

German Occupation of Kiev in 1941-1943: German Occupation of Kiev in 1941-1943: Documents of the Nazi-Controlled City Administration

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The State Archive of the Kiev Oblast' (GAKO) contains a collection designated as Fond R-2356 "*Kievskaiia gorodskaiia uprava* [Kiev City Administration]". Behind it is one of the most tragic pages in Ukraine's recent history – the Great Patriotic War. Nazi Germany invaded the USSR on June 22nd, 1941. On September 19th, 1941, the capital of Ukraine was already taken by the Nazis. Kiev was occupied for more than two years until its liberation on November 6th, 1943. The only European capitals that remained under Nazi occupation longer are Vienna, Prague and Warsaw.

To govern the occupied territories, the Nazis established Reichkommissariat "Ukraina" on August 20th, 1941. It included the main part of Ukrainian land and consisted of six general regions (Generalbezirken). The Kiev region was composed of the city of Kiev, and Kiev and Poltava oblasts within the borders of that time. The building of the former Kiev Military District headquarters housed the region's governing body command center at today's address of 11, Bankovaia Street.

The German occupation machinery was supplemented by local self-government, and manned by "politically reliable," active supporters of the occupiers.

October of 1941 saw the establishment of the Kiev City Administration with Prof. A.P. Ogloblin as the first appointed mayor (Buergermeister). He was soon replaced by V. Bagazii, a teacher at School No. 19, who was then arrested in February 1942 and shot at Babi Yar for supporting the communist underground organization and Ukrainian nationalists working for an independent state of Ukraine.¹ The longest-serving mayor was L. Forostovskii.

Besides controlling all of Kiev's district councils, the Municipal Council carried out executive functions. At its inception, it contained a staff of 1,138 and 128 divisions, the largest of which were management and administrative. The management division consisted of the mayor's reception office, a general affairs office, a translation pool, a finance and economics unit, and a protection squad. The administrative division had seven sectors in charge of keeping official records of births, deaths and marriages, issuing permissions to stay in the city, issuing passports, handing out administrative punishments, etc. The Council also contained divisions for propaganda and the press, culture and education, public health, trade and public catering, industry, transport, municipal railroads, fuel, communications, crafts, charity, finance, legal affairs, housing and statistics. Besides these, the Council also had squads of municipal police and a labor exchange that operated on

the basis of special rules and instructions issued by the German authorities. The Council and all of its divisions employed their own staffs and seals. This arrangement existed until June of 1943. The divisions were replaced by sections for: administration; schools and culture; health protection; veterinary services; land surveying; and legal affairs. The subsections oversaw: notary public and legal affairs; finance; public catering and agriculture; labor; municipal economic enterprises; municipal buildings and the private housing stock; construction; trade; crafts; and transport. Crowning the Council was the mayor (Buergermeister) and his two deputies.

It should be noted that the Kiev City Administration found itself in a difficult situation right away. It had to take complete responsibility for running the city while under total control of the German occupation authorities. The orders of the Municipal Council were based on the orders of the German command.

The Kiev City Administration inherited a devastated city. Abandoning Kiev, the Bolsheviks mined and bombed the main street of Kreshchatik and many buildings in the city center. Most of the factories were left without equipment, water, or power supply; food stockpiles were either carted away or poisoned; and municipal transport, communications, and water supply systems were out of service.

The Council did much to restore normal life in the city. The document entitled "One Year in Liberated Kiev" summed up the Council's actions during the first year of the occupation. Three municipal power plants were rebuilt; the water supply system pumped 55,000 to 60,000 cubic meters of water a day; a special 8-kilometer tram line between Pushcha and Bucha with a bridge over the Irpen' was built to carry peat; 18,000 families were given land to grow vegetables; 45,985 vouchers for living space were issued; 918 trucks and 252 cars were repaired; 21 wagon trains with 286 horses were formed; 56,000 RMs (Raummeters or, roughly, cubic meters) of firewood were procured for municipal needs; A telephone exchange serving 2,000 numbers and 18 post offices was established; 92 food stores, 19 meat shops, 17 consumer goods stores, 32 stalls, 71 kiosks, and 22 soup kitchens for the disabled opened for business; and 13,000 children of 7 to 11 years of age went to 59 elementary schools. The opera house, Ukrainian Choir, Bandurist Capella, Operetta Theater, Puppet Theater, conservatory of music, one dancing school, two schools of music, the Zoo, and the Botanical Garden also opened within the first year.²

However, being fully dependent on the German administrative and police organs, the Municipal Council was obliged to carry out the tasks of the occupation authorities: the plunder of captured territories, the use of city residents for work in the German war industry, and the crushing of dissent and all forms of resistance to the new government.

The plundering of Ukraine was part of the Third Reich's official policy. Materials of the Nuremberg trials contain a document which says:

The removal from Ukraine of surplus agricultural products to provide the Reich with supplies is possible on condition that the internal consumption in Ukraine should be reduced to the minimum. This will be achieved through the following measures: 1. The destruction of the unnecessary mouths (Jews), and residents of big Ukrainian cities, such as Kiev, will be getting no food supplies at all; 2. Through cutting to the maximal food quota for Ukrainian urban dwellers...³

The order, issued on the very first day of the occupation, called for handing over surplus food under the pain of death. A family could keep no more than a one-day supply of food. Stores were closed. Ration cards were issued as late as December to buy 200 grams of bread a day. Fats, meat, sugar and other foods were not included. The mayor reported to his superiors that people bloated from starvation began appearing on the streets.⁴

While they did not provide the locals with any food, the occupiers made them report for work under pain of death. Here is, for example, the notice issued by the chief of the protection police force of Kiev's Bogdanovskii district on November 03th, 1941: "You must turn up, with your own tools, at the Bogdanovskii district police station (38, Pushkin Street) on Monday, December 1st at 7 a.m. Failing to do so, you would be put to death under the wartime laws ..."⁵

The Municipal Council played a major role in implementing the criminal measures taken by the occupiers to forcibly deport residents of Kiev to Germany, as the station for forcible deportation was housed at 24, Artioma Street. The mayor of Kiev issued the decision to make city residents register with the labor exchange, first men and then women. This amounted to actually counting the people of Kiev. Those registered were not only under the control of the labor exchange, but district council, resident housing agent, and police as well.

Defaulters were forcibly brought for registration to the resident housing agent's office by the yardman or a police officer. Registration dodgers were regarded as saboteurs and could be punished. This follows from Resolution No. 239 of 9 December 1941, signed by Mayor V. Bagazii, "On Measures to Register all Unemployed Men with the Labor Exchange."⁶

The order of Kiev Mayor L. Forostovskii on April 11th, 1942 set the minimal quota of workers to be shipped to Germany. Hundreds of city residents, mainly young people, were shipped out of Kiev for forced labor every day. All in all, 120,000 people were deported from Kiev during the years of its occupation.

In addition to coercion, the authorities used propaganda. The very same L. Forostovskii said in an appeal to young people of Kiev:

The finest residents of the city of Kiev have shown their desire to volunteer to go to Germany to work not yet available to everyone in Kiev because not all of its enterprises wrecked by Judeo-Bolsheviks have been rebuilt.

I'm calling on the young people of Kiev to go to work in Beautiful Germany.

Doing practical work in Germany you will learn skills and, together with the cultured German people, use your energies and abilities for combating Bolshevism.

Those eligible are young lads and girls of 14-18 years of age. The first train with the young people starts from Kiev on May 4.⁷

Actively contributing to the propaganda effort was also the official Kiev newspaper *Novoe ukrainskoe slovo*, edited by historian K. Shtepa. During the years of occupation he worked as rector of Kiev University and head of the culture and education department of the Municipal Council. The usual fare at the movie theaters was a propaganda film footage entitled "The Road to Germany" and there were posters and leaflets pasted up on the walls of buildings and fences and great amounts of pamphlets were handed out. A number of examples of such printed material are found in the archive's library. The occupation caused massive unemployment in Kiev. As few as 40,000 people of the city's able-bodied population of 330,000 had jobs early in 1942. On top of this, the city was getting no food supplies at all.

For a time, the occupiers provided token aid to the relations of those recruited for work in Germany. The archive has a list of people who worked in Warsaw and whose relations received aid from the Podol'skaia and Sofievskiaia district councils. There are 26 names on the list. There is an "aid discontinued" note against 13 of the names. The mark against two further names says "has run away." The list is dated June 11th, 1942. Supposing those on the list were recruited during the first days of the recruitment campaign in January 1942, less than half of them remained six months later. Some of them either died or went back home exhausted and sick. The number of volunteers fell sharply by the spring of 1942. Their number in Kiev did not exceed 10 percent. The recruitment campaign fell through. The mayor's order of April 11th, 1942 to the heads of district councils urged them to step up the shipping of labor to Germany on pain of punishment.

The stepped up control over the residents on the part of the housing managers, yardmen and police accelerated the shipping of labor. One can see from the minutes of a conference of housing managers of the Sofievskii district held on April 18th, 1942 that the number of the hunted down Kievans went up from 2 to 20 to 70 to 102. But this dramatic increase halted. On April 26th they only rounded up 13 people to the recruitment center in the Sofievskii district.

Yet another instruction was issued on July 8th, 1942 by the Kiev Mayor "On Registration of the Population of Kiev Aged between 16 and 55." It said, among other things:

...to start the registration on July 10th and complete it on July 25th instantly. Individuals who shirk work (ignore summons, fail to report to work, evade registration) are to be punished as saboteurs and their property should be seized. This seizure is to be carried out forthwith, as soon as it is found that the individual who has no employment card failed to report on summons from the labor exchange.

Administrations, commandants, owners, and tenants, as well as heads of institutions that shelter individuals without employment cards are to be severely punished the same as for sabotage.⁹

On July 18th, 1942, the city mayor reported to the city commissar about punishing the housing managers, owners of houses, and tenants who had failed to dispatch labor as prescribed by the labor exchange. Seven housing managers were taken to the police court, 34 were sent to forced labor and 94 fined. Twenty owners of houses also had to pay fines. Of the residents they found, only 6 were sent to forced labor, while 63 residents were fined. They must have not been able-bodied and only fined for the failure to register.

Nearly the entire able-bodied population of Kiev was shipped off as forced labor during six months in 1942, for which reason the mayor issued Resolution No. 126 "On Mandatory Work in Kiev for Children of 11-14 Years of Age." When the indignant parents refused to send their children to work, the mayor issued on September 24th, 1942, Resolution No. 268 with the following instructions appended to it:

1. Children of 12-13 should be put to work...to fill in for the workers who have departed for Germany
2. The duties pertaining to the organization of registration centers, which are to steer the organization of child labor in the city districts, are thereby assigned to the department of culture and education...
3. All establishments and enterprises in Kiev shall take on children carrying appropriate certificates from the district registration centers...¹⁰

Orphans and homeless children were brought to special asylums located on the premises of factories and enterprises where they were made to work. Besides childhood and freedom, German medics also took blood from them for their soldiers.

The authorities also used educational institutions to mobilize labor for Germany. The newspaper *Novoe ukrainskoe slovo* carried an announcement on November 12th, 1942, about a meeting to take place on the university premises of former students of the Medical Institute. Having registered those who attended the meeting, the authorities urged them to agree to go to work in Germany right away. On November 15th, 1942 the newspaper carried a reminder from the Kiev general commissar on mobilizing the medical institute students. Simultaneously, the general commissariat issued secret orders to close down the medical institute and mobilize its students to go to Germany. This was paralleled with other repressive measures, including delays in the issue of ration cards to those Kiev residents whose children were evading to report at the recruiting center. As early as November 25th, Mayor L. Forostovskii received a report stating the number of bread cards taken away from the families of students in all Kiev's districts. There were 115 such families. People used various ways to evade mobilization: some left Kiev, others pretended to be ill. Thus, 236 medical students hid in villages, while 875 stayed in Kiev but wouldn't appear at the recruiting center. However, some of the dodgers were finally hunted down by the occupiers and shipped off to Germany.

Taking active part in the repressions against the city residents were units of the Ukrainian police force at the disposal of the city council.

We can get some idea of the structure and tasks of the police system in Kiev from a letter of instructions to the city mayor on December 5th, 1941, "The Organization of Ukrainian Police Force of the City of Kiev," signed by Kiev Okrug commissioner Oberbuergermeister Tagausch. It called for the following things subject to approval by the Schutzpolizei, the German police force in Kiev commander:

1. Police units:

- a) A battalion of the Ukrainian police force commanded by the German police force (headed by Capt. Pfahl);
- b) Every district has its own protection force. The police protection force included the Ukrainian chief and the appropriate number of police officers. Supervision and control is the duty of the district lieutenant or instructor together with ranking police officials;
- c) General control of individual police officers (individual guard stations) is in the hands of the Kiev police chief, Major Stunde;
- d) Auxiliary police squads were also attached to the armed forces stationed in Kiev.

2. Relationship of the city mayor and district council heads with police forces:

- a) In disciplinary terms, the Kiev Ukrainian police force is subordinated exclusively to the German police force (Schutzpolizei),
- b) In business relations, the Mayor has the right to issue instructions to the police chief and police squad chiefs. District council heads can only issue instructions to the police chiefs in their districts;
- c) Police chiefs should keep German police force (Schutzpolizei) officers informed and get instructions from them.

3. Item three of these instructions details the rights of the police force. The document stresses:

- a) The wartime police court can punish offenders by death or acquit them;
- b) The rights of the Kiev commissioner with regard to the administration of police punishment include:
 - i. Imprisonment or forced labor for the duration of up to 6 weeks.
 - ii. Fines of up to 1,000 German marks... The commissioner shall be granted the right to administer capital punishment on the strength of the Reichkommissariat of Ukraine directive on December 5th, 1941.¹¹

In other words, the right to determine punishment including punishment by death was granted to all levels and agencies of the punitive machinery in occupied Kiev beginning with the Gestapo, SS, the army and ending with local police forces.

The German protection police force included up to 1,000 men, the same as the Ukrainian police force. There was also a police force to protect the bridges over the Dnieper (up to 199 men) and a fire protection force (of up to 800 men). The personnel stationed in Kiev and the oblast numbered almost 6,000.

The Ukrainian police force in Kiev operated in close cooperation and under the supervision of the German protection police force and took part in the arrests, roundups, the protection of prisoner camps, execution of the population, deportations to Germany, and so on. On November 4th, 1941, the newspaper of the

occupation authorities *Ukrainskoe slovo* carried the order of Commandant of Kiev Major-General Eberhardt to execute 300 city residents “for sabotage.” On December 2nd, 1941 it reported the execution by a firing squad of 400 Kievans “for the premeditated damage to communications.” Some 220,000 Kievans were executed by the criminal punitive squads during the occupation period. Those executed at Babi Yar include, in addition to Jews and members of the Bolshevik underground resistance movement, advocates for an independent Ukraine. Arrested and executed in February of 1942 was representative of the OUN leadership K. Gupalo, the editor of the newspaper *Ukrain'ske slovo*, I. Rogach and his sister Hanna, poetess O. Teliga and her husband M. Teliga, a member of the Union of Ukrainian Writers I. Irliandskii, among others. Mayor L. Forostovskii wrote in his memoirs that “tens of thousands of actively conscientious Ukrainians” died in Kiev during the German occupation.¹²

The Municipal Council helped the occupiers to steal cultural treasures from private collections, cultural institutions, archives, stores, publishing houses, and so on. Some of the archive documents tell the story:

**Instruction of the Stadtkommissariat of the city of Kiev City
Administration establishment of addresses of Soviet intellectuals
and cultural institutions in order to find and requisition valuables.**

It is necessary to provide the Stadtkommissariat with the following:

1. Lists and addresses of the apartments where top officials of the party of Bolsheviks lived before October 19th, 1941.
2. Lists and addresses of well-known artists, scholars, actors, painters, professors and so on.
3. The addresses of the apartments of Jews who own fine paintings (originals and copies) and valuable books.
4. A separate list of all cultural establishments of Kiev as of October 19th, 1941 (concert halls, publishing houses, libraries, book stores, etc.).
5. Lists of libraries and archives controlled by the Municipal Council (with the exception of the library at 14, Kirov Street).
6. “The Soviet World Atlas” and the book “On Locations of Raw Materials and Their Operation,” whose publication was timed for the 18th party congress.

All the materials related to both the former and latter lists must be submitted on April 17th, 1942 at the latest to the Stadtkommissariat, room 39.

April 11th, 1942.

(signature)¹³

Incidentally, some 2000 files on the introduction of Magdeburg Law into Ukrainian towns, the activities in Ukraine of German colonists, WWI and the presence of Germans in Ukraine in 1918 were shipped to Germany during the occupation.

Kiev City Administration stopped operating after the liberation of Kiev on November 6th, 1943.

At the end of the occupation there remained 186,000 residents in the city, or a fifth of the pre-war number. The film director Aleksandr Dovzhenko wrote right

after the liberation of Kiev: “There is practically no population in Kiev. There are knots of miserable poverty-stricken people who need help. There are no children, there are no young girls, there are no young boys. There are only elderly women and cripples.”

The City Council documents stayed in GAKO’s secret stacks until December 1990, following which they were declassified and handed over for general storage. The Fond contains information on the economic position of the city during the occupation; the population’s political moods; appeals issues by the city mayor and German commanders; the organization of Ukrainian police force; the operation of housing management departments; the operation of schools, preschool centers, higher schools, libraries, theaters, and movies; massive deportations of the populations to forced labor in Germany; the use of child labor; the condition of medical establishments; incidences of diseases, documents of disabled and pensioners; and documents on the personnel of the Municipal Council and of institutions and enterprises under its control and the employment of experts.

The documents are in Ukrainian, Russian and German.

Sources

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4. GAKO, Fond R -2356, op. 1, d.60, p. 3.
5. GAKO, FR-2356, op. 1, d. 60, p. 8.
6. GAKO, FR-2412, op. 2, d. 2, pp. 50-51.
7. GAKO, FR-2356, op. 3, d. 9, p. 14.
8. GAKO, FR-2356, op. 2, d. 34, p. 5.
9. GAKO, FR-2356, op.17, p. 1
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11. GAKO, FR-2362, op. 1, d. 1, pp. 26, 27.
12. Forostovskii L. *Kiev pod vrazheskimi okkupatsiiami*. – Buenos Aires, 1952, - p. 76
13. GAKO, FR-2356, op.1, d. 123, p. 35.