousand people⁶⁹¹. This data should also not be considered accurate because detailed calculations have not been carried out. Search work in this direction should be conducted at the state level in all areas of the Transcarpathian oblast. The search conducted in some regions of the oblast makes it possible to claim that the number of victims of Horthy's terror does not exceed 1 thousand people. An active participant in the events of 1938-1939 M. Bandusiak concluded that if there were about 150 fighters who died in the fight with the Czechs, and 143 fighters in the fight with the Hungarians at Krasne Pole, then the total number is 293. If we include that there were mass shootings at the border and in different localities, then probably the number of killed is about 1,000 people. Today, the names of 151 Sich Riflemen who died in combat or were tortured in Hungarian concentration camps and prisons are known⁶⁹².

⁶⁹⁰ Гранчак І.М., Гапоненко І.С. Окупація Карпатської України військами Угорщини. *Нариси історії Закарпаття*. Т.ІІ. (1918–1945). Ужгород, 1995. С. 335.

⁶⁹¹ Божук Г., Зілгалов В. Репресивні акції проти населення Карпатської України у 30–50-х роках. *V Всеукраїнська наукова конференція з історичного краєзнавства*. Тези доповідей і повідомлень. Кам'янець-Подільський, 1991. С. 287–288.

⁶⁹² Вегеш М., Токар М. Вершина духу. До 80-річчя проголошення державної незалежності Карпатської України. Ужгород: Всеукраїнське державне видавництво «Карпати», 2018. 324 с., іл.; Вегеш М., Токар М. Карпато-Українське державотворення: До 70-річчя проголошення державної незалежності Карпатської України. Ужгород: Видавництво УжНУ «Говерла», 2009. 536 с; Вегеш М., Токар М. Карпатська Україна на шляху державотворення. Ужгород: Всеукраїнське державне видавництво «Карпати», 2009. 448 с.; Офіцинський Р. Анексія Карпатської України (березень-липень 1939 р.). *Карпатська Україна (1938-1939)*. Збірник матеріалів міжнародної наукової конференції до 70-річчя проголошення Карпатської України. Пряшів, 5 березня 2009 року. Пряшів – Ужгород, 2010. С. 154-163; Офіцинський Р. Дипломатичні зусилля уряду Карпатської України в екзилі (студія та документи). *Молодь – Україні* (Наукові записки молодих учених Ужгородського державного університету). Т. 1. Ужгород, 1994. С. 8–24; Офіцинський Р. Німецький фактор на сторінках карпато-української газети

Thus, on March 15, 1939 the Czech Republic and Moravia were occupied by German troops, and on March 18 the territory of Carpathian Ukraine was left by its last defenders. “In connection with the tragic events in Czechoslovakia,” the Czechoslovak Ambassador to the Soviet Union said, “I consider it necessary to resign. In my opinion, the occupation of the Czech territory by the German army was carried out by gross deception and intimidation against the existing constitutional order and against the true will of the Czechoslovak people”⁶⁹³. The USSR government strongly condemned the occupation of Carpathian Ukraine by the Hungarian troops. “The actions of the German government,” the People’s Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the USSR stated in the note to the German ambassador to the country, “signaled a gross invasion of the Hungarian troops in Carpathian Ukraine and a violation of the elementary rights of its people”⁶⁹⁴. President of Czechoslovakia E. Benesh, who emigrated abroad in October 1938, set up an emigrant government in London, which was recognized by the USA, USSR, Great Britain and France. But more importantly is the fact that none of the Allies recognized the Munich Agreement or any other international treaties that in the fall of 1938 divided the territory of Czechoslovakia⁶⁹⁵. One only has to regret that the insight for the great states came only in 1940.

During the occupation of Carpathian Ukraine by the troops of Horthy’s Hungary, A. Voloshyn and a number of members of his

«Нова свобода» (1938–1939). *Німці на Закарпатті (X–XX ст.)*. Карпатика. Випуск 4. Ужгород: Патент, 1995. С. 56–64; Офіцинський Р. Політичний розвиток Закарпаття у складі Угорщини (1939-1944). К., 1997. 244 с.; Офіцинський Р. Прелюдія осені 1944 року (Листівки часу Карпатської України). *Закарпатська Україна. Осінь 1944 року*. Матеріали наукової конференції, присвяченої 50-річчю визволення Закарпаття від фашизму та 50-річчю Першого з’їзду Народних комітетів Закарпатської України. С. 130–135; Офіцинський Р. Сучасні уявлення про Карпатську Україну. *Українське державотворення: альманах*. 2019. № 1. С. 44–47.

⁶⁹³ Документи по истории Мюнхенского сговора. 1937–1939. М.: Политиздат, 1979. С. 426.

⁶⁹⁴ Ibid. С. 428.

⁶⁹⁵ Магочій П.Р. Формування національної самосвідомості: Підкарпатська Русь (1848–1948). Ужгород, 1994. С. 151.

government emigrated abroad⁶⁹⁶. “In connection with the occupation of Transcarpathian Ukraine by the Hungarian troops,” A. Voloshyn said during an interrogation in Lefortovo on May 24, 1945, “I fled to Prague on the route: from Khust to Cluj (Romania) – Temeşuara (Romania). Then I went to Yugoslavia – Belgrade, where I stayed for 4 days. From Belgrade I went to Zagreb, where I stayed for 7 days. From Zagreb I moved to the resort town in Yugoslavia – Cirkvenica, where I stayed for 11 days. Then I returned to Zagreb again and from there through Vienna I moved to Berlin, where I stayed for a month and a half. From Berlin I traveled to Prague in May 1939”⁶⁹⁷. Y. Revai, A. Shtefan, S. Rosokha, I. Rohach, V. Komarynsky and others also left Carpathian Ukraine.

⁶⁹⁶ Віднянський С. Карпатська Україна як етап українського державотворення. *Карпатська Україна – незалежна держава*. Матеріали Міжнародної наукової конференції, присвяченої Незалежності Карпатської України (м. Ужгород, 14-15 березня 2019 року) / Вступне слово В. Смоланки; Редкол.: М. Вегеш (голова), С. Віднянський, М. Лендьел, О. Пагіря, М. Токар, С. Федака (члени редкол.). Ужгород: видавництво ПП «АУТДОР-ШАРК», 2019. С. 96-11; Віднянський С. Карпатська Україна як етап українського державотворення. *Український історичний журнал*. 2019. № 2. С. 67-93; Віднянський С. Уряди Карпатської України (1938-1939 рр.). *Уряди України у ХХ ст.*: науково-документальне видання / Відп. ред. В. М. Литвин. К.: Наукова думка, 2001. С. 273-289; Вегеш М., Горват Л. Карпатська Україна 1938-1939 років в портретах: (Методичний посібник для студентів історичного факультету, що вивчають «Красзнавство» / Ужгородський державний університет, Науково-дослідний інститут Карпатознавства. Ужгород, 2000. 101 с.; Вегеш М., Горват Л. Карпатська Україна у міжнародних відносинах (1938–1939) / Ужгородський державний університет. Ужгород, 1997. 136 с.; Вегеш М., Горват Л. Особливості українсько-румунських політичних взаємин напередодні Другої світової війни (на прикладі Карпатської України). *Relatii Romano-ucrainene, istorie si contemporaneitate. Румунсько-українські відносини. Історія та сучасність. Romanian-ukrainian relations, history and present*. Editura Muzeului Satmarean, 2015. С. 84-90; Вегеш М., Горват Л. Румунія і Карпатська Україна (1938–1939). Короткий історичний нарис / Ужгородський державний університет. Ужгород, 1999. 20 с.; Вегеш М., Горват Л. Сторінки історії Закарпаття: історичні статті, есе, історико-біографічні нариси / Союз Українців Румунії. Бухарест: Видавництво Мустанг, 2003. 407 с.; Вегеш М., Задорожний В. Велич і трагедія Карпатської України: історико-популярний нарис / Закарпатське товариство «Знання», консалтинг-центр «Перспектива». Ужгород, 1993. 84 с.

⁶⁹⁷ Центральный архив Министерства государственной безопасности РФ. 11, Н-17681, л.11–12.

In the “Personal Case of Voloshyn” there are two letters to the leaders of Hitler’s Germany (Memorandum of the Government of Carpathian Ukraine in exile to J. Ribbentrop of November 30, 1939 and Memorandum to Hitler of July 11, 1941). From the researched materials it is obvious: being in exile, the leading figures of the Ukrainian direction remained steadfast supporters of the unification, doing their utmost to prevent the world from forgetting the wrongs caused in Transcarpathia in 1939-1941. To this we add that A. Voloshin’s emigrant government not only informed Germany about the situation in Carpathian Ukraine, but also offered its own ways out of the situation, which took place after the Hungarians arrived. Thus, in the Memorandum of November 30, 1939 A. Voloshyn, Y. Revai, S. Klochurak and A. Shtefan proposed the idea of unification of Carpathian Ukraine with Slovakia. They convinced J. Ribbentrop that as a result of such a political state union the position of Germany would stabilize⁶⁹⁸, however, Hungary will have territorial losses. A. Voloshyn and his associates also suggested the technical side of solving this problem. They believed that “until the final regulation of the state status of Carpathian Ukraine its territory must be occupied by the German army. To determine the state identity of Carpathian Ukraine by means of a plebiscite, to decide whether Carpathian Ukraine will remain in Hungary or it will form a federation with Slovakia. All citizens who lived before November 4, 1938 in Carpathian Ukraine have the right to vote. Taking into account the hostile attitude of Carpathian Ukraine’s population towards Hungary, the Ukrainian government is confident that a plebiscite would decide to form a federation with Slovakia”⁶⁹⁹. The leaders of Carpathian Ukraine did not receive a reply to this Memorandum. As for the Memorandum to Hitler of July 11, 1941, it outlined a plan to build a united Ukrainian state⁷⁰⁰. German government did not respond to it also. It should be noted that the Government of Carpathian Ukraine has not limited itself to these two

⁶⁹⁸ Ibid. Л.75-76.

⁶⁹⁹ Центральный архив Министерства государственной безопасности РФ. 11, Н-17681, л.76.

⁷⁰⁰ Ibid. л. 94-96.

Memoranda. It is known that similar documents were sent to Berlin on May 27 and October 15, 1940, on March 12, 1941. There is no doubt that they could shed some light on the related problems.

On March 14, 1939 the troops of Horthy's Hungary invaded the territory of Carpathian Ukraine, and the following day the German Wehrmacht occupied the Czech Republic and Moravia, leaving Slovakia as an independent state, but with a focus on Berlin. This development of political events testified to the final elimination of Czechoslovakia. This could not but affect the course of the war actions during March 14-18, 1939. Archival documents indicate that the Czech troops resisted the aggressor only on the 14th of March. From March 15 to March 18, the planned and organized withdrawal of the Czech armed forces from Carpathian Ukraine continued. The real fight, despite the great advantage of the enemy, was given only by Carpathian Sich. However, it was an act of despair rather than realistic politics. The government of Carpathian Ukraine, being well aware of the impossibility of protecting the country in an armed way, tried to resolve the issue peacefully, through diplomatic channels. A. Voloshyn and members of his government had been hoping for Germany's protectorate. They did not depart from the pro-German orientation even after the occupation of Carpathian Ukraine by Hungary. Their intentions were unsuccessful. The occupation of Carpathian Ukraine was condemned by the USSR government. As for the major European countries and the United States, it was only in 1940 that they recognized that all decisions of international conferences that divided Czechoslovakia in the fall of 1938 were considered invalid.