

УДК [271.4+271.222(470+571)]-67(477.83/.86)

DOI: 10.20535/2307-5244.58.2024.309259

T. Pshenychnyi

ORCID: 0000-0003-2484-2694

Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv

Т. Ю. Пшеничний

Київський національний університет імені Тараса Шевченка

THE SOVIET NARRATIVE OF THE «ENEMY CHURCH» IN THE CONTEXT OF CULTIVATING THE MYTH ABOUT THE UKRAINIAN GREEK CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE UKRAINIAN DIASPORA

Радянський наратив «ворожої церкви» у світлі культивування міфу про Українську греко-католицьку церкву в середовищі української діаспори

The article presents the scope of activities of the Soviet special services and the structures controlled by them, which operated under the patronage of the Russian Orthodox Church, outside the borders of the Soviet Union. After the liquidation of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church at the Lviv pseudo-sobor in 1946 and the establishment of total state control over the church sphere of the western regions of the Ukrainian SSR, the UGCC was able to legally exist and develop in countries worldwide, where there were powerful centers of the Ukrainian diaspora from Galicia. However, even the existence of this church outside the USSR was considered dangerous in Soviet political circles. The functioning of the Ukrainian nationalist movement, supported by the diaspora, was associated with the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church. Therefore, to sever the ties between the Ukrainian diaspora and the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, and consequently to limit its connections with Ukrainian nationalists, the Soviet special services, with the assistance of the Russian Orthodox Church, launched a large-scale campaign to discredit the UGCC among the Ukrainian diaspora in 1946. The article also demonstrates the participation in this process of the Council for the Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church and its controlled organizations, as well as the Russian Orthodox Church itself outside the USSR. Undoubtedly, the presented material reflects only one of many segments of a large-scale campaign against the Ukrainian people, their values, traditions, and the national church.

Keywords: Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, Ukrainian diaspora, Russian Orthodox Church, Ukrainian nationalist movement, Soviet special services.

У статті представлено масштаби діяльності радянських спецслужб та підконтрольних їм структур, що діяли під патронатом Російської

православної церкви, за межами Радянського Союзу. Після ліквідації Української греко-католицької церкви на Львівському псевдособорі 1946 р. та встановленням тотального державного контролю над церковною сферою західних областей Української РСР, УГКЦ мала змогу легально існувати та розвиватись у тих країнах світу, в яких були потужні осередки української діаспори з Галичини. Проте навіть існування цієї церкви за межами СРСР вважалося в радянських політичних колах небезпечним. З греко-католицькою церквою пов'язували функціонування українського націоналістичного руху, яке підтримувала діаспора. Тому, щоб домогтися розриву відносин української діаспори з Українською греко-католицькою церквою, а відтак обмежити її зв'язок з українськими націоналістами, радянські спецслужби за допомогою Російської православної церкви 1946 р. розпочали масштабну кампанію з дискредитації УГКЦ в середовищі української діаспори. Також у статті продемонстровано участь у цьому процесі Ради в справах Російської православної церкви та підконтрольних їй, як і самій Російській православної церкві, організацій за межами СРСР. Звісно, наведений матеріал віддзеркалює лише один із багатьох сегментів масштабної кампанії проти українського народу, його цінностей, традицій, національної церкви.

Ключові слова: Українська греко-католицька церква, українська діаспора, Російська православна церква, український націоналістичний рух, радянські спецслужби.

Problem statement and its significance: One of the distinct features of totalitarian systems is the cultivation of the idea of an enemy. If there is no clear enemy, such a system remains capable of fabricating an imaginary one and fighting against it as long as it is beneficial. Often, this struggle remains incomprehensible to society, but can be made to believe in its necessity if the «enemy» is presented under the right focus and reinforced with an ideological narrative.

In each century, different political systems have worked on creating imaginary enemies. Often, their alleged existence served to justify internal terror by various political systems within their own country. Even today, there are many states whose governments cannot shake off the phobia of an illusory internal or external threat.

One of the states that adeptly identified its «internal enemies» was the Soviet Union. Emerging from revolutionary upheaval and establishing a multifaceted system of propaganda, censorship, and control, its political factions became creators of numerous myths and falsehoods aimed at shaping and supporting the state narrative to justify various political agendas. One such myth involved the revival, in essence, of the state-controlled Russian Orthodox Church. On September 4, 1943, after a prolonged prohibition, it was granted permission

by Joseph Stalin to resume operations. However, it functioned primarily as a puppet structure, tasked with upholding the theoretical construct of the «Soviet paradise». Upon gaining official status, it was instrumental in promoting state policies, including within the Ukrainian SSR. Moreover, its apparatus played a significant role in Ukrainian affairs, particularly after the Red Army's 1944 occupation of Western Ukraine, when the Soviet regime tasked the Orthodox Church with Sovietizing the region and countering the influential Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church.

Analysis of the historiographical foundation of the research. In Ukrainian historical science, significant attention has been devoted to the issue of the forceful shaping of the western regions of Ukraine after 1939, the liquidation of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church as the predominant social institution, and the role of intelligence agencies in forming a new information space in Galicia. Numerous scholarly studies have delved into these topics in Ukrainian historiography. Among them are works by I. Andrukhiv (Андрухів, І. 2006), К. Budz (Будз, К. 2012), S. Hurkina¹, N. Serdyuk², D. Vedyeneeva (Веденеев, Д. 2010), N. Kisia (Кісь, Н. 2018), М. Bohachevskoi-Khomyak (Богачевська-Хом'як, М. 2021), R. Siromskoho (Сіромський, Р. 2020, с. 80–90), М. Vehesha (Вегеш, М. та ін. 2022), and others.

Each author, focusing on their respective themes and drawing from available source material, indirectly examines the role of Soviet intelligence agencies in implementing anti-church policies in the western regions of the Ukrainian SSR. They address the repression of church activists and related aspects. Scholars have touched tangentially on the issue of discrediting the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church among the Ukrainian diaspora, where the church remained a potent institution for national identity and cohesion. However, these approaches do not fully explore gaps in exposing the extent of Soviet intelligence involvement in supporting the dissolution of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church in Galicia before March 1946, and its subsequent discrediting after the Lviv pseudo-sobor.

The existing historiographical focus on the multi-vector and phased Sovietization process in western Ukrainian territories, the destruction of cultural and religious identity from 1944 to 1989, and the resolution of the national question in the Ukrainian SSR through the Russian Orthodox Church, requires expansion. This is underscored by the contemporary use of the Russian Orthodox Church by the political elite of the Russian Federation to propagate an anti-Ukrainian narrative globally and domestically. This narrative sanctifies the war against Ukraine as «sacred» and frames it as a «rescue of Orthodox brothers in Ukraine». Similarly, such a narrative was employed during the liquidation of the

¹ Гуркіна С. Греко-католицьке духовенство Львівської архієпархії в умовах переслідування радянською владою (1944–1950 рр.): дис. ... канд. іст. наук. 07.00.01 — Історія України. Львів, 2012.

² Сердюк Н. Репресії радянських органів державної безпеки щодо української греко-католицької церкви в 1944–1949 рр.: дис. ... канд. іст. наук. 07.00.01 — Історія України. Київ, 2006.

Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church in western Ukrainian territories in 1946. Leading up to the Lviv pseudo-sobor in 1944, the Committee for the Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church launched extensive efforts to promote a new phenomenon within the USSR known as «Russian political Orthodoxy».

The research draws on documents from fund 4648 of the Central State Archive of Higher Authorities and Management of Ukraine, focusing on activities of the Council on Religious Affairs under the Council of Ministers of the USSR for the Ukrainian SSR. To gauge the extent of Soviet intelligence operations, operational summaries from the Ministry of State Security (MDB) at the Council of Ministers of the Ukrainian SSR in 1945–1946 were consulted, housed in fund 16 of the Sectoral State Archive of the Security Service of Ukraine. These sources were instrumental in tracking the expansion of the agent network within the Greek Catholic clergy and its deployment for propaganda purposes, including among the Ukrainian diaspora.

To achieve the set goals, driven by the relevance of the topic, a specialized methodological toolkit was employed. The principle of chronological sequence guided a phased analysis of Soviet influence on the Ukrainian diaspora, focusing on satellites of the Russian Orthodox Church in the United States, Canada, and France. The principle of systematicity provided a comprehensive view of the scales and peculiarities of Soviet anti-church policy, especially concerning the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church. The principle of analytical interpretation facilitated a critical assessment of the Council on Religious Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church and its network of agents outside the Ukrainian SSR, synthesizing the source base and establishing a comprehensive framework for the research problem.

The author aims to emphasize the operations of special Church organizations affiliated with the Russian Orthodox Church (its satellites) outside the Soviet Union. These organizations served as conduits through which Soviet special services and affiliated institutions disseminated discrediting information about the history and social significance of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church among the Ukrainian diaspora. This effort bolstered the narrative of the UGCC's «return» to Orthodoxy. It's crucial to note that propaganda materials were tailored for various audiences, including internal Ukrainians and specific informational content crafted for the Ukrainian diaspora. The essence of this content creation lay in creating an image of an «enemy» among Ukrainians themselves and for Ukrainians. Therefore, the presentation of the liquidation of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church to the Ukrainian diaspora should be interpreted as one of the extensive projects of Soviet special services against an imaginary «enemy». It was implemented gradually and systematically, involving a significant power apparatus of the state and the republic, the diplomatic corps of the USSR, and more. The analysis of the operational work of Soviet special services during 1944–1946 suggests that the liquidation of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church was one of the priority actions, both in terms of

scale and technical support. It was perhaps the first planned large-scale campaign in western Ukrainian lands that the Soviet government sought to implement after the second occupation of Galicia in 1944. As this action objectively went far beyond local boundaries, the work of special structures was multidimensional and aimed at its coverage outside the Ukrainian SSR. After the Lviv pseudo-sobor, their work focused on Ukrainian communities in the diaspora, where an information campaign was launched to spread the «truth» about the «voluntary accession» of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church to the Russian Orthodox Church, the renunciation of the first Union of Brest articles from 1596, and more.

The Ukrainian diaspora, both in the mid-20th century and today, is a rather heterogeneous phenomenon. Its formation in various countries was influenced by diverse factors, including forms of acculturation, the development and implementation of community consolidation instruments, support from local political elites, and more. However, a common feature among Ukrainian communities outside the Soviet Union in the mid-20th century was unity around the idea of preserving their identity, traditions, and religion. This was something dangerous to do in the conditions of Soviet reality but feasible in the «free world». Churches played a significant role in supporting the diaspora and continue to be influential institutions for Ukrainians abroad. However, they were, and still are, diverse, influenced by various political systems, regimes, and ideologies. As early as the 1920's, Bishop K. Bohachevsky of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church in Canada had to acknowledge that not all Ukrainians rallied around the idea of a Ukrainian state.

With the expansion of Soviet occupation into Ukrainian territories after 1944, the issue of subduing Ukrainian nationalist forces, with all their structures, branches, and satellites, became a priority for the Soviet leadership. The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, with its leadership and clergy largely contributing to these nationalist forces, was among such groups. However, globally, it's crucial to remember the factor emphasized by V. Yelensky: «within the expansion of the influence of the Russian Orthodox Church in the region, it was necessary to significantly weaken the Vatican's positions in Central Europe, strengthen the influence of Orthodoxy, and thus Soviet policy» (Єленський, В. 1993, с. 41). This deepens our understanding of the scope of the anti-union campaign, which aimed to establish the narrative about the «anti-people» essence of the UGCC and its liquidation as «the only correct way to convert hundreds of thousands of believers to the path of truth and historical justice» (Береж, М. та ін. 2022).

Access to recently declassified archive documents of Soviet special services and materials from the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine¹ allows us to grasp the scale of efforts to eradicate the Ukrainian Greek Catholic

¹ Копии спецсообщений докладных записок и представлений // ГДА СБУ Ф. 16. Оп. 1. Спр. 561. 301 арк.

Church from the public sphere in both the Soviet Union and Western European countries, the USA, Canada, and beyond. It is noteworthy that after the Lviv pseudo-council, the state campaign against this denomination did not diminish. The entities involved in this campaign actively endeavored to undermine the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church among the diaspora. Thus, beginning in 1945, the First Directorate of the NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR, later reorganized into the First Directorate of the MGB of the Ukrainian SSR from March 1946 onwards (Пристайко, О. 2021, с. 163–177), launched an aggressive information campaign to create a «new» perception of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church not only within the Ukrainian SSR but also beyond its borders. The operational records of the NKGB departments for Western Ukrainian regions during 1946–1956, forwarded to the central republican secretariat of the MGB, contain numerous reports detailing diverse measures aimed at combating the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church¹. Some of these efforts took on a hybrid character, utilizing information-ideological tools to fabricate and disseminate falsehoods about the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church through mass media, diplomatic channels, church organizations, and other means.

Indeed, such efforts could not have been undertaken without the involvement of the Council for Religious Affairs under the Council of Ministers of the USSR in the Ukrainian SSR. As part of the extensive campaign to Sovietize Western Ukrainian territories after World War II, the subsequent phase involved shaping the information sphere and propagating «correct» historical interpretations, particularly concerning the history of the Ukrainian Church. While these reforms could be relatively easily imposed in Galicia, the same cannot be said for their implementation within the Ukrainian diaspora. Engaging with the diaspora was a priority for Soviet special services. М. Bohachevska-Khomjak, an American of Ukrainian descent and author of a monograph on Greek Catholic Bishop Konstantin Bohachevsky in the USA, highlights that following the liquidation of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, the diaspora and the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church outside the Soviet Union bore the responsibility to «preserve the organizational structure of the Ukrainian Church» (Богачевська-Хом'як, М. 2021, с. 407).

However, in reality, the Ukrainian diaspora lacked unity. Apart from divisions along religious lines, there were also ideological differences within it. As mentioned earlier, М. Bohachevska-Khom'jak emphasizes the lack of a cohesive understanding among diaspora representatives regarding Ukrainian issues and interconfessional dialogue. She specifically recalls instances of representatives from one confession attempting to attract believers from another. Bishop K. Bohachevsky's memoirs highlight that it was «relatively easy to lure

¹ Докладная записка о ходе подготовки к проведению собора греко-католической церкви западных областей Украины // ГДА СБУ. Ф. 16. Оп. 1. Спр. 565. Арк. 137–143.

Greek Catholics into the Orthodox Church, especially when monetary incentives were involved» (Богачевська-Хом'як, М. 2021, с. 133). It is noteworthy that both Soviet intelligence in these countries and the Council on Religious Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church actively exploited this situation through controlled Orthodox hierarchs, clergy, and church structures.

Operational documents from the 2nd Directorate of the MGB of the Ukrainian SSR indicate that work with the «agency on the Uniates» began as early as 1944 (Веденєєв, Д. 2010, с. 391), coinciding with the launch of the project to liquidate the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church. As part of this effort, the Council on Religious Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church began actively involving organizations within the Ukrainian diaspora in the summer of 1946 to spread fake information about the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church. These organizations primarily operated within Orthodox parishes and were numerous, especially in Western European countries, the USA, and Canada. One such organization was the «Canadian Society for Cultural Relations with Ukraine» (not to be confused with the «Society of United Ukrainian Canadians»). — *the Author*), whose members actively disseminated the Soviet narrative about religious freedom in the Soviet Union and the «reunification» of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church with the Russian Orthodox Church in the Western regions of the Ukrainian SSR. Special documents prepared by the Russian Orthodox Church Council on Religious Affairs extensively detail the collaboration between the society and the Council. According to these documents, on October 11, 1946, a member of the Main Directorate of the Society, P. Prokopchak, arrived in Kyiv from Canada for a special visit. He was a prepared individual for work in the «deep rear», a member of the Communist Party, and held authority among the higher party leadership of the USSR¹. This is evidenced by his direct meetings with the first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine, M. Khrushchev, and the authorized representative of the Council on Religious Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church at the Council of Ministers of the Ukrainian SSR, P. Khodchenko². During these meetings, he presented the overall religious situation among the Ukrainian diaspora in Canada and the United States³. Documents from P. Khodchenko, the authorized representative of the Russian Orthodox Church Council, indicate that both the Council and the intelligence services made good use of Prokopchak's visit to Kyiv. He was allowed to travel through the western regions of the Ukrainian SSR, meet with Archbishop Makary of Lviv and Ternopil, and protopresbyter H. Kostelnyk (Head of the «Initiative Group» for the liquidation of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church). Specifically for H. Kostelnyk, Prokopchak prepared a

¹ ЦДАВО України Ф. 4648. Оп. 1. Спр. 19. Арк. 21.

² ЦДАВО України Ф. 4648. Оп. 1. Спр. 19. Арк. 21.

³ ЦДАВО України Ф. 4648. Оп. 1. Спр. 19. Арк. 22–26.

Ukrainian-language sample overview of the religious situation in the Ukrainian diaspora in Canada, titled «General Religious Situation in Canada»¹, which was likely presented to him on October 3, 1946. This conclusion is supported by informational notes from A. Vyshnevsky, the authorized representative on religious affairs at the Lviv Regional Executive Committee².

The content of the informational note by P. Prokopchak focused on two aspects: firstly, acknowledging the fact of diaspora unification around criticism of the Sovietization of Western Ukrainian lands, and secondly, the necessity of organizing high-quality propaganda among the Ukrainian diaspora. It is worth noting that in Prokopchak's note, emphasis is placed on the lack of unity within the Ukrainian diaspora and conflicts between Ukrainian Greek Catholics and Orthodox in Canada. However, he pointed out that «hatred for the Soviet Union unites them»³. The fact that «Orthodox preachers, intoxicated with hatred for the Soviet Union, defend the Greek Catholics, saying that they are «Russifying our brothers in Western Ukraine»»⁴ seriously undermines the work of Soviet propaganda, particularly in Canada.

It can be assumed that the recipient of the copied letter, H. Kostelnyk, and Prokopchak's meeting with him were not coincidental. P. Khodchenko might have initiated it. After all, it concerned the need to develop a special mission with corresponding informational support regarding the «correction of the situation» and «fighting against this propaganda»⁵. Addressing H. Kostelnyk, P. Prokopchak emphasized: «It would be good if prominent church figures, especially from the western regions of Ukraine who converted to Orthodoxy, wrote articles on the topic of the rights of the Orthodox Church in Ukraine – rights not only in terms of state laws but especially, and most importantly, from a canonical perspective»⁶. Additionally, he wrote, «It would also be good if a representative of the Kyiv Metropolis came to Canada and America. The representative should be proficient in the Ukrainian language and be one who converted from the Greek Catholic to the Orthodox Church»⁷.

It is possible that the person mentioned could have been H. Kostelnyk himself, but we find no confirmation of this. However, regarding the creation of special propaganda material, he was directly involved. Even before P. Prokopchak's departure to Canada and on the eve of his trip to Kyiv, on October 9, 1946, in Lviv, H. Kostelnyk wrote an «Informational Article for Canadian Ukrainians». It consisted of two sections and seven subsections, in each of which the author illuminated the essence of the liquidation of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church.

¹ ЦДАВО України. Ф. 4648. Оп. 1. Спр. 19. Арк. 27.

² ЦДАВО України. Ф. 4648. Оп. 1. Спр. 19. Арк. 27.

³ ЦДАВО України. Ф. 4648. Оп. 1. Спр. 19. Арк. 28.

⁴ ЦДАВО України. Ф. 4648. Оп. 1. Спр. 19. Арк. 28–29.

⁵ ЦДАВО України. Ф. 4648. Оп. 1. Спр. 19. Арк. 29.

⁶ ЦДАВО України. Ф. 4648. Оп. 1. Спр. 19. Арк. 29.

⁷ ЦДАВО України. Ф. 4648. Оп. 1. Спр. 19. Арк. 29.

From the opening lines, he appealed to the fact that the overseas Ukrainian diaspora did not understand the nature of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and the consequences of its establishment in 1596. One of H. Kostelnyk's statements illustrates this: «All that time (from the Union of Brest. — Ed.) the union in the soul of our clergy and people rotted and decayed; resentment against Rome grew, and the union was in a severe crisis, so that for the blind, it became increasingly clear that the union would not survive...»¹. Thus, H. Kostelnyk referred to the joining of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church to the Russian Orthodox Church as «Great Changes»² and «great opportunities for the development of the life of the Ukrainian people»³. Therefore, a myth of the anti-popular nature of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church was created for the diaspora, based on manipulation of historical facts, state censorship, and propaganda.

Information regarding whether the aforementioned article was printed and in what quantity remains unknown. It is also unclear whether it was immediately given to P. Prokopchak to take to Canada or whether it was sent to him later after being revised by the Council for Religious Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church. Additionally, in a confidential letter from P. Khodchenko to the Chairman of the Council for Religious Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church G. Karpov, dated October 11, 1946, there was no mention of Kostelnyk's text. The letter only stated, «These days, Prokopchak is leaving for Canada. I have provided him with our printed materials: the calendar of the Orthodox Church, Lviv eparchial reports, etc.»⁴ However, it is plausible that P. Prokopchak's visit to Lviv and Kyiv indeed catalyzed the preparation of Soviet special services for engaging with the Ukrainian diaspora in Canada and beyond the USSR. On November 25, 1946, the text by Archbishop Makariy (Oksiuk) of Lviv and Ternopil, Archimandrite of the Pochaiv Holy Dormition Lavra, titled «The Orthodox Church in the Western Regions of Ukraine», was published⁵. While justifying the necessity of liquidating the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, which itself appears understandable, Archbishop Makariy devoted almost half of the text to disclosing state-church relations in the Ukrainian SSR in various aspects and forms. This interested both the international community in general and aroused significant interest in the Ukrainian diaspora. However, the text had a propagandistic nature and clearly aimed solely to deflect attention from repressions against the faithful and clergy in the western regions of the Ukrainian SSR after the Lviv pseudo-sobor. Notably, the text explicitly stated that «...without interfering at all in the internal, spiritual aspects of the Church's life, the State grants the Church complete freedom to lead a full life, satisfying all its

¹ ЦДАВО України. Ф. 4648. Оп. 1. Спр. 19. Арк. 1.

² ЦДАВО України. Ф. 4648. Оп. 1. Спр. 19. Арк. 8.

³ ЦДАВО України. Ф. 4648. Оп. 1. Спр. 19. Арк. 8.

⁴ ЦДАВО України. Ф. 4648. Оп. 1. Спр. 19. Арк. 21.

⁵ ЦДАВО України. Ф. 4648. Оп. 1. Спр. 19. Арк. 11–17.

external needs in accordance with the lofty principles of the Constitution of the Soviet Union»¹.

In the summer of 1946, the Council for Religious Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church initiated another project aimed at discrediting the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church among Ukrainian communities in the United States. This initiative, as explained by contemporary religious studies scholar M. Lahodych, was prompted by the establishment of centers of religious life in Galicia abroad, including in the United States, following the Lviv pseudo-council (Лягодич, М. 2014, с. 79). The organization known as the «Carpatho-Rusyn Union» operated there, and Soviet special services began cooperating with it in August 1946. All visible efforts in this regard were understandably led by the aforementioned Council for Religious Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church. On August 28 of the same year, G. Karpov, the chairman of this Council, wrote to L. Korniets, the first deputy chairman of the government of the Ukrainian SSR, regarding the necessity of establishing contact with Archpriest Y. Fedorenko, a representative of the organization. Republican authorities informed G. Karpov that L. Korniets would soon visit Moscow and later Kyiv to gather material «to counteract the libelous propaganda against the USSR conducted by Ukrainian and Russian fascists in America»². The information proved to be interesting and significant for G. Karpov, prompting him to instruct H. Katunin, the deputy authorized representative of the Council for Religious Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church, to engage actively with Y. Fedorenko on the church situation in the western regions of the Ukrainian SSR³.

Despite being a representative of the Carpatho-Rusyn Union, the Council for Religious Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church closely monitored his activities, as such «guests» were advantageous for the organization. Furthermore, the Council meticulously prepared for such visits. Specifically, for each visit by a foreign guest, a detailed «Delegate Reception Plan» was devised with predetermined informational support, coordinated by designated representatives. Therefore, to adequately brief the American guest on the religious situation in the western regions of the Ukrainian SSR, the Council entrusted Bishop Makariy. As part of familiarizing J. Fedorenko with the current state of Orthodox Church affairs⁴, he was tasked with arranging meetings with H. Kostelnyk, and if necessary, M. Melnyk and A. Pylvetsky. During the visit to the Zakarpattia region, the person of Bishop Makariy was to arrange a meeting for Fr. J. Fedorenko with Bishop Nestor (Syduruk) of the Mukachevo-Uzhhorod Diocese of the Russian Orthodox Church. Additionally, an individual screening of the film «Lviv Cathedral» was

¹ ЦДАВО України. Ф. 4648. Оп. 1. Спр. 19. Арк. 16.

² ЦДАВО України. Ф. 4648. Оп. 1. Спр. 19. Арк. 32.

³ ЦДАВО України. Ф. 4648. Оп. 1. Спр. 19. Арк. 32.

⁴ ЦДАВО України. Ф. 4648. Оп. 1. Спр. 19. Арк. 33.

mandatory for the guest¹. Interestingly, the maintenance of the representative of the Union during trips was the responsibility of the Council for Religious Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church, exclusively local dioceses. The main emphasis in the accompaniment of J. Fedorovych was placed on shaping the necessary impression on him regarding the Lviv pseudo-sobor and religious freedom in the USSR. This was a challenging task that could also yield negative results. The mentioned Bishop Kostiantyn Bohachevsky noted «...communist tendencies in the American-Ukrainian community itself and drew attention to the fact that even among Ukrainians atheism sows discord, provokes attacks on the Church...» (Богачевська-Хом'як, М. 2021, с. 416).

It should be noted that, in addition to creating a negative image of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church among the diaspora, Soviet special services actively worked on discrediting it by magnifying negative information about the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church. A clear testament to this is the special publications of the highest officials of the Council on Religious Affairs under the Council of Ministers of the USSR, particularly P. Khodchenko. An analysis of the documents prepared by him in 1946 allows us to assume that he was preparing special propaganda material for the mentioned J. Fedorenko, titled «Report on the history of the liquidation of the Union of Brest with the Vatican and the reunion of the Greek Catholic Church in Western Ukraine with the Russian Orthodox Church»².

In 1946, the Greek Catholic theme became a subject of manipulation by Soviet special services among Ukrainian communities in Western Europe. In March of the same year, the CRA, jointly with the MGB, actively fought against the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church led by Metropolitan Polikarp Sikorsky. Attention to this church increased, especially after the Bishops' Council of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church, held from March 14 to 18, 1946, in the German town of Esslingen-on-Neckar, where the autocephalists expressed support for the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church³. The behavior of the autocephalists was considered «schismatic» by the Soviet authorities. Representatives of the Moscow Patriarchate's Brotherhood of St. Photius in Paris, led by N. Poltoratsky, informed the authorized representative of the Council on Religious Affairs P. Khodchenko: «The Council addressed all Christian churches with an attack against the Soviet Union and the Russian Orthodox Church, as well as with a special appeal to the Catholic Church, expressing condolences for the «forced» joining of Uniates to the Russian Church»⁴. This sparked lively discussions both in the CRA and the Patriarchal Curia. Immediately after the Synod of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church, N. Poltoratsky, acting as the «mouthpiece» of

¹ ЦДАВО України. Ф. 4648. Оп. 1. Спр. 19. Арк. 33.

² ЦДАВО України. Ф. 4648. Оп. 1. Спр. 19. Арк. 37–50.

³ ЦДАВО України. Ф. 4648. Оп. 1. Спр. 19. Арк. 19–20.

⁴ ЦДАВО України. Ф. 4648. Оп. 1. Спр. 19. Арк. 19.

the Russian Orthodox Church, initiated a campaign to discredit the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church. To ensure its success, he proposed sending a special Orthodox Ukrainian priest to Paris, who would be «loyal to the Moscow Patriarchate, proficient in the Ukrainian language, and knowledgeable about the Uniate question»¹.

Whether the Patriarchate actually sent a special person on the mentioned «mission» is unknown, as there are currently no documents indicating this. However, it should be noted that the selection of «missionaries» was not easy. It was not always possible to find the right systematic person from the church environment who could handle the assigned task. N. Poltoratsky himself, when analyzing the work of one such individual, specifically the rector of the Church of the Protection of the Holy Virgin in Paris, Archpriest Illarion, complained in a letter to Patriarch Alexy in the spring of 1946 about his «Ukrainian-church-national line» and his desire to «maintain the status quo»².

Overall, the above represents only a fragment of a comprehensive campaign by Soviet special services, not just towards the Ukrainian diaspora or the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church. Primarily, it reflects a profound, fundamentally national state policy. In the Soviet Union, its essence was aimed at the destruction of the identity of nations, the elimination of traditional social institutions, and the creation of a ‘new’ reality through the artificial sterilization of memory. It is fair to note that the liquidation of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church was just one of the ways to ‘solve’ the national issue concerning one of the most conservative regions of Ukraine. However, the liquidation of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church did not resolve the national issue in Galicia or among the Galician diaspora. Success was not achieved in destroying Galician conservatism, on the basis of which the Ukrainian nationalist movement was formed. An attempt to do so was the discrediting of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and the creation of a «new» role for it. This article provides an assessment of the scale of such a campaign and the resources directed at its implementation.

Андрухів, І. 2006. *Релігія і церква в політиці радянської влади та її прояви на теренах Прикарпаття в період Другої світової війни (1939–1945)*. Івано-Франківськ: Тіповіт.

Богачевська-Хомяк, М. 2021. *Громада — єпископ — Церква: Константин Богачевський і становлення української католицької митрополії в США*. Львів: Український католицький університет.

Будз, К. 2012. «Воз’єднання» чи «невоз’єднання»: греко-католицьке духовенство в умовах ліквідації церкви (1945–1946). *Наукові записки НаУКМА: Історичні науки*. Т. 130. С. 27–32.

Вегеш, М. та ін. 2022. *Нариси історії Української Греко-Католицької Церкви*. В 2 т. Т. 1. Ужгород.

¹ ЦДАВО України. Ф. 4648. Оп. 1. Спр. 19. Арк. 19.

² ЦДАВО України. Ф. 4648. Оп. 1. Спр. 19. Арк. 20.

Веденсьєв, Д. 2010. Органи державної безпеки СРСР і релігійні об'єднання в Україні під час Великої Вітчизняної війни. *Наукові записки Інституту політичних і етнонаціональних досліджень ім. І. Ф. Кураса НАН України*. Вип. 4. С. 377–396.

Кісь, Н. 2018. Пам'ять та ідентичність українських греко-католиків. Про джерела історичної політики УГКЦ. Львів: Інститут українознавства ім. І. Крип'якевича НАН України.

Сіромський, Р. 2020. Культурний обмін між Канадою і Української РСР як інструмент радянської пропаганди. *Американська історія та політика*, № 10. 80–90.

Кукрас, І. та ін. 1993. *Церква і національне відродження*. Київ. Інститут національних відносин і політології НАН України.

Andrukhiv, I. 2006. *Relihiia i tserkva v politytsi radianskoi vlady ta yii proiavy na terenakh Prykarpattia v period Druhoi svitovoi viiny (1939–1945) [Religion and the Church in the Policy of the Soviet Government and Its Manifestations on the Territory of Prykarpattia during the Second World War (1939–1945)]*. Ivano-Frankivsk: Tipovyt. [In Ukrainian].

Bohachevska-Khomiak, M. 2021. *Hromada — yepyskop — Tserkva: Konstantyn Bohachevskyyi i stanovlennia ukraïnskoi katolytskoi mytropolii v SShA [Community — Bishop — Church: Konstantin Bogachevskyyi and the Formation of the Ukrainian Catholic Metropolis in the USA]*. Lviv: Ukrainskyi katolytskyi universytet. [In Ukrainian].

Budz, K. 2012. «Voz'iednannia» chy «nevoz'iednannia»: hreko-katolytske dukhovenstvo v umovakh likvidatsii tserkvy (1945–1946) [«Reunification» or «Reunification»: the Greek Catholic Clergy in the Conditions of the Liquidation of the Church (1945–1946)]. *Naukovi zapysky NaUKMA: Istorychni nauky*. T. 130. S. 27–32. [In Ukrainian].

Vehesh, M., ta in., 2022, *Narysy istorii Ukraïnskoi Hreko-Katolytskoi Tserkvy [Essays on the History of Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church]*. V 2 t. T. 1. Uzhhorod. [In Ukrainian].

Viedenieiev, D. 2010. Orhany derzhavnoi bezpeky SRSR i relihiini ob'iednannia v Ukraini pid chas Velykoi Vitchyznianoï viiny [The Agencies of State Security of the USSR and Religious Associations in Ukraine during the WWII]. *Naukovi zapysky Instytutu politychnykh i etnonatsionalnykh doslidzhen im. I. F. Kurasa NAN Ukrainy*. Vyp. 4. S. 377–396. [In Ukrainian].

Kis, N. 2018. *Pam'iat ta identychnist ukraïnskykh hreko-katolykiv. Pro dzhherela istorychnoi polityky UHKCh. [Memory and Identity of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholics. About the Sources of the Historical Politics of UGCCCh]*. Lviv: Instytut ukraïnoznavstva im. I. Kryp'iakevycha NAN Ukrainy. [In Ukrainian].

Siromskyyi, R. 2020. Kulturnyi obmin mizh Kanadoiu i Ukraïnskoi RSR yak instrument radianskoi propahandy. *Amerykanska istoriia ta polityka*, № 10. S. 80–90. [In Ukrainian].

Kukras, I. ta in. 1993. *Tserkva i natsionalne vidrodzhennia [Church and National Revival]*. Kyiv. Instytut natsionalnykh vidnosyn i politolohii NAN Ukrainy. [In Ukrainian].