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# **PROTESTANT PENTECOSTALS IN THE POST-WAR REPRESSION IN SOUTHERN UKRAINE 1945 – 1953**

**By Mykhailo Fedorenko and Serhii Makarchuk**

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## **Abstract**

The article examines one of the most dramatic pages in the history of the Pentecostal religious movement, which is related to the repression against them in the postwar years of 1945-1953 (the period of late Stalinism). The object of the study involves the communities of Pentecostals in the South of Ukraine, which operated in the territory of modern Mykolayiv and Odessa regions. After presenting the historiography of the question, it is shown that despite thorough scientific research on the activities of Protestant movements in Ukraine during the Soviet era, there are not enough separate studies related to the Pentecostals. Pentecostals were mainly studied in the context of other Protestant denominations, usually Baptists. Thus, the repressions between 1945 and 1953 are insufficiently covered. In fourteen cases stored in the Sectoral State Archives of the Security Service of Ukraine and the Archives of the Security Service of Ukraine in Mykolayiv region, the work of repressive bodies (People's Commissariat of State Security – Ministry of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR) of the Ukrainian South were explored. The personal case of Andriy Mykhailovych Kits, arrested in 1946 and sentenced to correctional camps in 1947, is provided as an example and the content of other cases are analyzed. The absurdity and artificiality of the accusations and the severity of the sentences are also shown. The article ends with the authors' conclusions.

**Keywords:** Pentecostals, repressions, the South of Ukraine, the People's Commissariat of State Security, the Ministry of State Security, intelligence and operational activities.

## **Introduction**

Pentecostals today are one of the largest Protestant denominations in Ukraine. As of January 1, 2019, there are 2,654 registered communities declaring their membership in the Pentecostals. Historically, Pentecostals began their way in Ukraine in the early 20th century. The spread of Pentecostal doctrine in Ukraine started with three centers. The southern center was located in Odessa. Repatriate Ivan Voronayev began the Pentecostal movement in 1921 after returning from the United States. The Volyn Center also dates back to the early 1920s and is associated with the activities of Volyn re-emigrants from the United States and prisoners of war during the First World War, as well as with the activities of Gustav Schmidt and Arthur Bergholtz. The Bukovina Center (Bukovina in the 1920s was part of Romania), like the previous ones, dates back to the early 1920s, thanks to the activities of Christian Gavril and Filat Rotaru. The first Pentecostal community was formed in 1928. Thus, the formation and development of the Pentecostal movement took place during the turbulent times of Soviet rule in Ukraine, which had negative consequences for the followers of the Protestant faith. Here, we consider it one of the most tragic pages in the history of the Pentecostals of Ukraine, which is related to the repression carried out against them by the People's Commissariat of State Security — Ministry of State Security, in the period after World War II, from 1945 to 1953. The object of this study were selected communities of Pentecostals in the Ukrainian South, namely the communities of modern Odessa and Mykolayiv regions.

## **Historiography**

It should be noted that modern Ukrainian historical science recently paid considerable attention to the history of the origin and activities of various Protestant denominations in Ukraine. One of the prioritized areas of research is the repression of the Soviet government against Ukrainian Protestants. The opening of closed archives, related to the activities of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the State Security Committee, have provided historians with great opportunities to study this horrific period. However, it should be noted that today, more research related to the repression of Protestants concerns the period of the “Great Terror,” from 1937-1938. The period of post-war repressions of 1945-1953 have not yet received sufficient coverage in modern Ukrainian historiography.

Among the existing studies that resonate with this period are the works of Yu. Vilkhovy and V. Voynalovych. Yu. Vilkhovy studied the policy of the Soviet state towards

Protestant churches in Ukraine (the mid-1940s-1970s). Characterizing the repressive policy of the party and state bodies of the USSR and the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic in relation to Protestant denominations, he focused mainly on Evangelical Baptists. The repression against the Pentecostals was viewed in a general context.<sup>1</sup> V. Voynalovych, based on a wide range of sources of party and state authorities, revealed the features of their repressive policy towards Ukrainian Protestants in the 1940s - 1960s. But, in this case, the Pentecostals are considered in the general context, where the main focus is again on Evangelical Baptists.<sup>2</sup> It should be noted that these studies are mainly based on the use of a body of sources stored in the party and state archives of Ukraine and Russia. Documents from the archives of the former State Security Committee are presented to a lesser extent, due to the purpose of the research. The mechanism of the work of the repressive bodies themselves have not been sufficiently disclosed. Pentecostals are not the subject of a separate study. The authors emphasize that the source base associated with the Pentecostals is quite narrow, as much of the denomination was in an illegal state.<sup>3</sup>

Unfortunately, there are not many scientific studies devoted to the history of the Pentecostal movement in Ukraine. I. Salamakh, who takes care of this topic, singles out only three authors: V. Melnyk, O. Nazarkin, and V. Franchuk.<sup>4</sup> Of these studies, the most interesting is the work of V. Franchuk, "Russia asked for rain from the Lord." The author traces the history of the Pentecostals on the basis of a wide source base, focusing on the events unfolding in Ukraine. The repressions applied to the believers of this denomination by the Soviet authorities and punitive bodies are studied separately. The book is written in the style of historical and literary narrative, typical of many Protestant scholars.<sup>5</sup> As for the article by I. Salamakha, it is devoted to the study of the attempt to create the Union of Pentecostals in Ukraine in 1948, their relationship with Evangelical Baptists, and party and state authorities. Interestingly, the author points out the need for further research in this area,

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<sup>1</sup> Ю. Вільховий, "Політика радянської держави щодо протестантських церков в Україні (середина 40-х – 70-х років ХХ ст.)" (дис. ...канд. істор. наук: 09.00.11, 2002).

<sup>2</sup> В. Войналович, *Партійно-державна політика щодо релігії та релігійних інституцій в Україні 1940 – 1960-х років: політологічний дискурс* (Київ: Світогляд, 2005).

<sup>3</sup> Ю. Вільховий, "Політика радянської держави щодо протестантських церков в Україні (середина 40-х – 70-х років ХХ ст.)" (дис. ...канд. істор. наук: 09.00.11, 2002), 30.

<sup>4</sup> І. Саламаха, "П'ятидесятники України в післявоєнні роки (1945 – 1948 рр.)," *Наукові записки Національного університету Острозька академія сер.: Історичне релігієзнавство*, no. 1 (2009): 207 – 214..

<sup>5</sup> В. Франчук, *Просила Россия дождя у Господа* (Київ: Світанкова зоря, 2001).

using the archives of the Security Service of Ukraine, the archives of the All-Union Council of Evangelical Baptists, and the archives of the Pentecostals of Ukraine.<sup>6</sup>

Regarding the repressions against Protestants in the South of Ukraine, it is necessary to pay attention to the article by O. Dovbny. Thus, the author, in her study on the modern historiography of repression against Protestants in the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic in the 1920s and 1980s, outlined and systematized the main directions of regional research. According to her, the repressions against the Protestant denominations of the South of Ukraine were studied by the following scholars: E. Goloshchapova researched the anti-religious struggle of party and state bodies against Evangelical Baptists during the period of social transformations in 1920-1930. The author also wrote a biography of members of the Baptist community in Berdyansk. T. Savchuk paid attention to the dynamics of repression against the Evangelical Baptists of southern Ukraine in 1980. I. Nikolaev and G. Marynchenko covered the activities of Jehovah's Witnesses of Odessa and Mykolayiv in the postwar period. G. Marynchenko, in some works, focused his attention on the mechanisms of the pressure of the Soviet government on the Protestant communities of the South in the second half of the 1940s to the mid-1960s. It should be noted that the author concluded that in 1947-1953, repression was mainly directed at unregistered communities, which included Evangelical Christians or Pentecostals, Adventist Reformers, and pure Baptists. Using the materials of the archival-investigative case, I. Pavelko traced the tragic fate of Pastor Kovalev Mitrofan Stepanovych from the village of Shelyuhy, Zaporizhia region. The relationship of Soviet power with the Protestants of the Crimea in the 1920s revealed in the works of R. Beloglazov, and O. Katunina explored these relations in 1940-1960. The author of the historiographical study, O. Dovbnya, draws attention to the lack of comprehensive research and historical and statistical investigations involving documents from the branch of the Sectoral State Archive of the Security Service of Ukraine and departmental archives of the Security Service of Ukraine in the regions.<sup>7</sup>

It should be noted that among the above works, the topic of repression against the Pentecostals is very poorly studied. The exception is the study of V. Franchuk. The tragic events which took place in the Mykolaiv and Odessa areas are almost not researched. G.

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<sup>6</sup> І. Саламаха, "П'ятидесятники України в післявоєнні роки (1945 – 1948 рр.)," *Наукові записки Національного університету Острозька академія сер.: Історичне релігієзнавство*, no. 1 (2009): 207 – 214.

<sup>7</sup> О. Довбня, "Репресії проти протестантів УСРР/УРСР (1920 – 1980-ті рр.) у сучасній вітчизняній історіографії: регіональний аспект," *Актуальні питання гуманітарних наук* 1, no. 21 (2018): 15–22.

Marynchenko's dissertation works on this problem only partially; the author almost does not use materials from the archives of repressive bodies.<sup>8</sup>

As for the rest, it is necessary to note one of the last researches of O. Korotayev, which is directly related to the repressions against the Pentecostals in the post-war years of 1944-1953. Based on little-known sources, the author explored the work of anti-religious units of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs – the Ministry of State Security and the content of their work among the Pentecostals of Ukraine during the late Stalinism (1944-1953).<sup>9</sup> But, based on the purpose of the study, O. Korotayev focused on the events of the artificial union of the All-Ukrainian Union of Evangelical Baptists and the All-Ukrainian Union of Evangelical Christians, which was formed from Pentecostal communities, into a single organization called the All-Union Council of Evangelical Christians and Evangelical Baptists in Moscow. They held roles in this process of special services and organization and held a secret congress of Pentecostal leaders in Kamyanske (Dnipropetrovsk region) on March 16, 1948, who refused to join the All-Union Council of Evangelical Christians and Baptists. The events that took place in the Ukrainian South were hardly considered.

### **Key Definitions and Status of the Main Participants in the Study**

The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is a state that existed from 1922 to 1991 in Eastern Europe, parts of Central and East Asia. The Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic was a socialist Ukrainian state, proclaimed in 1919 and since 1922, was a union republic within the USSR.

The All-Union Communist Party of the Bolsheviks has been around since 1952. It is an unregistered left-wing political party in Russia, formed on November 8, 1991, in the USSR of a communist orientation, operating in the territory of the countries of the former Soviet Union. It is the first communist party following the Communist Party of the RSFSR and the dissolution of the CPSU.

The Communist Party of the Soviet Union was the only legal political party from 1920 to 1991 in the Soviet Union.

The People's Commissariat of State Security is the central body of state power in the USSR, which was in charge of state security issues and carried out repressive measures.

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<sup>8</sup> Г. Маринченко, “Відносини радянської влади та церкви в Південній Україні (друга половина 40-х – середина 60-х років XX століття)” (автореф. дис. ... канд. іст. наук: 07.00.01, 2013).

<sup>9</sup> О. Коротаєв, “П’ятидесятницькі релігійні союзи України як об’єкт оперативної розробки органів НКДБ – МДБ за часів пізнього сталінізму (1944 – 1953),” *Наукові записки Вінницького державного університету імені Михайла Коцюбинського*, no. 33 (2020): 55–65.

The Ministry of State Security, the successor to the People's Commissariat of State Security, existed from 1946 to 1953.

The State Security Committee, the successor to the Ministry of State Security, existed from 1953 to 1991.

The Security Service of Ukraine is a state body of special purpose with law enforcement functions, which ensures the state security of Ukraine, founded on March 25, 1992.

Evangelical Baptists were the main Christian denomination of the Evangelical Baptist religion in Ukraine. It is a unique Christian movement that combines elements of Protestant and Orthodox Christian traditions.

Evangelical Christians are the largest all-Ukrainian association of Pentecostal communities.

The All-Union Council of Evangelical Christians and Baptists, founded in 1944 on the initiative of the Soviet authorities to control Protestant denominations, brought together Evangelical Christians, Baptists, Pentecostals, Mennonites, and smaller evangelical groups. After the collapse of the USSR, the single union split into national associations, which are now part of the Eurasian Federation of Evangelical Baptist Unions.

Article 54-10 of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian SSR (1927 and 1937) was an article that provided responsibility for “counter-revolutionary activities” and “betrayal of the homeland.” Introduced into the Criminal Code of the USSR in 1927 in the wording of 20.07.1934, Article 54-10 part 1 of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic deals with counter-revolution (any action aimed at overthrowing, undermining, or weakening power); Part 2 of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian SSR deals with armed uprising. Punishment: execution, or imprisonment for a term of 10 years with confiscation of all property.

## **After World War II**

After the tragic events of World War II, the socio-economic situation in the USSR and in Ukraine in particular, were extremely difficult: it saw plundered cities and villages, destroyed industries, the decline of agriculture, and terrible human losses. People who endured all the horrors of war felt the need for support and comfort. Such a situation contributed to the conversion of a large part of the population to religion and the Word of God, which alarmed the ruling party-state circles led by Stalin. Of particular concern was the revival of Protestant communities. As the Orthodox Church, after the defeat of the 1920s and 1930s, was forcibly

placed under the control of the ruling regime, it was much more difficult for Protestants, who had their spiritual and cultural centers in Europe and United States. In addition, this spiritual and cultural connection aroused suspicion in the People's Commissariat of State Security (since March 15, 1946, the Ministry of State Security), which considered Protestants potential agents of Western intelligence. Therefore, even during the liberation of Ukraine from German occupation, all Protestant communities found themselves in the operational development of the Soviet repressive authorities. The Pentecostals were no exception. In 1944, the leaders of the Pentecostal communities were assigned a special name, "The Prophets," by the centralized intelligence service.<sup>10</sup> The aim was to bring the reborn Pentecostal community under control, after the Great Terror of 1937-1938 and during the German occupation. For this reason, they planned to eliminate them, by discrediting and repressing community leaders, replacing them with leaders loyal to the regime and controlled by special services candidates. As a result, both the All-Ukrainian Union of Evangelical Christians and the All-Ukrainian Union of Evangelical Baptists were liquidated in order to further merge them with other Protestant denominations into the All-Union Council of Evangelical Christians and Baptists. According to the leadership of the People's Commissariat of State Security, the formation of the All-Union Council of Evangelical Christians and Baptists, under the leadership of its own agents, would provide an opportunity to bring under constant control all Protestant denominations in the USSR. As a result of repressive actions, according to the documents of the People's Commissariat of State Security of the USSR, 87 "anti-Soviet organizations and groups operating in the religious sphere" were liquidated, and 875 members of religious activists were arrested.<sup>11</sup> The People's Commissariat of State Security's hopes that the Pentecostals would easily join the All-Union Council of Evangelical Christians and Baptists were also dashed. With spiritual practices being somewhat different from those of the Baptists, the leaders of the Pentecostal communities began to resist attempts at unification.

As a result, the authorities began to deprive Pentecostals who resisted registration of the right to hold religious meetings. In essence, they were placed under the law, translating into an illegal (catacomb) situation that threatened repressive consequences. Based on the catastrophic situation, the leaders of the Pentecostal unions entered into the so-called August Agreement of 1945. The agreement proclaimed the entry of the Pentecostal unions into the

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<sup>10</sup> О. Коротаєв, "П'ятидесятницькі релігійні союзи України як об'єкт оперативної розробки органів НКДБ – МДБ за часів пізнього сталінізму (1944 – 1953)," *Наукові записки Вінницького державного університету імені Михайла Коцюбинського*, no. 33 (2020): 57.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.



All-Union Council of Evangelical Baptists and the unification of their doctrine with the doctrine of the Baptists. Thus, the People's Commissariat of State Security intended to eliminate the Pentecostals at the hands of evangelical Christians and Baptists.

Realizing the situation, most of the Pentecostals, led by D. Ponomarchuk and P. Bidash, sabotaged the August agreement. Despite the fact that the authorities managed to lure D. Ponomarchuk to their side, a significant part of the faithful with P. Bidash refused to register. They were known as “unregistered Pentecostals.” As a result, the Ministry of State Security renewed the intelligence case and intensified repression against the Prophets.

As a result of operational developments, from 1946 to 1953, in the territory of the Mykolaiv, Odesa, and Izmail (existed from 1940 to 1954) areas, the Ministry of State Security instituted 12 personal and collective cases which were revealed during research. Mykolayivska had one case, Odessa had four cases, and Izmailska had seven cases. The Directorate of the Ministry of State Security of the Nikolaev region addressed to Blinov a report filed for November 1946 on the results of the investigation into “the Prophets” case.

An active member of the illegal anti-Soviet group of Pentecostals, Andriy Mykhailovych Kits, born in 1906, was arrested. His place of birth was listed as the village Winter (in the investigation case, the village of Budari), Bilgoraj district, Lublin region (Poland). Until March 1945, he lived in the village of his birth. As a result of the resettlement of Ukrainians from Poland, he arrived to reside in the village of Novo-Aleksandrovka, the Vladimir area (today the Bashtansky area) of the Mykolaiv area. With the help of intelligence materials and witness testimony, it was established that Kits, after arriving in Ukraine, joined an illegal group of Pentecostal sectarians (the term “sectarian” was used to refer to religious associations not controlled by the Soviet authorities (which also included unregistered Pentecostals). Under the guise of religious activity, he allegedly began to conduct active anti-Soviet agitation among the population. After moving from Poland to Ukraine, Kitz brought with him a large number of sectarian literature and magazines in which anti-Soviet articles had been published. Kitz distributed the literature to Pentecostal sectarians and the local population. During illegal rallies, Kitz spoke out against Soviet reality. He urged sectarians not to take part in the postwar reconstruction of the national economy. We are investigating the case of Kitz in the direction of revealing all the facts of anti-Soviet activities that he carried out and his criminal connections with the objects of the “Prophets” intelligence case.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> ГДА СБУ(Галузевий державний архів Служби Безпеки України). Ф.16, Оп. 1, Спр. 581, Арк. 87, 104, 105. [GDA SBU (Sectoral State Archive of the Security Service of Ukraine).]

In Archives of Management of Security Service of Ukraine in the Mykolaiv area, the investigative case of Andrey Mikhailovich Kits was brought on charges of violating Art. 54-10-part II of the Criminal Code of the USSR P3127. The case contains 52 documents on 117 pages. According to the resolution of November 11, 1946, the chief of the Vladimir district department of the Ministry of State Security of the Mykolaiv area, Major Nedoshivin, considered materials concerning the criminal activity of Kits Andrey Mikhailovich, who was born in 1906 in the native of the village Budari, Belgorod district, Lublin region, Ukrainian, from middle peasants, was a citizen of the USSR, a literate, non-partisan, Pentecostal sectarian, and an immigrant from Western Ukraine who lived in the village of Novo-Aleksandrovka in the Vladimir region in the Nikolaev area. Nedoshivin found that Andriy Mykhailovych Kits had come to his permanent residence in Volodymyrivskiy district from Western Ukraine in 1945, as a Pentecostal sectarian, and had established contacts in the village of Nova-Oleksandrivka with his fellow believers Chernyshov and other sectarians, with whom he actively engaged in sectarian work and under this guise, developed active anti-Soviet activities, by mass distribution among sectarians of anti-Soviet, sectarian literature, which he brought from Western Ukraine. In addition, he systematically told sectarians negative fabrications about the Soviet reality.

Klavdiya Makarivna Dryzhak, a resident of the village of Oleksandrivka, said that Andriy Kits and Serhiy Bakala brought a lot of anti-Soviet, sectarian literature from Western Ukraine, which they brought to the sect's prayer house, which was read by most of the sectarians. It should be noted that from his anti-Soviet literature, Andriy Kits in the fall of 1945, recommended to Claudia Dryzhak to read the magazine "Light to Enlightenment," which Claudia Dryzhak later passed on to Valentina Sherstyuk. Valentina Sherstyuk said that in the first days of April 1946 she was in the apartment of Claudia Dryzhak, who invited her to read the above-mentioned magazine filled with a number of anti-Soviet defamatory articles. Claudia told Valentina that this magazine was given to her by Andriy Kits, who brought many such magazines from Poland.

The arrested sectarian Mitriev further testified about Andriy Kits' anti-Soviet activities:

As a senior presbyter, I was in the Novo-Myrivska Baptist community on the 20th of February to unite the latter with the Pentecostals. The leaders of the Pentecostal sect, Andriy Kits, and Ivan Chernyshov opposed the unification, explaining that the authorities needed their unification in order to arrest and try them. At the same time, I read in the prayer house a letter from the representative of the All-Union Council of Evangelical Baptists in Ukraine, in which he called on the faithful to take an active part in the country's work. Andrew Kits and Ivan Chernyshov took this letter hostilely,

saying that Christians should not do it! We have not received anything good from the Soviet government, we have always suffered oppression from it and now it does not give anything good to the people. In no country do people live as badly as here, we are getting poorer and hungrier in the Soviet Union. The Soviet government takes away every last grain from the collective farms and the workers often get nothing. Mitriev's testimony is confirmed by several other witnesses.<sup>13</sup>

Based on this testimony, the chief decided to arrest Andriy Kits and search his apartment. Kitz himself was arrested on November 16, 1946. Later, in order to prevent ways of evading the investigation in court in relation to Andriy Kits, they decided to keep him in custody and to inform the arrested person against a receipt in this decision.<sup>14</sup>

In all, since the arrest of Andriy Mykhailovych Kits, seven interrogations have been carried out from November 16 to December 6, 1946. The case also contains eight interrogations of witnesses. Of these, seven interrogations were conducted from April 12, 1946, to November 7, 1946, prior to the indictment and arrest of Kitz, and one interrogation of witness Konstantin Grigorovich Radchenko on December 12, 1946, after his arrest. In addition, there is one protocol of a face-to-face meeting between Kits and witness Saglayev dated December 29, 1946.<sup>15</sup> A typical example of interrogation protocols of that time is the interrogation protocol of Andriy Mykhailovych Kits dated November 22, 1946, the content of which is provided.

Interrogation report: Kits Andriy Mykhailovych  
The city of Mykolayiv 22 / XI – 46

The interrogation began at 10:30.

1. Tell the investigation your autobiography. - I was born in 1906 in the village. In the winter of Bilgoraj district, Lublin region, my father was a poor peasant until 1915. I lived with my family at the place of birth, then moved with my family to another village, where he lived until 1919, engaged in agriculture. In 1919, my family and I returned from the Ryazan province to the Lublin region, where we lived until 1945 and continued to farm.

I was only one son of my parents and we always lived together, my father died in 1941 and my mother in 1936. My farm consisted of 5 hectares of land, a horse, 3 cows, a house with various outbuildings, a horse thresher, self-tapping screws, fans and more.

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<sup>13</sup> Архів УСБУ в Миколаївській області. Спр. 2895-с. Т. 1. Арк. 3 – 3 зв. [Archive USBU in the Mykolaiv region.]

<sup>14</sup> Архів УСБУ в Миколаївській області. Спр. 2895-с. Т. 1. Арк. 4 – 5. [Archive USBU in the Mykolaiv region.]

<sup>15</sup> Архів УСБУ в Миколаївській області. Спр. 2895-с. Т. 1. Арк. 38 - 61. [Archive USBU in the Mykolaiv region.]

2. What else did you have on the farm?

I still had an apiary, which consisted of 15 families.

3. Did you have hired power?

While my father was alive, we did not have hired labor, only when we harvested, we hired workers. My family consists of three children and a wife. In 1954, we all moved.

4. Before 1945, were you a member of any organization?

No, never. I became a Pentecostal sectarian in 1932, this sect was in our village.

5. Where exactly did you join the sect and what preceded it?

I was in the Lublin region and sectarians from different places often came to our village, including the presbyter of the Pentecostal sect of the Zolochinsky district of the Ternopil region – Fedyshyn Hryhoriy, whose last name I do not remember, and he talked to us about joining the sect. In 1932, a sect of believers was created in our village, which I joined. In the same year, I was baptized in water by the presbyter himself.

6. What position did you hold in the sect?

I was a regular member of the church.

7. After coming to the USSR, were you a member of a Pentecostal sect?

When I arrived in the Volodymyrivskyi district, I was interested in whether there was a Pentecostal community here, but officially it was not there, there was only a group of sectarians who were not registered as a community but carried out their purely religious and organizational work. I was part of this group and a Pentecostal sectarian.

The answers to the questions from my words are written correctly and read to me.

Kits A.

Interrogated by UMGB investigator Lieutenant Kuzco.<sup>16</sup>

In fact, in the first interrogations, the investigator's questions were of an introductory nature. Their purpose was to get acquainted with the suspect and bring him to the heart of the matter. In subsequent interrogations, the investigator found out how the interrogated established a connection with an unregistered Pentecostal group, and his relationship with the leader of the group Ballard, in which he held a position in the Pentecostal sect Novo-Oleksandrivka, which had sectarian literature. The investigator was also interested in the magazine "Light to Enlightenment," (*Svet k prosvetleniju*), which was published in Warsaw in 1936, the magazine "Traveler" (*Puteshestvennik*) published in Danzig until 1939, and the magazine "Evangelical Voice" (*Evangel'skij golos*), which was published in Kremyanets until 1939. It should be noted that the investigator's interest in religious literature was not accidental. The magazine, published in Warsaw in 1936 (relations between Poland and the USSR were tense at the time), contained a critique of Soviet reality, which was strictly forbidden in the USSR. The presence of the magazine "Traveler" in 1936 in Danzig

<sup>16</sup> Архів УСБУ в Миколаївській області. Спр. 2895-с. Т. 1. Арк. 17 – 19. [Archive USBU in the Mykolaiv region.]

(Germany) was the basis of Kitz's suspicion of sympathy for Nazi Germany, given the testimony of witnesses.

Some of the literature was published in New York, which had separate periodicals in Russian. After the end of World War II, the United States and the Soviet Union entered the Cold War, which was announced in the iconic Fulton speech of Winston Churchill on March 5, 1946. Pentecostals and representatives of other Protestant churches that had their spiritual and cultural centers in the United States and Europe, immediately came under suspicion from the Department of Homeland Security as agents of a potential enemy. In fact, the suspect's possessing of the listed literature already gave grounds to accuse him of conducting anti-Soviet propaganda.

But the most tragic in the fate of Kitz were the last two interrogations, which took place on November 26, 1946. The first interrogation lasted from 10:20 to 16:50. The investigator questioned the meeting of the religious community to which Kitz belonged regarding the unification process of the All-Union Council of Evangelical Baptists. He was also interested in the anti-Soviet statements of the suspect at the meeting, which, according to Kitz, the investigators found out during the investigation. In 1945, a Pentecostal church merged with Evangelical Baptists in the suspect's village. Presiding S.M. Balada led the united community. In February 1946, the community discussed a letter from the All-Union Council of Evangelical Christians-Baptists in Ukraine by Andreeva on the participation of believers in the reconstruction of the economy destroyed by Nazi invaders. Kitz asked where the money to be raised for reconstruction would go. After explaining that the money will go to Kyiv, Moscow, and part of it will remain in Mykolayiv, Kitz said that there were poor people on the ground who needed help so the money should not be sent elsewhere. Ivan Chernyshov supported him in this assertion. At similar meetings in the village of Nova Lidiyivka, the suspect did not slander the Soviet authorities.<sup>17</sup>

The text of the protocol shows that in 1945, in the Volodymyriv district, Mykolayiv region, the community of Pentecostals with Baptists was united. Pentecostals Kitz and Chernyshov were dissatisfied with this association, but it was not active. They limited their dissatisfaction to remarks. However, this was enough for the investigation to prove the suspects' anti-Soviet activities. This process of unification was artificially introduced into the religious life of the Protestant communities of the USSR by the party-state authorities under the control of the People's Commissariat of State Security–Ministry of State Security.

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<sup>17</sup> Архів УСБУ в Миколаївській області. Спр. 2895-с. Т. 1. Арк. 27 – 30. [Archive USBU in the Mykolaiv region.]

Therefore, the minor opposition to the association was considered a state crime and severely punished.

In the second interrogation, which took place on November 26, 1946, and lasted from 20:00 to 22:00, the point in the accusation of Kitz was finally revealed. But Kitz pleaded guilty only in part. He admitted that, as a convinced Pentecostal, he talked to Lydia Lydov and Claudia Dryzhak, invited them, and gave them literature that he had brought from Poland. It was about the magazine “Light to Enlightenment” №4 in 1936. Kitz acknowledged that in №4, there were a number of articles against the Soviet Union and he constantly gave this magazine to the above-mentioned persons and did not remove these articles from the magazine. At the same time, Kitz asked that accusations of slandering the Soviet government and allegiance to the German invaders be dropped. He only asked why the Germans were called fascists and what the word meant. He also asked if the Germans who lived in Ukraine and were evacuated before the war were Nazis. He never called the Nazis his brothers. Kitz only admitted that in his opinion it was wrong to call all Germans fascist invaders, because among them were also believers.<sup>18</sup>

Thus, according to the protocol, Kitz pleaded partially guilty to the charges. It was only in regard religious literature, which contained some anti-Soviet articles and he distributed among fellow villagers and believers. Regarding sympathy with the Nazis, he denied his guilt.

Based on the case file, the senior investigator, Lieutenant Kuzko, issued a resolution according to which Andriy Mykolayovych Kits was unveiled as a sectarian, a Pentecostal, and who in 1945 came to the territory of the USSR from Poland, established contact with his fellow believers and distributed sectarian anti-Soviet literature he brought with him. In addition, he delivered anti-Soviet speeches among the sectarians, claiming that the policy was wrong, and that the Soviet reality was terrible.

The investigator ruled that guided by Art. 120 and 127 of the Criminal Procedure Code of the Ukrainian SSR Andriy Kits was prosecuted under Art. 54-10 part II of the Criminal Code of the USSR.<sup>19</sup> On December 29, Colonel Martinov upheld a conviction stating that Andriy Kits had been arrested and prosecuted for anti-Soviet activities.<sup>18</sup>

On January 10, 1947, an open court session of the regional court of the first instance took place, consisting of the chairman Tarasov, people's assessors Ananyev and Babych, with

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<sup>18</sup> Архів УСБУ в Миколаївській області. Спр. 2895-с. Т. 1. Арк. 32 – 34. [Archive USBU in the Mykolaiv region.]

<sup>19</sup> Архів УСБУ в Миколаївській області. Спр. 2895-с. Т. 1. Арк. 31. [Archive USBU in the Mykolaiv region.]

the secretary Kulchytska, the prosecutor Dudnyk, and the lawyer Kunyanska in the case of Andriy Kits. According to the court's verdict:

... Given the circumstances of the case and the identity of the defendant, guided by Art. 296, 297 of the Criminal code of the USSR the court condemned Kits Andrey Mikhailovich on the basis of Art. 54-10 part 2 of the Criminal Code of the USSR to be imprisoned in labor camps in remote areas of the USSR, for a term of 8 years with confiscation of all personal property and restriction of rights under Art. 29 of the Criminal Code of the USSR for a period of 5 years. The sentence will be calculated from November 16, 1946. The verdict can be appealed in the Supreme Court of the Ukrainian Republic within 5 days from the moment of its passing to the convict»<sup>20</sup>

As a result of Kits's cassation appeal, filed on January 15, 1947, on January 29, the prosecutor of the CSR (Criminal Judicial Department) of the Prosecutor's Office of the Ukrainian SSR, Junior Justice Adviser Yefimenko, issued an opinion. According to the text,

... the accusation brought against the convict was proved, but the court did not indicate in the verdict exactly when the convict committed the crime and incorrectly qualified this crime under Part 2 of Art. 54-10 of the Criminal Code.... I consider that the sentence of the Nikolaev regional court, in this case, is subject to change and to recognize Kits Andrey convicted under Article 54-10 part 1 of the Criminal Code and accordingly to soften a measure of punishment.<sup>21</sup>

According to prosecutor Yefimenko, on February 7, 1947, the Judicial Board for Criminal Cases of the Supreme Court of the Ukrainian SSR, chaired by Tarasov, considered a criminal case on the complaint of a convict of the Mykolayiv Regional Court. The panel found out from the testimony of witnesses that no evidence of slander by Kits Andriy against the Soviet authorities was found. He only came from Poland and was unaware of the political situation. Given all the circumstances, the decision of the Judicial Board for Criminal Cases of the Supreme Court of the USSR of February 7, 1947, the verdict of the Regional Court changed the accusation of Kits Andriy that he slandered the Soviet authorities, so the sentence was reduced to 3 years imprisonment, confiscation of personal property, and restriction of rights.<sup>22</sup>

The severity of the first sentence against Kitz, who was a simple member of the Pentecostal community and did not hold leadership positions in it, can be explained as follows. The case of Kitz was instituted during the active involvement of the Pentecostals in

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<sup>20</sup> Архів УСБУ в Миколаївській області. Спр. 2895-с. Т. 1. Арк. 95. [Archive USBU in the Mykolaiv region.]

<sup>21</sup> Архів УСБУ в Миколаївській області. Спр. 2895-с. Т. 1. Арк. 98 - 99. [Archive USBU in the Mykolaiv region.]

<sup>22</sup> Архів УСБУ в Миколаївській області. Спр. 2895-с. Т. 1. Арк. 100 - 101. [Archive USBU in the Mykolaiv region.]

the All-Union Council of Evangelical Baptists, following the August 1945 agreement. Opposition to the leaders of the Pentecostal communities under the agreement was intensified by the People's Commissariat of State Security – the Ministry of State Security. The “Prophets” agency case was introduced and implemented in order to identify and neutralize community leaders. But during operational development in the Mykolaiv area, only two ordinary members of one community of Pentecostals, Kits, and Chernyshev who were cautiously opposed to the association were found. This is evidenced by the fact that today in the Sectoral State Archive of the Security Service of Ukraine and the archives of the Security Service of Ukraine in the Mykolaiv area, only one specified case was found. Obviously investigators of the Nikolaev Ministry of State Security not unreasonably feared accusations of official negligence, from the top management. So, from the beginning, they tried to make Kitz the head of the Pentecostal community. When it became clear that Kitz was not chairing the community, he was accused of anti-Soviet propaganda and agitation. But the evidence and the arguments of the accusation were weak, and the verdict of the Mykolayiv Regional Court was so biased that the Judicial Board for Criminal Cases of the Supreme Court of the Ukrainian SSR commuted the verdict. It should be noted that at that time it was not safe to question the results of the Ministry of State Security.

Andriy Mykhailovych Kits himself did not return to his family. He died in the camp in 1948 while serving his sentence according to the information contained in the statement of his son, Anton Andriyovych Kits addressed to the prosecutor of the Mykolaiv region. In this statement, dated August 4, 1964, Anton Kitz asked for a review of the case of his father, whose guilt he always doubted.<sup>23</sup> By the decision of the plenum of the Supreme Court of the USSR on October 10, 1964, Andriy Mykhailovych Kits was rehabilitated.<sup>24</sup>

A very similar situation of repressions against Pentecostals developed in Odesa and what was at that time the Izmail regions. Documents on intelligence and operational work show that in a report on the intelligence work of sectarian clergy in November 1946, addressed to the Deputy Minister of State Security of the USSR named Blinov, it is noted that the Ministry of State Security of the Izmail region exposed an anti-Soviet group of Pentecostals, whose assets were taken during an agency action. The assets included Konstantyn Haidarzhy, born in 1896, a resident of the village of Dmytrovka, Tatarbunary district, and a community presbyter; Stepan Dubovy, born in 1913, resident of the village of

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<sup>23</sup> Архів УСБУ в Миколаївській області. Спр. 2895-с. Т. 1. Арк. 110. [Archive USBU in the Mykolaiv region.]

<sup>24</sup> Архів УСБУ в Миколаївській області. Спр. 2895-с. Т. 1. Арк. 113 - 114. [Archive USBU in the Mykolaiv region.]



Shevchenko, Kiliya district, community presbyter; Vissarion Klymenko, born in 1914, resident of the village of Shevchenko, Kiliya district, community presbyter; Nikita Dense, born in 1912, resident of the town of Tatarbunary, community leader, and an additional three men. The agency found that Gaidarzhi, Dubovyi, and others, having extensive ties among Pentecostals in the Izmail region, had intensified their work to form illegal communities. New members were recruited. Anti-Soviet agitation was carried out among the population, which was aimed at disrupting the measures taken by the Soviet leadership. They spread lies about Soviet reality, as well as religious songs of an anti-Soviet nature. Particularly striking is the absurdity of the accusation of religious songs. Gaidarzhi, Dubovyi, and Klymenko, at illegal meetings, urged sectarians, especially young people of pre-conscription age, not to take up arms and refuse to serve in the Red Army.<sup>25</sup>

In contrast to the Kits case, in this case, the Ministry of State Security brought to the attention of the leaders of the illegal Pentecostal communities in the Izmail region. Among the standard accusations of anti-Soviet propaganda, the allegations of urging to renounce service in the Red Army are quite serious, which is generally characteristic of the Pentecostal beliefs. Forcing the Pentecostals to take up arms is similar to forcing the early Christians to sacrifice to pagan gods and Roman emperors in early Christianity. Such accusations were guaranteed to be sent to the Stalinist regime's concentration camps. In January 1948, Konstantin Gaidarzhi, a presbyter, and Dmytro Ivanov, born in 1907, the head of the Sunday School in the village of Dmytrovka, Tatarbunary district, were arrested as members of the anti-Soviet "sect" of the Pentecostals. In addition to the standard accusations of anti-Soviet agitation, Gaidarzhi was accused of organizing a Sunday school to prepare young people to join the "sect." It was also emphasized that the reluctance to serve in the Soviet Army and take up arms was being instilled in the school. In addition, it was pointed out that Gaidarzhi's son was an active member of the Ukrainian Nationalist Organization underground and was in a gang. The region has interesting information about Dmitry Ivanov. According to the case, he was an agent of the Ministry of State Security, but came under the influence of Gaidarzhi and embarked on a path of "betrayal." Ivanov took an active part in the formation of the illegal Pentecostal community, and he also worked to break up the Evangelical Baptist community in order to form a Pentecostal community. As a result, by the beginning of 1947, Gaidarzhi and Ivanov had formed an illegal Pentecostal community of 300 people, 70 of whom were school-age children. Ivanov had ties to underground communities of fellow

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<sup>25</sup> ГДА СБУ(Галузевий державний архів Служби Безпеки України). Ф.16. Оп. 1.Спр. 580. Арк. 149, 154 - 156. [GDA SBU (Sectoral State Archive of the Security Service of Ukraine).]

believers in western Ukraine, from where he received illegal religious literature of anti-Soviet content and distributed it to believers.<sup>26</sup> The importance of the above information lies in the fact that in addition to the standard accusations of creating an underground religious center and anti-Soviet agitation, refusal to serve in the army, there are allegations of connection with the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists. Such an accusation at the time was extremely serious. It gave rise to direct accusations, in this case of Pentecostal leaders, of direct anti-government activities and was punished more severely. There were no other allegations of collaboration with the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists. The figure of Dmytro Ivanov, a former agent of the Ministry of State Security, who accepted the teachings of the Pentecostals and became an active member of the religious community, is of great interest and rare in the region. The man was aware would happen to him if the Ministry of State Security exposed him to the authorities. It was necessary to have a strong faith to dare to take such a step. The case also contains very interesting information about the religious controversy between Pentecostals and Baptists, which confirms reports of disputes between these denominations in different regions of Ukraine at the time.<sup>27</sup>

Also, in 1948, an asset of the community of Pentecostals from the village of Novoselske, Reni district, Izmail region, headed by Mykola Dmytrovych Tasmala, born in 1903, was put into operational development. The reason for opening a case is standard: the formation of an illegal community, anti-Soviet agitation, work among young people.<sup>28</sup> Of particular interest is a report addressed to the Deputy Minister of State Security of the USSR Blinov, in June 1948. According to the report, in the village of Cherne, Chernyansky district, Odesa region, was an organized underground anti-Soviet group of Pentecostals, led by Elizar Vasilyevich Wozniak (born in 1874). In total, the group consisted of seven people. Among the activists, Fedor Gavrilovich Gomailo, Fedor Elizarovich Wozniak, and Mykhailo Trokhimovich Sapinsky were singled out. It is noted that Elizar Wozniak, together with Fedor Homaylo, systematically campaigned against collective farms and carried out activities conducted by the Soviet authorities. Particular emphasis was placed on spreading speculation

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<sup>26</sup> ГДА СБУ(Галузевий державний архів Служби Безпеки України). Ф.16. Оп. 1.Спр. 636. Арк. 234, 240 – 241. [GDA SBU (Sectoral State Archive of the Security Service of Ukraine).]

<sup>27</sup> Коротаяев О. П'ятидесятницькі релігійні союзи України як об'єкт оперативної розробки органів НКДБ – МДБ за часів пізнього сталінізму (1944 – 1953). *Наукові записки Вінницького державного університету імені Михайла Коцюбинського*. Вінниця, 2020. Випуск XXXIII. С 60. [Korotayev, O. "Pentecostal religious unions of Ukraine as an object of operational development of the KGB-MGB during the late Stalinism (1944 - 1953)." *Scientific notes of Vinnytsia State University named after Mykhailo Kotsyubynsky*]

<sup>28</sup> ГДА СБУ(Галузевий державний архів Служби Безпеки України). Ф.16. Оп. 1.Спр. 669. Арк. 61, 74 – 75. [GDA SBU (Sectoral State Archive of the Security Service of Ukraine).]

about a future war between the USSR and the United States and Britain, in which the USSR was to be defeated. Among the identified cases of operational development, the Ministry of State Security, among the Pentecostals of Mykolayiv and Odessa regions, is the first such prophecy. Given that the Soviet Union was in a state of "Cold War" with the United States and Western Europe at the time, the accusation brought the Pentecostals of Ukraine under the article of treason. The memorandum also stated that the suspects had ties to Pentecostals in Kyiv and other oblasts of Ukraine. The investigation itself actively continued to identify the organizing center of the underground throughout Ukraine.<sup>29</sup>

Since 1949, the Ministry of State Security's management notes to senior management began to have a stricter and more radical content. After careful operative elaboration, arrests are beginning among the Pentecostals of the Ukrainian South, with the aim of liquidating both the entire leadership and the illegal communities themselves. Thus, in a note from November to December 1949, a group of senior members and activists of the Pentecostal community were arrested by the Ministry of State Security of the Izmail Region. According to the official terminology of the Ministry of State Security, the community is called a "sect" and is referred to as an "anti-Soviet Pentecostal formation.: Community leader Semyon Mykytovych Maslakov 1908 born Mala-Maryanivka village, Lyman district, Izmail region, Volodymyr Maksymovych Yuzefovych, Stepan Kaliyankovych Nelin, Lukeriya Vasylivna Mazurenko, born in 1923, Kamyany Most village, Lyman district, Izmail region, acting as a "prophetess" in the community. A total of eight people were arrested. During interrogations, the detainees admitted to carrying out anti-Soviet activities. Members of their community were provided with long-term posts in order not to go to work in the fields. Young people were persuaded to give up service in the Soviet Army. During their arrest, a large amount of "anti-Soviet sectarian" literature published by foreign missionary organizations was found and confiscated from them.<sup>30</sup> The results of the investigation were reported, according to the Special Report of the Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Izmail region for № 3/35 from 21/I-1950, by the Deputy Minister of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR, Major General Poperek. In January 1950, the Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Izmail Region liquidated the Pentecostal underground in the Belgorod-Dniester, Borodino, and Lyman districts, the management of which was developed on the basis of intelligence by "Fanatics" and "Dissenters." Semyon Mykytovych Maslakov,

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<sup>29</sup> ГДА СБУ(Галузевий державний архів Служби Безпеки України). Ф.16. Оп. 1.Спр. 656. Арк. 4, 17 – 19. [GDA SBU (Sectoral State Archive of the Security Service of Ukraine).]

<sup>30</sup> ГДА СБУ(Галузевий державний архів Служби Безпеки України). Ф.16. Оп. 1.Спр. 729. Арк. 204, 230 – 233. [GDA SBU (Sectoral State Archive of the Security Service of Ukraine).]

Tikhon Hryhorovych Polishchuk, Stepan Kaliyankovych Nelin, Andriy Spiridonovych Volokytn, Lukeria Vasylivna Mazurenko, and others were arrested. A search of the detainees turned up anti-Soviet literature in a foreign publication, anti-Soviet psalms, and other physical evidence of hostile activity. Agency and investigative materials established that the arrested persons were active in anti-Soviet activities. They spread rumors among the population about a possible war and a change in the political system in the USSR.

At the same time, they praised the life and the fascist regime during the temporary occupation of Ukraine by the Germans. Young people were urged to resign from service in the Soviet Army. They disrupted work on collective farms with the help of posting flyers. Mazurenko, who was arrested, testified during the investigation that in 1946, while in the Soviet Army in Romania, she established contact with local Pentecostal leaders Valery Todorich, Ivan Kuzman, and others. From them, she received anti-Soviet literature, which she distributed among Soviet servicemen. After returning to the USSR in 1947, Mazurenko continued to keep in touch with Valery Todorich. She informed him about the activities of the Pentecostals in the Izmail region and received instructions from him on further practical work. The investigation established that Polishchuk, Nelin, Mazurenko, and others arrested were trying to create an illegal group of Pentecostals in the Soviet Army. As a result of the investigation, all those arrested pleaded guilty. The Izmail Regional Court found them guilty of anti-Soviet activities. The court sentenced Maslakov, Nelin, Polishchuk, Mazurenko, and six others to 25 years in prison camps. Another seven people were sentenced to 10 years in prison camps.<sup>31</sup>

Six more cases were identified, similar in structure, content, and charges to those listed above. According to them, in the period from 1948 to 1953, the Ministry of State Security identified and arrested leaders and activists of unregistered (underground) Pentecostal communities. In the Odessa region, in Ananiev were five people; in Domanivka district were four people; in Pervomaisky district was one person; and in Vradiyivskyi district was one person (three districts are in the Mykolaiv area today). In the Izmail region (today part of the Odessa region), in Izmail were 10 people; in the Baltic region were three people; in Borodino district were three people; and in Tuzla district were 10 people.<sup>32</sup> A total of 68

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<sup>31</sup> ГДА СБУ (Галузевий державний архів Служби Безпеки України). Ф.16. Оп. 1.Спр. 749. Арк. 70 – 74. [GDA SBU (Sectoral State Archive of the Security Service of Ukraine).]

<sup>32</sup> ГДА СБУ (Галузевий державний архів Служби Безпеки України). Ф.16. Оп. 1.Спр. 714. Арк. 48 – 49.; Спр. 718. Арк. 58, 92 – 93.; Спр. 800. Арк. 1 – 5.; Спр. 863. Арк. 180 – 183.; Спр. 874. Арк. 7 – 10.; Спр. 877. Арк. 31 -37. [GDA SBU (Sectoral State Archive of the Security Service of Ukraine).]

people were arrested and repressed in those cases from 1945 to 1953 in the present day Mykolayiv and Odesa oblasts. Based on all of the above, we can draw the following:

## **Conclusions**

Repression against the Pentecostals of Ukraine began as a result of the anti-religious policy of the All-Union Communist Party of the Bolsheviks which as of 1952, was renamed the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The goal was to gradually eliminate the Pentecostals by uniting them again with the Baptists in the All-Union Council of Evangelical Baptists.

The leadership and communities of the Pentecostals opposed the union, refusing to join the All-Union Council of Evangelical Baptists. As a result of the resistance, party and state authorities denied registration to Pentecostal communities, outlawing the existence of communities.

Given the activities of unregistered (illegal) Pentecostal communities, the People's Commissariat of State Security-Ministry of State Security launched repressive actions against the latter. Agent cases called "Prophets," "Fanatics," "Schismatics," and others were opened in order to identify and neutralize their leadership and assets.

In southern Ukraine, in the territory of modern Mykolayiv and Odesa regions, repressions began in 1946 and lasted until 1953 inclusive.

The main charges included the following: belonging to a "sect," involvement of other citizens and especially young people in the "sect," underground activities, criticism of the All-Union Communist Party of the Bolsheviks, the Soviet government, and the political system of the USSR; agitation against the collective farm system; preservation and distribution of religious "sectarian" literature, especially foreign press; singing religious songs of "anti-Soviet nature" refusal to serve in the Soviet Army; positive views of the German occupational regime during World War II; liaison with foreign Pentecostal centers; prophecies of a possible Soviet war with the United States and Britain, and the defeat of the Soviet Union in such a war. All allegations were usually artificial and unfounded.

All defendants were repressed and sentenced from 10 to 25 years in prison camps. The exception is the case of Kits Andriy Mykhailovych, who was sentenced to 3 years in prison after a cassation appeal but died after a year of exile.

In general, after the military repressions of 1945-1953 (the period of late Stalinism), against the Pentecostals of Ukraine, little is known about it in the region today. The topic needs further in-depth research.

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