

SECRET

22 April 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Assassination of Stefan Bandera

1. This memorandum has been written in an attempt to determine whether there is sufficient information to support KGB agent Bogdan Nikolayevich Stashinskiy's claim that he assassinated Ukrainian emigre leader Stefan Bandera in Munich in October 1959. German authorities convicted him of the crime in 1962 and sentenced him to eight years' hard labor.

2. This memorandum also attempts to point out contradictions between his story and the numerous versions and rumors circulating at the time.

3. Information on Stashinskiy's claim that he also assassinated another emigre leader, Lev Rebet, in 1957 is included only insofar as it affects the establishment of Stashinskiy's bona fides.

4. On 15 October 1959 Stefan Bandera (aka Stefan Popel), Ukrainian Chief of the Foreign Section of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (Zch/OUN), was assassinated in Munich. Results of the autopsy on Bandera's body showed traces of potassium cyanide poisoning, but it was never established that the cyanide was the cause of death. The autopsy also produced a fragment of gelatinous material which the examining doctors thought might have been the remains of a capsule. There was no proof, however, that the capsule originally contained poison. According to those close to him, Bandera had been taking various pills for a cold. When Bandera was found, he was lying on his face in the hallway of his apartment building, with his left arm doubled under him and his left hand clutching at his right shoulder. Questioning of Bandera's associates revealed that Bandera was left-handed and that he carried a pistol in a shoulder holster on his right side.

5. On 12 August 1961 Bogdan Nikolayevich Stashinskiy (aka Josef Lehmann, Siegfried Draeger, Hans Joachim Budeit), Ukrainian, born 4 November 1931, in Borshhevitsy, USSR (then in Poland), defected with his wife from East Berlin to West Berlin and told American authorities that, under orders from the KGB, he had assassinated Bandera, as well as Lev Rebet, a leading Ukrainian emigre who had died in 1957 apparently of a heart attack. Stashinskiy, a KGB non-staff agent

DECLASSIFIED AND RELEASED BY
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
SOURCE METHOD EXEMPTION 3B2B
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE 2006

SECRET

CROSS FILE COPY FOR
[]
DO NOT DESTROY

SECRET

-2-

employee since 1951, said that in both assassinations he had used a weapon which fired a poisonous liquid into the victim's face. This liquid gave off vapors which were fatal when inhaled by the victim but which left no trace. He said the weapon used against Rebet had a single barrel, whereas the weapon used against Bandera was double-barrelled.

6. After the initial Agency interrogation of Stashinskiy in Frankfurt/Main in August 1961, the conclusion was drawn that he would not be valuable operationally as a double agent, that he was not a bona fide defector and not the individual he purported to be. Because the assassinations had occurred on German soil, Stashinskiy, on 1 September 1961, was turned over to German authorities, who charged him with espionage activities and viewed his accounts of the assassinations with skepticism. The report of the interrogation of Stashinskiy by the German Criminal Inspector, the Chief Police Commissioner, and Security Group officials on 12 September 1961 stated that Stashinskiy's quiet, sure and precise statements with regard to events preceding the assassination, the lapse of time, and the description of the localities and the execution of the deeds led to the general conviction that Stashinskiy could, in fact, be the murderer of Rebet and Bandera. The German police investigation preceding Stashinskiy's public trial at Karlsruhe in October 1962 also unearthed documents and witnesses to corroborate most of Stashinskiy's story. Stashinskiy was convicted and sentenced to eight years' hard labor.

Stashinskiy's Account of the Bandera Assassination

7. In early 1959, after he had successfully assassinated Lev Rebet (12 October 1957) by firing a poisonous liquid into his face as Rebet ascended the stairs to his office in Munich, Stashinskiy was informed that Moscow had assigned him the task of assassinating Stefan Bandera as well. Stashinskiy made several trips to Munich from East Berlin/Karlshorst during which he located Bandera's residence and tried to determine a pattern of Bandera's activities and movements.

8. During one of these trips Stashinskiy attempted to gain access to the front door of the building in which Bandera had an apartment on the third floor. In this attempt he used a key bow, stem and collar, plus five different bits, which the KGB had provided him. None of the different bits fitted the lock and, when Stashinskiy tried to use force, one of the bits broke off and dropped into the lock housing in the door. When Stashinskiy then tried to use the aluminum key of his own room in East Berlin in the lock, this bit also broke off and dropped into the lock housing. Stashinskiy still decided

SECRET

SECRET

- 3 -

to assassinate Bandera during this trip but changed his mind when Bandera caught a glimpse of him when he was still some distance away. Stashinskiy said he felt that Bandera would be prepared to take evasive action; he therefore did not carry out the assassination. Acting upon instructions from Moscow, Stashinskiy then went to the canal near the Hofgarten in Munich, fired both barrels of his weapon into the air, and threw the weapon into the canal in the same general area where he had discarded the Rebet murder weapon.

9. In June 1959 Stashinskiy again flew to Munich, armed with four keys which the KGB had made according to Stashinskiy's specifications. Although all of the keys partially moved the bolt, none of the keys unlocked the door completely. Stashinskiy therefore purchased various files from Woolworth's and filed down the keys where he noted pressure ridges. On his next visit to the Bandera apartment building, one of the four keys opened the front door. Stashinskiy entered the building and located Bandera's apartment. He noted that the name "Popel," the alias Bandera was using, was written on a piece of paper and attached to the door with Scotch tape. Stashinskiy then returned to East Berlin to await the arrival of the weapon from Moscow.

10. By 14 October 1959 the weapon had arrived and Bandera had returned from an extended vacation in Italy, so Stashinskiy proceeded to Munich by air armed with the weapon, the gauze compresses and yellow tablets which were to protect him from the poison fumes, as well as documentation in the name of Hans Joachim Budeit. In Munich he stayed at a new hotel located on Senefelder Street.

11. The following day, 15 October 1959, Stashinskiy took the yellow protective pill and went to the Ludwig bridge near the German Museum to observe the Ukrainian emigre office on Zeppelin Street. He noted that Bandera's car was parked near this office. At circa 1130 hours he saw a man and a woman come out of the office, get into Bandera's car and drive in the direction of the Marienhilf Square. He was not close enough to identify the individuals but decided the man must be Bandera. He then took a streetcar to the area of Bandera's residence at 7 Kreittmayer Street and took a position on Massmann Square. At circa 1300 hours Bandera drove past Massmann Square in the direction of his residence. Stashinskiy noted that Bandera, who was usually accompanied by a bodyguard, was alone in the car.

12. After Stashinskiy saw Bandera drive into the driveway to the garage, Stashinskiy, using the key he had prepared, entered the apartment building and walked up the stairs between the ground and second floor stair landing to wait for

SECRET

SECRET

-4-

Bandera. Stashinskiy then heard the voices of two women taking leave of each other on the second or third floor and could hear that the departing woman was using the stairs instead of the elevator. In order to avoid suspicion by loitering on the stairs between the landings, he walked down the stairs and began to play with the elevator button. The woman walked past behind him and out of the building. As soon as she disappeared, Stashinskiy turned to move back up the stairs.

13. Almost as soon as he began to move, Stashinskiy heard a noise at the front door and saw Bandera entering the door with the aid of a key, which was on a key ring together with other keys. He was carrying several packages of vegetables and fruit in his right hand and was trying to extricate the key from the door with his left hand. Bandera had also spotted Stashinskiy, so Stashinskiy saw that he could wait no longer and moved in the direction of the front door. He held the murder weapon, concealed in a newspaper, in his right hand, the safety released. As he walked past Bandera, who was still trying to extricate his key from the lock, Stashinskiy took the door handle with his left hand, as if to assist Bandera, and asked him, "Doesn't it work?". By this time Bandera had succeeded in pulling his key out of the lock and as he answered, "Yes, it works.", Stashinskiy fired both barrels of the murder weapon simultaneously into Bandera's face at almost pointblank range. When Stashinskiy saw Bandera lurch rearwards and to the side, he walked out of the apartment building and closed the front door. Although he did not wait to see Bandera drop to the ground, Stashinskiy said he was certain that Bandera did not scream or otherwise call for help.

14. Stashinskiy then crushed the antidote vial in the gauze compress and inhaled the vapors, after which he took a circuitous route to the canal, discarding the key en route, and threw the murder weapon into the canal at almost the identical spot where he had discarded the Rebet weapon. He then checked out of his hotel and took the next train to Frankfurt/Main. On the following day he flew to Berlin. En route he read about Bandera's death which had already been reported in the newspapers.

15. On 4 or 5 December 1959 Stashinskiy was awarded the "Order of the Red Banner" by KGB Chief Aleksandr Shelepin in Moscow for the Bandera assassination.

Evidence Supporting Stashinskiy's Story

16. Although the German police were skeptical about Stashinskiy's story, the following information supported

SECRET

SECRET

-5-

Stashinskiy's account of the assassination.

a. The German police found bits of two keys in the housing of the front door of the Bandera apartment house.

b. The police located the woman who had passed behind Stashinskiy while he faced the elevator in the Bandera apartment building. She was a maid who had been employed by a German couple in the building. She remembered the night in question and recalled seeing a man waiting for the elevator, but since she had only seen his back, she could not identify him. According to the police records, she had made the same statement on 17 November 1959 when questioned about her observations after Bandera's death.

c. The guest register of the Hotel Salzburg on 1 Senefelder Street contained an entry that a Hans Budeit had rented Room No. 32 from 14-16 October 1959. The registration slips at the Hotel Stachus, where Stashinskiy said he stayed during the Rebet assassination, showed that a Draeger had occupied Room 303 from 9-12 October 1957. Stashinskiy said he had used documentation in the name of Siegfried Draeger during this period.

d. Flight manifests showed that on 13 October 1957 a Draeger flew to Berlin from Frankfurt.

e. The police confirmed through Zch/OUN employee Yevgeniya Matviyeyko-Mak that Bandera had driven home alone on the day of the assassination. Yevgeniya Matviyeyko-Mak said that at 1130 hours she had accompanied Bandera to the market to buy some fruit. When they returned to the office at 67 Zeppelin Street about 1230 hours, she had asked Bandera to wait while she called a guard to escort him to his home. She said he replied that, by the time the guard came down, he would be home, and he drove off. Forty minutes later he was dead. The residents of his apartment house, including Bandera's wife, confirmed his arrival at his home around 1300 hours.

f. Stashinskiy was able to identify Bandera and Rebet without hesitation from 50 photographs. The police commented that certain individuals in the photo collection resembled the victims.

g. During a reconstruction of the Bandera and Rebet assassinations carried out by the Munich police

SECRET

SECRET

-6-

with Stashinskiy on 22 September 1961, Stashinskiy showed a very good knowledge of Munich and of the area of Bandera's residence, as well as the route to the Hofgarten and the canal in which he said he had disposed of the murder weapons.

h. During the police interrogation of Stashinskiy, he said that circa 1130 hours on 13 October 1957, after his attack on Rebet, he saw a radio patrol car near Rebet's office in Karl Square. The police confirmed that a patrol car had been parked in that area at the time specified.

i. According to the account of the Bandera assassination in the book KGB The Secret Work of Soviet Secret Agents by John Barron, German authorities detected flakes of glass on Bandera's face from the crushed poison ampule. There was no mention of this in the police reports in the Stashinskiy and/or Bandera files.

j. Yuriy Nosenko, a KGB official who defected in early 1964, confirmed that Stashinskiy had assassinated Bandera. Nosenko's comments also supported some of Stashinskiy's statements of the events leading to his defection. Nosenko said that Stashinskiy was an agent, not a staffer, and that he returned to Moscow after having successfully completed two assassinations. He was personally met by Shelepin and received a decoration--either the Order of the Red Star or the Order of the Military Red Banner--for killing Bandera. Stashinskiy was given an apartment but soon began to detect that he was being surveilled. He also found a mike behind the baseboard in his apartment. Nosenko said Stashinskiy also knew that in Beriya's time assassins were caused to disappear so there would be no danger of compromise. He therefore thought the KGB was planning to liquidate him and he decided to defect. (According to Stashinskiy, he had become disillusioned with the Soviet Union prior to finding the microphones. He said this discovery only confirmed that his decision to defect was right.) When Stashinskiy received a letter from his German wife that their child had died, he requested and received permission to go to East Berlin for the funeral. His case officer, Yuriy Aleksandrov, was ordered to accompany him and to stay with him. In East Berlin Stashinskiy was also surveilled by East Berlin staffers. However, one night Aleksandrov ran into some friends and left Stashinskiy, who took the opportunity and fled to West Berlin, taking his

SECRET

SECRET

-7-

wife with him. Nosenko said that, for this error, Aleksandrov was expelled from the KGB and from the Party. Nosenko said he knew of no measures or letters by the Central Committee regarding Stashinskiy's defection, nor did he know of any countermeasures taken in the various departments of the KGB.

Contradictions

17. Autopsies performed on 17 and 18 October 1959 showed potassium cyanide in Bandera's stomach, although it appears that the autopsies were not complete enough to determine whether Bandera had received a lethal dose. Stashinskiy said that, when he heard that the German police had found poison in Bandera's body, he doubted this and asked that inquiries be made in the KGB laboratory. Several days later he was told that the liquid in the weapon he had used contained no provable poisons, neither potassium cyanide nor any other common poison. He said he did not feel there was any reason for the KGB to deceive him, particularly since he would have had to employ altogether different protective measures and antidotes if cyanide had been used. He also claimed that his KGB handler in Karlshorst had indicated his pleasure upon learning that the police suspected potassium cyanide since this indicated that the police were off the track. Stashinskiy said he later heard through his handler that rumors were extant in emigre circles to the effect that Bandera had eaten or snacked at the Zeppelin Street office just before returning home.

18. According to the police, Bandera was found lying on his face. Stashinskiy said that, according to a built-in feature of the weapon, he should have fallen backwards or sideways.

19. Stashinskiy said that Bandera was carrying several packages or bags of vegetables and fruit, and he specified red tomatoes. According to the police investigation, Bandera was carrying a chip basket full of green tomatoes, on top of which, wrapped in a piece of newspaper, was some cabbage. When he was questioned about this discrepancy, Stashinskiy said that he had seen something red and assumed it was tomatoes. He pointed out that by that time he was so excited that he was not in a position to observe exact details of the course of events. In this connection, Yevgeniya Matviyeyko-Mak said that Bandera had purchased grapes, plums and green tomatoes at the market. As was his custom, he tasted everything but the tomatoes.

20. Stashinskiy maintained that when Bandera arrived at his residence on 15 October he parked his car inside the

SECRET

SECRET

-8-

garage. The police said that, according to consistent witness reports, Bandera had parked his car in the court in front of the garage. When confronted with this, Stashinskiy said that his impression was that the car stood in the open garage. He said he only hastily glanced out of the corner of his eye at the entrance to the court when passing by. He therefore was not certain whether the car actually stood in the garage or was still in the court.

21. Stashinskiy said he was sure that Bandera had not screamed. According to the police reports, witnesses variously reported hearing a scream, sounds of a heavy body falling down the stairs, or a scuffle. According to the "Ukrainian Weekly," Bandera's wife heard the scream of a 10-year-old German boy who lived in the building and who found the body. When she ran into the corridor, she saw her husband lying on the steps of the first floor, blood running from his mouth, nose and ears. He was taken to the hospital but died in the ambulance en route. According to another report, Bandera's wife said she saw Bandera approach the apartment building and waited for him to reach the apartment. When he did not appear, she called his office and learned that he had been taken to the hospital.

22. The press reported that Bandera's wife said Bandera had rung the bell to their apartment and she had pushed the buzzer to open the front door. Stashinskiy said he did not know whether Bandera had rung his apartment bell, but he was sure there was no buzz to open the door because Bandera was using his key.

23. In September 1961 the canal was drained and searched but the murder weapons were not recovered. German officials stated that the canal is cleaned annually.

24. In the Agency debriefings Stashinskiy said he had assassinated Rebet in the fall of 1958 (Rebet was found dead in October 1957). In later German police reports, Stashinskiy confirmed that he had assassinated Rebet in October 1957. Stashinskiy also said that he murdered Rebet on the stairs to the second floor. When the police told him that Rebet was found on the landing of the third floor and asked Stashinskiy if he were still sure that the assassination had taken place on the stairs to the second floor, Stashinskiy said he was.

25. Although Stashinskiy told Agency interrogators he did not carry out the first assassination attempt against Bandera because he feared that Bandera would take evasive action, he later told the German police that he did not carry out the assassination because he felt certain inhibitions when he caught sight of Bandera and an inner voice told him

SECRET

SECRET

-9-

not to assassinate him. Stashinskiy told Agency officials that, at the time he came to the West, he did not feel his past actions were criminal. They were patriotic acts committed in the name of the state. He said he now realized that the German law took a different view. He said that although he did not want to go to jail he would have to suffer the consequences.

26. Flight manifests did not show anyone traveling from Frankfurt to Berlin on 16 October 1959 under the name of Budeit, Stashinskiy, Draeger, or other alias Stashinskiy said he had used in the past.

Allegations and Theories

27. On 14 October 1961, after Stashinskiy's defection but before his confession of the crimes was made public, the East German press reported that Stefan Liebholz, Ukrainian, told journalists in a press conference that he had been recruited by the West German Intelligence Service (BND) near the end of World War II and that his first assignment for the BND was to organize the poisoning of Bandera. He said Bandera was to be liquidated because he had been working for British intelligence and refused to transfer his network to the BND. Liebholz said he had been unable to carry out the murder and the task had been given to another agent, Dmitriy Miskiv, a member of Bandera's group. Liebholz said Miskiv was subsequently murdered by the BND.

28. The Bandera organization was convinced that the article was a fabrication. It was well known in the Ukrainian community that Miskiv was in Italy at the time of Bandera's death, and the Munich investigation of Miskiv's death concluded that he died of a cerebral hemorrhage induced by over-indulgence in liquor and women.

29. The Agency also knew from Stefan Liebholz, a KGB agent since 1929, that in early 1957 he had been given the assignment, by the KGB, of poisoning Bandera, using a poison which could not be detected and which could be administered considerably in advance of Bandera's death. Agency officials believed that the Soviets learned in advance that the West Germans planned a press release about Stashinskiy, and that this advance warning came from a Soviet penetration of the BND who had been arrested and was undergoing interrogation (presumably a reference to Heinz Felfe). This enabled the Soviets and East German authorities to produce Stefan Liebholz, who fabricated the story that the BND had executed the Bandera murder.

SECRET

SECRET

- 19 -

30. Five theories for Bandera's assassination were investigated by the German police and by M. Khorzhan, an emigre, who arrived in Munich from Paris almost a month after Bandera's death at the invitation of Ivan Kashuba, chief of Bandera's security service (SB), for the purpose of privately investigating the assassination.

a. The Communist press claimed from the beginning that Bandera was poisoned by the BND at the request of the Minister of Refugee Affairs, Professor Dr. Theodore Oberlaender, because Bandera knew too much about Oberlaender's participation in the Lvov murders of Polish intelligentsia in June 1941. Although the German police, Khorzhan, and Bandera's emigre organization rejected this theory, they noted that two German intelligence men, one of whom was Heinz Herre, had met and had had dinner with Bandera and two of his colleagues, Yaroslav Bentsal and Dr. Gregory Vashkovich, on 14 October 1959 in the Bayerischer Hof in Munich. The group had discussed Zch/OUN cooperation with German intelligence, financial subsidy by the Germans, and the continuation of Zch/OUN relations with the Homeland. German criminologists discounted any possibility for the cyanide poisoning of Bandera during the dinner, either by the German participants or by any of the hotel waiters or kitchen help. They also believed that a cyanide capsule would have become effective much sooner than in 24 hours.

b. Bandera was poisoned by the Communists because he maintained contacts with the Ukraine and led the liberation struggle in the Ukraine until his very end. This story had two angles:

(1) The potassium cyanide was forced on Bandera in the elevator in the building where he lived.

(a) Members of Bandera's group said there were two men who got out of the elevator in Bandera's apartment building just about the time of Bandera's death and ran away. After questioning residents of the apartment building and neighbors, however, the police said no evidence was found that two men left the premises at that time, and the police found no signs of violence on Bandera's body.

(2) The cyanide was given to Bandera by a close associate who was a KGB agent.

SECRET

SECRET

-11-

(a) This theory was denied by the Banderaites but was thoroughly investigated by the German police and by Khorzhan. Of the five Zch/OUN employees who were known to have had contact with Bandera the morning of 15 October, the one considered most likely was Yevgenia Matviyeyko-Mak, who was the last person known to have been with him before his death. Khorzhan's theory regarding Yevgenia Matviyeyko-Mak was that her husband, Myron Matviyeyko, former SB chief on assignment in the Ukraine, had been in KGB hands for some time. He theorized that since the KGB had been playing with the Zch/OUN for years, they now desired to destroy Bandera with Matviyeyko's and Yevgenia's help. KGB couriers got in touch with her and instructed her on how to do it; in exchange, Matviyeyko would live. Although Khorzhan felt that Yevgenia Matviyeyko-Mak was "capable of anything," he said that neither he nor the police believed that she had fed Bandera the poison.

(b) The other Zch/OUN individual of interest was Yaroslav Bentsal, who maintained liaison between the Zch/OUN and the Germans and who organized the 14 October meeting with the BND. Bentsal had been in contact with a KGB official who tried to get him to return to Lvov, where Bentsal at one time was director of the Lvov theaters under the Communists. According to Khorzhan, this position meant that the Communists trusted him. Bentsal's wife was a pharmacist who worked in a German apothecary where she had access to potassium cyanide. Khorzhan said he had excluded Bentsal from the very beginning "for some reason."

(c) According to a [] source, some of the KGB's sources were very close to Bandera, and one source worked for some time in the SB. This individual came under suspicion by the SB several times. This [] source also said that Bandera's assassination was handled by KGB Department 9, which contained a section dealing with Ukrainian nationalists, and that the section chief received an award for the assassination. He said it may have been a joint operation with Department 13, or with the Illegals Department.

SECRET

SECRET

-12-

c. Bandera was poisoned by Myron Matviyeyko, who supposedly had been in Germany for six weeks prior to the assassination and with whom Bandera was reported to have secretly met.

(1) Khorzhan said that there was nothing to justify this version, that it was pure speculation.

(2) According to unsigned "random notes" in the Bandera file, an Agency source (PDCASSOWARY/2) mentioned that an unknown visitor from the Soviet Bloc had visited Bandera (no time period given), and that an Agency official had an intelligence report which stated that a KGB officer was visiting Bandera in Munich.

(3) The police were not able to explain what Bandera did for the 40 minutes between the time he dropped Yevgenia Matviyeyko-Mak at the Zeppelin Street office and the time he arrived home. If he had driven directly home, he would have been there within 20 minutes. Khorzhan said there was some evidence that Bandera either returned to the market or stopped at some store. Yevgenia had stated that she did not see Bandera buy dill for pickling the tomatoes; however, after he died, five sprigs of dill were found in the basket. At Khorzhan's request, the SB drove Bandera's car from Zeppelin Street to the market where dill was sold, lingered there for several minutes and drove on to Bandera's home. The entire trip took 20 minutes, leaving 10-20 minutes still unaccounted for.

(4) According to an Agency source [] Bandera received an anonymous letter threatening death about a month prior to his assassination. For this reason and normal security reasons, he was under constant SB protection. However, for unknown reasons Bandera drove home for lunch alone on 15 October. Bandera was also reported to have begun to avoid his guards.

d. Stefan Bandera was poisoned by his former associate and strong political opponent Mykola Lebed.

(1) Khorzhan was unable to determine the source of this theory, but he considered that it was possible that the Soviets had taken advantage of the situation to instigate political mistrust and misunderstandings among the Ukrainian nationalist emigre groups and to prevent these groups from unifying in their reactions

SECRET

SECRET

-13-

to the theory that Bandera was liquidated by the "Moscow-Communist enemy."

(2) Khorzhan said the majority of the BND informants was of the opinion that this theory was typical provocation devoid of any sense whatsoever. They felt that it originated with Soviet groups of blind Ukrainian party followers.

e. Bandera committed suicide by taking cyanide.

(1) Khorzhan favored this theory and gave as the motive Bandera's "unbearable marital situation," especially as a result of his association with other women. SB chief Kashuba had told Khorzhan that Bandera was in love with a young German maid of a family who lived in the same apartment building as Bandera. Kashuba also said that on the morning of 15 October Bandera's wife had quarreled bitterly with him over this girl. (Khorzhan cited other evidence of Bandera's unbearable home life.) Kashuba claimed that Bandera had died in front of the door of the family for which this maid worked. Khorzhan also claimed that Bandera's wife at first said that Bandera always carried cyanide on his person. She later said she could not verify this fact, and Khorzhan said it was evident that the Zch/OUN had forbidden her to talk. The police found no cyanide either on Bandera's person or in his house.

(2) Unsigned "random notes" in the Bandera file commented that SB chief Kashuba was tied operationally to Myron Matviyeyko and it was possible that Kashuba was spreading the suicide-lovesickness version in order to cover KGB complicity.

(3) Khorzhan stated that Verioivka's Ukrainian nationalist chorus was in Munich at the time of Bandera's death and that Soviet diplomats from Bonn were present. He claimed that therefore this was a good time for Bandera to commit suicide and place the blame on the Soviets. Khorzhan said Bandera knew that nobody would suspect that he might take his own life. For this reason, Khorzhan claimed, Bandera began to avoid his bodyguards.

(4) The German Criminal Police Commission was also convinced at first that Bandera had committed suicide but eventually came to the conclusion that it was not in Bandera's character. The commission

SECRET

SECRET

14-

also was not certain that there was a sufficient quantity of poison in Bandera's body to have caused death.

31. In addition to the five theories outlined by Khorzhan and the police, the BND considered the possibility of a "combination poisoning" in which a lethal but hard to trace poison was first administered and, not until later, a non-lethal amount of easily traceable potassium cyanide, the purpose being to cast suspicion on the wrong person.

32. In early 1960 Agency source Michal Goleniewski furnished the following information on Bandera's death: Bandera was liquidated by the KGB, who had had its sights on Bandera for years and who was waiting for the right moment to assassinate him. The source said the operation was directed by the KGB through Berlin-Karlshorst and was supported by KGB channels from Prague. According to this source, a KGB agent who was very close to Bandera alerted him that an interesting personality, who was of interest to US intelligence services, had defected from the USSR. Bandera met with this "personality" in an unknown restaurant in Munich and, during a short discussion with this "defector," who was a KGB officer, a drop of poison was squirted into Bandera's coffee cup. According to the source, the poison was not cyanide but a special poison prepared by the KGB for "special purposes," and this poison proved fatal only after 10-15 hours. The source said this was the only time Bandera ever saw this man; Bandera was dead the next day. According to the source, the KGB played false clues into the investigation through an agent sitting in the American intelligence office in Regensburg.

33. It is possible that Goleniewski may have confused some of the details of the Bandera assassination with the September 1957 alleged attempted poisoning of Captain Nikolay Khokhlov, a former KGB officer who defected in Frankfurt, Germany, in February 1954 rather than carry out his KGB assignment to assassinate Georgiy Sergeevich Okolovich, a leader of the National Alliance of Russian Solidarists (NTS).

a. On 15 September 1957, while participating in an NTS convention in Frankfurt, Khokhlov became ill and later collapsed. He was taken to a Frankfurt hospital where his condition was diagnosed as acute gastroenteritis. After several days he broke out in hemorrhagic skin lesions, his hair fell out, and his mouth and throat were so inflamed that he could not eat. The impression of the German hospital staff was that he probably had been poisoned and the poison may have been a thallium derivative of arsenic. When treatment was to no avail, he was transferred to the

SECRET

SECRET

-15-

US 97th General Hospital in Frankfurt on 27 September in critical condition. Under special treatment his condition gradually improved, and he was discharged on 8 October 1957.

b. According to a press statement by the head of the US Army Hospital, the poison used was probably thallium and/or other chemical agents. A conclusive determination was not possible because no specimens of hair, skin, etc. from the early period of his illness were available for study. However, on 3 September 1965, a member of the Agency's Medical Staff, who was in Frankfurt in 1957 and personally handled Khokhlov's hospitalization for the Agency, said that the Army hospital found no evidence of poisoning by thallium or other chemical agent, and the press release issued by the commanding officer of the hospital was due to pressure exerted by the Agency to strengthen an Agency propaganda play of the incident.

c. In early 1964 Yuriy Nosenko told Agency officials that the KGB had poisoned Khokhlov by putting something in his coffee, and Nosenko added that "his hair even fell out."

d. In December 1961 Soviet defector Anatoliy Golitsyn said that a friend of his in Moscow had told him that the KGB had used a Soviet female translator in the UN to administer the poison to Khokhlov. Although it was never established that Khokhlov actually was poisoned, it was considered unlikely that the KGB or any other service would come as close to killing a man as Khokhlov claims in order to establish his bona fides in the West. The special, delayed-action poison mentioned by Goleniewski would appear to fit the Khokhlov case rather than the Bandera assassination.

34. Goleniewski also commented that Bandera's liquidation took place at the right moment for the KGB because an extremely important agent would be "promoted upstairs" in the Bandera movement or would even take over Bandera's position. The assassination also put the KGB in a position to ruin Oberlaender's reputation by alleging that he, because of fear, had killed this "dangerous witness."

a. Bandera's position was filled by Yaroslav Stetsko, leader of the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc of Nations (ABN), of which Bandera's organization technically was a member; however, according to the files, the ABN was actually controlled by the Bandera party. Stashinskiy said he was assigned in 1959 to establish a pattern of Stetsko's

SECRET

SECRET

-16-

22 April 1976

activities and he assumed that Stetsko was the next to be assassinated. His KGB handler told him, however, that Moscow would probably not approve an assassination of Stetsko because he was not that important.

Conclusion

35. There appears to be more evidence in the files to support Stashinskiy's claim that he assassinated Bandera than any other theory. However, the question of the alleged cyanide in Bandera's body remains unresolved. Even if Goleniewski's claim that a special poison was put into Bandera's coffee cup is accepted, this question still remains unresolved because Goleniewski specifically stated that the poison was not cyanide. It is also difficult to see what the KGB could have gained by Stashinskiy's confession. Stashinskiy himself served two-thirds of his eight years' sentence; he was released in 1967. He was given iron works training by German authorities and resettled under another name in another country.

CI/R&A/O

Distribution:

1 - E
1 - C/CI/R&A/T (via C/CI/R&A)
1 - CI/R&A/O Chrono

SECRET