

UKRAINIAN REBEL DIES IN MYSTERY

Stefan Bandera Said to Have
Fallen in Munich—Fought
Soviet to Free Region

MUNICH, Germany, Oct. 16 (AP)—Stefan Bandera, Ukrainian nationalist leader, died under mysterious circumstances yesterday at his secluded home here.

The police said today that no evidence of foul play had been found.

Mr. Bandera died after allegedly falling on the stairs. There were no witnesses. The chief of the Munich homicide squad said the police were looking into the circumstances.

Mr. Bandera, whose guerrilla force once battled both Soviet and Polish armies, fought at the head of 200,000 Banderaites for an independent

Ukraine during and after World War II.

His activity in recent times was largely restricted to editing his organization's newspaper. Nevertheless, friends said his life was in constant danger.

Indirect Tribute Paid

The Soviet press frequently refers to Ukrainian nationalists as "Banderoivtsy." It is an indirect tribute to Stefan Bandera's influence in the Ukrainian nationalist movement.

In 1938 Mr. Bandera and two other Ukrainian nationalists were sentenced to death for complicity in the 1934 assassination of Bronislaw Pieracki, Polish Minister of the Interior. The sentences were commuted to life imprisonment.

The German invasion of Poland in 1939 restored Mr. Bandera to freedom. The following year he broke away from the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists, or O. U. N., headed by Andriy Melnyk. Taking many members of the original O. U. N. with him, he established a new

organization with the same name.

When the Germans attacked the Soviet Union in June, 1941, Mr. Bandera turned his O. U. N. into a semi-military organization.

On June 30, 1941, Yaroslav Stetsko, Mr. Bandera's principal lieutenant, proclaimed the independence of the Ukraine and set up a Ukrainian government at Lvov.

Apparently sympathetic at first, the Germans quickly turned against the Lvov regime and threw most of its leaders into prison. However, they offered Mr. Bandera and Mr. Stetsko the possibility of collaboration. This was refused and the two Ukrainians found themselves in the Sachsenhausen concentration camp.

Insurgents' Army Formed

Meanwhile, in the Ukraine, their organization continued its activities. The Ukrainian Insurgent Army came into existence in the Carpathian Mountains in 1944.

Released from the concentra-

tion camp in September, 1945, Mr. Bandera returned to the Ukraine to continue the struggle for Ukrainian independence. He fled to Germany with several of his followers in 1947 and there organized the Foreign Units of the O. U. N.

The Ukrainian Insurgent Army is believed to have asserted its control over fairly wide areas at one time, but the Soviet Government took steps to wipe it out. In 1950 Soviet troops surrounded the headquarters of Taras Chuprynyk, commander of the army. To avoid capture, he ordered his own bunker blown up and perished in the explosion.

Mr. Bandera was described as rather short and slightly hunched. As far as is known, he was never married and lived solely for the cause of Ukrainian independence.

First King Haakon

The First King Haakon of Norway, who died in 1901, was educated in England as a Christian.

DECLASSIFIED AND RELEASED BY
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
SOURCE METHODS EXEMPTION 3B2B
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE 2004 2006