

Institute of National Remembrance

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Press release on Michael Karkoc (with regard to the information by The Associated Press about Michael Karkoc, one of the commanders of SS "Galicia" Division, man responsible for atrocities during World War II, who was found in the USA)

With regard to the information by The Associated Press about Michael Karkoc, one of the commanders of SS "Galicia" Division, man responsible for atrocities during World War II, who was found in the USA, the Institute of National Remembrance would like to inform that its prosecutors will take steps to establish the possible role of Michael Karkoc in the crimes committed by the Ukrainian Self-Defense Legion in Chłaniów and Kolonia Władysławin in 1944 and his participation in the suppression of the Warsaw Rising. At the same time IPN will provide all possible assistance to the American judicial authorities in the course of gathering evidence in the case.

Former Regional Commission for the Investigation of Nazi Crimes in Lublin conducted an investigation no Ds. 125/68, on pacification action on July 23, 1944, carried out by the Ukrainian Self-Defence Legion in Kolonia Władysławin (Krasnystaw region), and the murder of 60 inhabitants of the village. Furthermore, IPN had been investigating the murder of 72 inhabitants of Chłaniów village committed by Ukrainian nationalists unit in July 1944. The proceedings were suspended.

Moreover, the case of the Ukrainian Self-Defence Legion was of interest to historians of the Institute of National Remembrance. The IPN magazine "Memory and Justice" (no. 2/2005) published an article by Marcin Majewski, "A Contribution to the military history of the Ukrainian Self-Defence Legion (1943-1945)". The text shows that Mykhailo Karkoć (born 1919 in Lutsk), nicknamed "Wowk," is one of the officers of the Ukrainian Self-Defence Legion, i.e. the 31 battalion of Schutzmannschaft German Security Police (Sipo). He was participating in the talks between the leadership of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists of Melnyk fraction and officers of the German Security Police and Security Service (SD) in Volyn near Lutsk. Since 1944 he was the commander of the 2nd Company of Ukrainian

Self-Defence Legion which participated, along with the entire Legion, in the pacification of Chłaniów and Władysławin. In September 1944, together with some of his Company's soldiers under the command of Colonel Petr Diaczenko he participated in the suppressing the Warsaw Rising. Karcoc stationed in the so-called German police district and probably fought against the Polish Home Army group called "Kryski". Since March 1945 Mykhailo Karkoć was an officer in the 14th Waffen Grenadier Division of the SS "Galicia".

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