

INFORMATION REPORT

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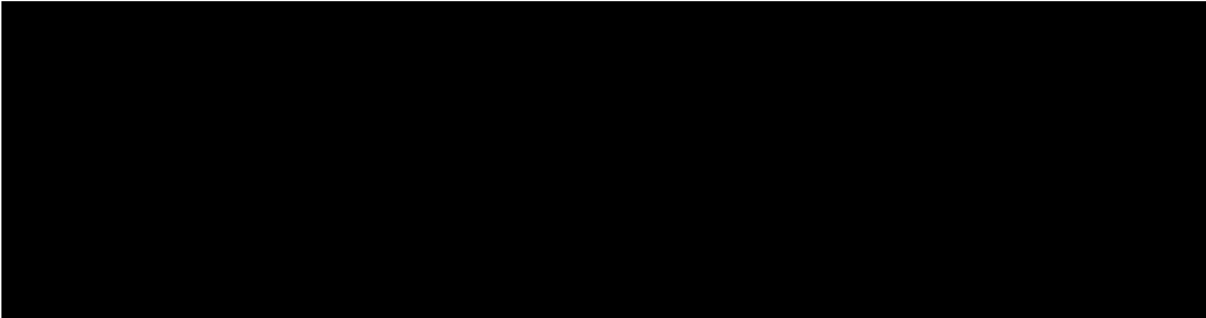
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COUNTRY USSR (Ukraine)
SUBJECT Subterranean Bunkers of the
Ukrainian Underground Movement

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General

1. Although the bunkers of the Ukrainian underground movement considered below are all subterranean, it is not uncommon for bunkers to be built above ground in buildings. The majority of bunkers of all types consist of one subterranean room used only during the cold months of the year. In direct contrast to operating procedures up to the end of World War II, no offensive actions are ever carried out from bunkers, since they are built only for defensive purposes. All branches of the resistance movement use bunkers, both active partisans and specialists. In other words, those members of UPA, OUN, the UHVR, the SB, the Red Cross, and the finance and propaganda sections who are living as illegal residents of the Soviet Union or Poland live in bunkers some time during each year. Supplies of food and water must be sufficient in the fall to permit the inhabitants to remain entirely within the bunker as long as snow is on the ground. In reaction to increasingly refined and clever Soviet methods of bunker detection, the resistance movement has per force continually improved camouflage devices and other measures to prevent detection.

Location

2. The site chosen for an underground bunker depends largely on local conditions, terrain, density of population, etc. Bunkers are often built into the sides of hills because it is easier to dig horizontally than vertically. In general, the farther a bunker is situated from a settlement, a road, or any sort of thoroughfare, the better. The common location presently used is in an ordinary field covered with brush one or two feet high. Prior to 1946, the partisans found that bunkers near brooks were very satisfactory because, when approaching the bunker, one could wade along the brook, thereby eliminating tell-tale footprints. After the discovery of such a bunker in 1946, the Soviets began searching all brooks for bunkers; and since that time the UPA units have been instructed to stop building bunkers beside brooks. UPA Headquarters issues no specific instructions concerning the location of bunkers. The choice of sites is left to the discretion of the local commanders, who are more familiar with on-the-spot conditions.

Construction and Camouflage

3. Spades, picks, and shovels are the main implements used in building bunkers. Usually a large bunker to accommodate seven to nine men can be built in three

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weeks if the men working on it spend ten hours a day or night on the job. Only the men who are to live in it participate in the building of the bunker. Formerly, ordinary workmen were blindfolded and led to the site, but this became an insecure method when Soviet anti-partisan pressure on the civilian population increased. When building in an open field, the partisans attempt to dispose of the dirt in a nearby field under cultivation. At night they mix the dirt with plowed soil so that it looks natural. Directly over the bunker on the ground, branches and limbs of trees are laid in a criss-cross fashion to increase the amount of weight which the ground over the bunker can support. Leaves are then strewn over these branches and limbs of trees. After a firm foundation has been made, a type of asphalt or cement is poured among the branches and leaves. Above this "asphalt", dirt and grass or shrubs are planted so that the location blends with its natural surroundings. The ground above a bunker should slope so that water will drain off.

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Interior

4. [REDACTED] the following description of a bunker which he occupied for three and a half months during the winter of 1946-47. This typical bunker consisted of one room five meters long and four meters wide. The height of the sloped ceiling varied from three and a half meters on one side of the room to two meters on the other side. The four corners of the bunker were fortified by posts made from tree trunks and the inner walls were lined with strong branches criss-crossed in much the same manner as above the bunker and strengthened with the same cement-like substance. This bunker had two openings flush with the ground, one-half meter square, which served as windows. These windows were made of camouflaged removable boards. The only means of entry and exit to the bunker was a square tunnel two meters long and one meter wide, extending between the ceiling of the bunker and the surface of the ground above. At the upper entrance to the tunnel, a wooden box resting on two ledges was fitted flush with the ground. This box, filled with dirt, was camouflaged with grass. To enter the bunker, one had to lift the box by pulling a wire well hidden in the surrounding brush. To leave the bunker, one pushed the box up from below.
5. Within this bunker there was one table with an oil lamp, two chairs, several barrels containing food, a chest containing weapons and ammunition, a stove, and a wooden structure partitioned into twelve bunks. Under the bunks were stored boxes of food and arms.
6. The stove in the bunker was used not only for cooking but for warmth. Cooking was done only on moonless nights; the stovepipe emerged in a clump of bushes above the bunker. The heat created during the cooking hours had to last to warm the bunker until the stove could be used again the following night.
7. In order to ventilate most bunkers, a small hole is drilled up the middle of a nearby tree. This method is generally used for forest bunkers. Otherwise, there appears to be no specific provision for ventilation except for the ordinary amount that would come into a bunker through the opening and closing of the tunnel or "windows" or through cracks. In some bunkers there is a small tunnel built off the main room which is used for toilet facilities.

Seasonal Use

8. Bunkers are usually built in the late fall or just before the ground freezes. The partisans move into the bunkers in December or January and stay there underground until about April. During this time, they do not leave the bunker unless there is no snow on the ground.
9. Bunkers are built either as the winter quarters for small groups of ordinary partisans or for specialist underground workers such as printers. Partisans normally leave their bunkers in the spring and live above ground until the following winter. Specialists, however, often continue living in their bunker as long as it is safe to do so during all seasons of the year.

Life in a Bunker

12. The men who live in bunkers usually sleep between 5:00 am and 3:00 pm. Normally, breakfast is eaten at 3:00 pm. Following breakfast, there is a

lecture and study period which lasts five or six hours. Military history of the Ukraine, compass and map reading, political indoctrination, and partisan warfare are only a few of the topics that are taught during these sessions. Naturally, the caliber teaching depends on the ability of the group leader and the special talents of the other inhabitants. At mid-night the occupants have their main meal, and an hour before daybreak they have their supper and go to bed.

11. During the summer, the UPA has a five-week course in first aid, which trains about fifty men each year. Whenever possible, the occupants of a bunker will include one of these trained men during the winter. If, however, a bunker has no one trained in first aid, all occupants do what they can to aid a sick or wounded companion. Regardless of the circumstances, a sick man remains inside the bunker until spring. The security danger is considered too great during the winter period to allow the man to go to a village or town for medical treatment.

Security Measures

12. Whenever practical, i.e., not during the snow season, the men in a bunker perform guard duty. This duty consists solely of guarding the bunker. The guard rests in concealment usually not more than a meter from the entrance to the bunker itself, so that no unnecessary footprints are left on the ground. This guard is necessary to keep the occupants from being caught unaware by an intruder.
13. There are four standard ways of dealing with intruders who discover the location of a bunker while it is in use:
- a. If the men in the bunker know the man who discovers their hiding place, they warn him of the danger to all concerned if the Soviets should find the location of the bunker. Following a lengthy lecture, the man is set free.
 - b. Should the man not be well-known to the occupants of the bunker, he is kept in the bunker until a check can be made of him. If the occupants are unable to obtain any information, derogatory or otherwise, they often keep the man with them in the bunker throughout the winter.
 - c. If the man who discovers the bunker is a known agent, or subsequent information should prove him to be one, he is liquidated.
 - d. When a bunker has been discovered and it appears likely that other persons of unknown reliability know of its location, the bunker is evacuated. Evacuation is also normal if a person who has discovered the location manages to escape.
14. Some bunkers are built with an escape tunnel or hatch, usually very crudely fashioned and barely wide and high enough for one man at a time to squeeze through. This exit is never used except for emergency escape. When the decision to evacuate has been made the occupants take all papers and printed material, weapons, ammunition, and, if time permits, their food. A one-room bunker with about ten men can usually be evacuated completely in half an hour. After leaving the bunker, the men bury everything that they have taken with them in order to be able to travel to the next safest place without being burdened with extra equipment.

Soviet Methods for Discovering Bunkers

15. Generally speaking, Soviet bunker-detecting methods have gone through the following three phases since 1943:

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- a. The Red Army on the way to or from the western front in 1943 through 1945 combed specified areas looking for bunkers and partisans. They concentrated mostly on wooded areas. Larger troop units were sent through the woods searching. The soldiers were easily spotted by the UPA men and few partisans were discovered during these years.
- b. By 1945 and 1946, Soviet Army troops were no longer used because they were considered unreliable. Instead, MVD and special troops in groups of 200 were sent into areas known to contain partisans. One source told of a wooded area, forty-five kilometers long and seven kilometers wide, where about 700 UPA partisans lived. The Soviets sent 8,000 MVD troops into this area to ferret out the partisans during the summer of 1946. At that time of the year, UPA partisans were living above ground. There were three former forest rangers with the partisans that summer who had formerly worked in this same forest complex. Consequently, by following the directions of these rangers, the partisan units spent the entire summer leading the Soviets a merry chase through the woods. The groups of 200 men that the Soviet sent out from time to time were not familiar with the woods and were easy marks for the small bands of UPA men, who could spot them coming and chose the convenient time and place for an ambush or encounter. Because they were losing too many men on these forays into partisan country, the Soviets gave up Phase 2 at the end of 1946.
- c. Early 1947 marked the beginning of the latest and most successful Soviet method of detecting the location of bunkers and partisan units. After the mass troop action of Phases 1 and 2 proved unsuccessful, the Soviets decided on the one-man penetration method. They would put one man into a suspected partisan area and order him to report all information that he could obtain regarding the possible location of partisan groups. According to recent reports, these agents are more interested in the general area where partisan bunkers are located than in the specific location of any one bunker. These men also live in an area for a long time and attempt to gain the confidence of the local population before starting on their task of ferreting out bunkers of the underground movement. Prior to July 1948, it was known that MVD troops stationed in the oblast capital, Drogobych, were given a course in the detection of bunkers. A captured MVD man who had attended the course in Drogo-bych told the UPA that the MVD troops were given instruction on seventy-six different types of bunkers used by the partisans. MVD Headquarters in Kiev reportedly has a central office entirely devoted to the study and comparison of bunkers and means of detecting them.

16. [REDACTED] the Soviets are very thorough in their attempts to locate centers of partisan activity. He claims that, if, for example, the MVD locates a bunker in a well or near a brook, a check of every brook and well in that particular area for further evidence of bunkers can be expected. He also mentioned the fact that in the winter of 1947-1948 the Soviets suspected that there were strong and well-organized UPA partisans in a certain territory in the western Ukraine. In this region of about fifteen villages and 7,000 inhabitants, there was a wooded area where the Soviets had captured a Polish youth who apparently had no great love for the Ukrainians. After plying the Pole for a week with food and wine, they instructed him to spend some time in the forest area and to attempt to obtain all the information that he could concerning possible partisan activity. This method proved unsuccessful because the young Pole was not familiar with the woods.

17. Still undaunted, the Soviets tried another approach. One evening they robbed several homes in one of the villages and the next day, professing great concern over the robbery, the Soviets went into the village and searched for the "robber". The word was quietly passed around by the MVD that quite possibly the Pole who had spent some time in the village might

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have committed the robberies. Meanwhile, the Polish boy had taken to the woods to hide out from the villagers and supposedly from the Soviets. Not long after having gone to the woods, he met two UPA men one evening. He warned them that the Soviets were in the village. They thanked him and went on, but the young Pole quietly followed them. He soon noticed that their footsteps suddenly stopped ahead and he heard nothing for a while. In this manner he was able to surmise the approximate location of the bunker. The next evening the MVD troops surrounded the area, and a fight ensued the following morning. During this encounter, four UPA men and six Soviets were killed. The young Pole who had been the informant was later captured by the UPA and verified the above incident in detail.

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