

# When Zelensky Entourage Depicts Nazism, Photos Vanish Into Thin Air

In another media act of concealing truths about the war in Ukraine, an image published by Ukraine's presidential office of a soldier wearing an SS-style patch simply vanishes.

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*The presidential office of Ukraine has changed the images published during Vladimir Zelensky’s visit to the town of Izium in the country’s east. All outlets have silently removed a photo of one of Zelensky’s armed guards sporting an SS-style patch.*

The image, which was first shared on the presidential website, Telegram, and other social media platforms, depicted a [soldier holding a stylized skull](#) and crossbones emblem similar to that used by the 3rd SS Panzer Division ‘Totenkopf’.

The insignia, commonly viewed as a hate symbol, is popular among neo-Nazis.

The patch appeared to be a contemporary, “tactical” version of the emblem, with the skull wearing a ballistic helmet and using headphones. The helmet, however, looks to bear the skeleton key symbol, which is the insignia of the 1st SS Panzer Division Leibstandarte SS Adolf Hitler.



Zelensky's guard appears to wear Nazi insignia. (Source: Office of the President of Ukraine)

However, the apparent attempt at damage control was only partially effective. The patch may still be seen in part on another shot on one of Zelensky's social media pages.

Ukrainian officials have frequently denied the presence of neo-Nazis in the country's military, calling such claims "Russian propaganda". Despite this, Ukrainian soldiers wearing various neo-Nazi emblems have been shown in official images published by the country's authorities on numerous occasions.

Zelensky shared this image on Instagram in late August showing a Ukrainian soldier donning the patch of the SS's 14th Waffen Grenadier Division, commonly known as the 1st Galician Division. The battalion, which was mostly made up of Ukrainian volunteers from the Galicia region, is well known for perpetrating war crimes and slaughtering Polish citizens during WWII.

The President's office posted a photo of a Ukrainian artilleryman wearing an original 'Totenkopf' patch earlier this year. Ironically, the shot was included in a collection of images commemorating WWII Victory Day and was also posted by the country's Defense Ministry.

Zelensky's office, in addition to the Ukrainian Defense Ministry, released a photo of a Ukrainian troop in May, heavily armed, wearing a 'death head' patch on his chest. Russia, in response, highlighted the influence that extremist groups have on Ukraine.

Kiev's army has openly neo-Nazi battalions operating on the battlefronts against Russia, holding neo-Nazi symbols out in the open, raising questions about Europe's commitment and claims of combatting Nazism.

The [Aidar Battalion](#)'s motto is inspired by the Third Reich, Adolf Hitler's dictatorship state from the 1930s through the 1940s. In 2014, Amnesty International released a report exposing the human rights abuses of the Aidar Battalion, whose actions amount to war crimes, particularly in the Lugansk region where the group has carried out abductions,

unlawful detention, ill-treatment, theft, extortion, and possible executions.

In March, the National Guard of Ukraine's Twitter account released a video, boasting about [Azov fighters greasing their bullets with lard](#) to be used against Muslim Chechens on the Russian side. The Azov battalion is a part of the Ukrainian National Guard – a wing of the Ukrainian Ministry of Internal Affairs, which flaunts its Nazism very openly.

Azov fighters of the National Guard greased the bullets with lard against the Kadyrov orcs

Бійці Азова Нацгвардії змастили кулі салом проти кадировських орків

Підписуйтесь на наш телеграм канал <https://t.co/SBQltMr4bMpic.twitter.com/A1ci7tZL8r>

— НГУ (@ng\_ukraine) [February 27, 2022](#)

The video came as a direct threat to Muslims who hold the Islamic beliefs that pig is prohibited for their consumption, and that it's an impure substance.

The Tweet captioned, "Azov fighters of the National Guard greased the bullets with lard against the Kadyrov orcs," referring to Ramzan Kadyrov, who is the president of the Chechen republic.

The [United States](#) and Canada over the years have aided the neo-Nazi units with weapons and training, strengthening their presence in Ukraine.

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*Featured image: Zelensky's visit to Izium in the country's east. (Source: Office of the President of Ukraine)*

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