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Ukrainian Secret Service Holds Hearings On WWII Insurgent Army



UPA rebels pictured in 1947

April 10, 2009

KYIV -- The Ukrainian Security Service (SBU) has organized public hearings about the international contacts of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) during World War II, RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service reports.

The history of the UPA is highly controversial in Ukraine, as Soviet propaganda depicted the UPA -- which fought against both the Nazis and the Soviets -- as traitors and Nazi collaborators.

Oleksandr Pahiria, an SBU archive staff researcher, told RFE/RL that the UPA had a wide range of international contacts, including with foreign governments.

"The fact that the UPA conducted peace talks with the governments of Hungary and Romania is testimony to the existence of a new phenomenon in the international relationships of the time -- insurgent diplomacy," Pahiria said.

The UPA operated in Ukraine until 1953, when it was defeated by the Soviets.

The SBU is the only security service in the post-Soviet space to completely open its archives to the public.

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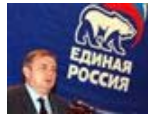
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