

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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SECURITY INFORMATION

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COUNTRY	USSR (Ukrainian SSR)	REPORT NO.	<input type="text"/>
SUBJECT	Resistance Activities in the Area of Rava-Russkaya, Ukrainian SSR	DATE DISTR.	30 April 1953
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(FOR KEY SEE REVERSE)

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1. Rava-Russkaya (N50-14, E23-37) is a small town in the western Ukrainian SSR, about one or two kilometers east of the Polish-Soviet border. Since I passed through the town only once, and then in military formation, I can give very little information on it. There were several main streets which were paved, but in the outskirts there were dirt roads. I cannot estimate the size of the town or guess at its population. It had a small railroad station and, I think, a double-track railroad. I know of no industry located there; the entire area seemed to be agricultural. A small river, about ten meters wide, was located about two kilometers northwest of Rava-Russkaya. A hilly forest area began about two kilometers south of the town.

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2.  was located just south of Rava-Russkaya. There were two regiments of recruits, one artillery regiment which trained with 57 mm guns, and one infantry regiment to which I was assigned. I underwent the usual infantry basic training course; the training seemed quite rigorous to me. The food was extremely poor and many recruits either could not eat the food or became ill after eating.

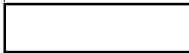
3. The population in and around Rava-Russkaya was quite hostile toward Soviet soldiers, whether they were Russian or Ukrainian. I heard that the entire area was covered with Bandera bands which terrorized and preyed on Soviet soldiers and Soviet sympathizers.

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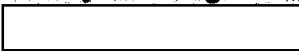
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These local bands were allegedly composed of people living in the area who worked their fields by day and took up arms at night. Any local resident known to be cooperating with the Soviet authorities was in danger of losing his life and having his home destroyed by these bands. Particularly bitter and violent opposition to collectivization by the people in the western Ukraine had prevented the formation of collective farms up to the time I was there (I later heard from a soldier who had been in the region that even as late as 1951 no headway had been made toward collectivization.) Judging from their homes, livestock, and clothes, the people in the Rava-Ruszkaya area were very well off and enjoyed a standard of living much higher than I had seen anywhere in the Ukraine. To illustrate this high standard of living: in 1946 and 1947, which were near-famine years in the Soviet Union, many Ukrainians traveled to western Ukraine for food which the people there seemed to have in abundance.

4. I heard several stories connected with hostile action directed against Soviet troops in the region of Rava-Ruszkaya. I heard of one incident in which a straw-filled wagon concealing a machine gun opened fire and killed a Soviet soldier. Another story concerned a Soviet officer who was caught in the nearby forest, tortured by being slashed with knives and having salt sprinkled into his wounds, and then finally put to death. I also heard of a Soviet soldier who died from poisoning in a restaurant in Rava-Ruszkaya. When Soviet officers went to investigate the death, they found the restaurant closed and apparently unoccupied, whereupon they ordered it destroyed with hand grenades. This was but one of several instances of poisoning of Soviet troops in Rava-Ruszkaya, which was the reason for a regulation prohibiting Soviet troops to purchase food in the city. Several attempts had been made by the Soviets to wipe out the hostile bands of residents by sending Soviet troops to track them down; but, up to the time  Bandera activities had not been stopped.

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