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*100-20000-2659*

FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

FROM: AmConGen, MUNICH

67  
CLASS. NO.

*XP 7616.521*

TO: THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

October 26, 1959  
DATE

REF: Munich Telegram 141 dated October 16, 1959

17 For Dept. Use Only	ACTION	DEPT.
	REC'D	OTHER
11-7-59	<i>RC-8 R10/R-2 RR-4 P-5 m/s-1 m/sa-1 INR-1 VO-1</i>	
	<i>Germany, Hungary &amp; Austria - 15, USSR, UCB-1 USA 10</i>	

SUBJECT: PERIPHERAL: Mysterious poisoning of Stefan BANDERA, Leader of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (Banderists).

SUMMARY

*Born - 1 Missouri - 1 Journal - 1  
Frankfurt - 1 Paris - 1 Prague - 1  
Munich - 1 Rome - 1*

Stefan Bandera aka Stefan POPEL, age 50, Leader of the Banderist wing of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN/B), was found unconscious shortly after noon on October 15, 1959, at the foot of the stairs leading to his apartment at 7 Kreittmayr Strasse, Munich 2. Neighbors reported hearing him cry out before he collapsed and rolled down the staircase. He died shortly afterwards in a Munich hospital. An autopsy was ordered by the Munich Criminal Police Homicide Section.

All of the Munich daily newspapers carried detailed accounts of his death and funeral as an inside page feature article. One of the newspapers, Die Abendzeitung, a daily tabloid, ran the announcement of his mysterious death as a front page story on October 16, 1959. Each paper reported the preliminary autopsy findings of cyanide poisoning on October 19, 1959, and continued coverage to include detailed descriptions of the 1500 man funeral procession and service carried out under police protection on October 20, 1959.

As yet no official autopsy report has been issued; however, a reliable source has informed the Consulate General that autopsies on October 17 and 18, 1959, established that the cause of death was cyanide poisoning, probably administered in a gelatin capsule with the victim's food. Bandera's body bore no marks of violence. Police officials in charge of the investigation now state that they are "almost sure" that Bandera was assassinated. They are not optimistic about finding the murderer although they have one or two unidentified persons under investigation.

Emigre reaction in Munich has been moderate, but it is generally agreed that he has died a hero's death (Heldentod), the victim of Bolshevik agents. The degree to which the whole Ukrainian emigration felt his death is demonstrated by the fact that his political arch-enemy Mykola LIWYCKJ (Munich Despatch 179, April 8, 1959), leader of the democratically oriented Ukrainian National Rada, attended the funeral.

*JPS* *KM*  
JPSherman/KSMidthun/gc

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An official of Radio Liberty\* told one of the reporting officers that monitors of the station had reported hearing a Radio Moscow broadcast on the subject of Bandera's death. This broadcast was a summary of an article which appeared in Krasnaya Vezda (Red Star), the official Soviet Army newspaper, accusing Bundesminister for Refugee Affairs Theodor Oberlander of having had Bandera eliminated because Bandera knew too much about Oberlander's allegedly unsavory record as a Nazi commander in the Lemberg area of Poland during World War II. Radio Prague and Radio Lvov have echoed this theme.

Although the theory that Bandera actually was the victim of a Soviet plot cannot be discounted, it is also possible, in view of Bandera's own record of strong-arm tactics and ruthless leadership, plus reports of an internal crises in OUN/B, that many people even within his own organization, would have had a motive for taking his life.

#### CIRCUMSTANCES OF BANDERA'S DEATH

The death of Stefan Bandera, who used the cover name Stefan Popel and gave his profession as journalist to screen his identity in Munich, was not witnessed by anyone so far as is known. He apparently had spent the morning at his office, eaten a middle-of-the-morning snack of grapes with his secretary, Eugenia MACK nee SCZYHOL, completed some shopping en route home, reached the first floor of his residence at about noon before he collapsed and fell down the staircase to the ground floor. The stairs to his third floor apartment are narrow and unpolished and turn slightly to approach each floor. Apparently Bandera's cry as he collapsed brought neighbors to his aid. He was found on the ground floor by a 10-year-old neighbor boy. He had visible head injuries and was bleeding from the nose and mouth.

Bandera's wife had seen him approach the building from their apartment window and waited for him to reach the apartment. When he did not arrive she called his office. She then learned that her husband had been injured and taken to the Red Cross Hospital in Lazarettstrasse, Munich. She was with her husband when he died at about 1:00 in the afternoon. He apparently did not regain consciousness after his fall.

Bandera, whose life was marked by many dangerous activities including several reported attempts on his life recently, was not accompanied at the time by his bodyguards, who had gone to lunch. The Munchner Merkur in its October 17-18 issue quoted the editor of the Bandera newspaper, Mr. Wolodymyz LBNYK, as saying "Bandera felt immune to all danger since he had survived the Partisan Wars and the years in prisons and concentration camps."

Translations of some of the best local press accounts of his life story, death, and funeral are attached as enclosures 1, 2, and 3 respectively.

\* The Munich radio station supported by AMCOMLIB, a privately sponsored American anti-Communist organization.

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A chronological history of Bandera's life is attached as enclosure no. 4.

TENETS AND HISTORY OF THE OUN/B

The following summary of the tenets and history of Bandera's party, the OUN/B, was prepared by the reporting officers on the basis of materials ranging from newspaper accounts to official records and scholarly works.

The Banderist wing of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists is the revolutionary element of the party. The OUN was founded in the Ukraine in 1929 by the late Col. Buhen (Eugen) KONOVALETS who was assassinated almost certainly by a Soviet agent in Rotterdam, Holland, in 1938. Bandera split with the OUN in 1940 and has in the post-war years claimed a following of several hundred fellow Ukrainian exiles and refugees in West Germany, principally in the Munich area. The Banderists publish a weekly newspaper, Szlach Peremchy (Road to Victory) in Munich.

The OUN/B has imparted an unusual amount of almost 19th century nationalistic revolutionary fervor and militancy to its activities. It is a highly authoritarian organization, similar in its ideology to the Marxist URDP under BAHRIANY, and, although it has little toleration for other parties, it lacks the anti-capitalist views typical of most Marxist movements.\* Its membership is generally active, conscientious, and patriotic, but lacks good political education and tends toward demagoguery in its extremist ideology. Bandera opposed the party of the democratic LIWYCKJ, the Ukrainian Government in Exile, and fought against the American Committee for Liberation, a private American organization which tried to unify the efforts of the various exiles from the USSR.

The OUN/B is technically one of the member organizations of the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc of Nations headed by Yaroslav STETZKO, former Prime Minister of the Ukrainian Republic 1917-21. Actually, however, the ABN, which embraces many of the nationality groups of the USSR and the Satellite countries (but no Russians!), is controlled by the Bandera party.

\* Who's Who in the Emigration, compiled by the American Committee for Liberation, Inc., 1954, pp54 and 58.

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COMMENTS:

Assassinations are nothing new in the Ukrainian nationalist movement, in the emigration or otherwise. Bandera was himself implicated in the 1934 assassination of the Polish Minister of Interior, for his part in which he was sentenced to death. In Rotterdam, in 1938, Bandera's then chief in the OUN leadership met his death by explosion when a box purportedly containing secret despatches from the Ukraine was delivered by one of his trusted lieutenants. This crime was "almost certainly the work of Soviet agents."\* Earlier, in 1925, Simon PETLIURA, former leader of the post-1918 Ukrainian Directory, was mysteriously murdered in Paris, possibly by Soviet agents.

According to the rival MELNYK wing of the OUN (OUN/M), Bandera's group carried out a whole series of assassinations in the Ukraine in 1941 (when the two factions were contesting the leadership of the Ukrainian partisan movement under the German occupation). The most notorious of these deeds was the ambushing of the Melnyk adherents, SENYK and STSIBONSKYI, on August 30, 1941, at Zhitomir.

Although the facts are difficult to establish, the Bandera group, after World War II, developed a reputation for the use of false denunciations and strong-arm tactics in its competition with other emigre groups in West Germany. Many emigre figures clearly do not personally lament his passing. His death, though, can have only an adverse effect upon the Soviet emigration as a whole because of the demoralizing effect of another real or assumed Soviet political assassination under the noses of private bodyguards and the German police and the fact that Bandera controlled one of the largest, most closely knit, and militant emigre organizations in West Germany.

Because of the personal quality of leadership in the OUN/B and the closely allied Anti-Bolshevik Bloc of Nations (ABN), it is impossible to take for granted that there will be an orderly and satisfactory transfer of power to a new leader. Mrs. Slava STETZKO, wife of Yaroslav STETZKO, the ABN leader who flew from Spain to attend the Bandera funeral, told one of the reporting officers that Stetzko would succeed to the leadership. Whether this will occur and whether the OUN/B will retain its force and unity remain matters of speculation. What is certain is that any splintering of a major anti-Communist emigre group, even one having undeniably repugnant features, such as the OUN/B, would be a Soviet psychological victory.

\* Ukrainian Nationalism 1939-1945, John A. Armstrong, Columbia University (1955).

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As a footnote to the life and activities of Stefan Bandera it might be mentioned that during the last few months of his life he had been making vigorous attempts to obtain a visa to visit the United States, and the question of his eligibility had still not been settled at the time of his death. On one occasion some months ago, FSO K. S. Midthun interviewed him when he called at the Consulate General in connection with his visa application. His explanation of the means by which the OUN/B would establish and preserve "democracy" if it came to power in the Ukraine lay largely in an unsophisticated assertion that democracy would obviously accompany national self-realization. At that time he promised to send Mr. Midthun some literature explaining the views of his organization, and he later did so. The following booklets, in the Ukrainian language, are being separately transmitted to the Intelligence Collection and Distribution Section (INR:ICD) in the Department:

XX Z\*IZD IPSS Bez Maski  
Kontsentratsiini Tabori b Sobets'komu Soyuzi  
Ukraina Proti Moskvi  
Bol'shevism i Vizvol'na Borot'ba  
UPA b Dokumentax 1942-50  
ABN b Dokumentax 1941-56  
UGVR b Dokumentax 1944-51  
OUN b Dokumentax 1929-55

Edward Page Jr  
American Consul General

Enclosures:

1. Translation of the article "An Assassination is Rumored", from Munchner Merkur, October 17-18, 1959.
2. Translation of the article "The Ukrainians Say He Died A Hero's Death", from the Süddeutsche Zeitung, October 21, 1959.
3. Translation of the article "Ukraine Soil Covers Bandera", from the Munchner Merkur, October 21, 1959.
4. Chronological Biography of Stefan Bandera.

Department pass to:

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**AN ASSASSINATION IS HUNGRED. STEPAN BANDERA'S MYSTERIOUS DEATH.**

**HE LED THE STRONGEST EMIGRE GROUP.**

Translation of an article in the  
Munichmer Merkur on October 17-18, 1959.

On Thursday at about one o'clock in the afternoon the occupants of a house on Kreittmayrstrasse heard a scream. A heavy body rolled down the staircase from the first floor. A small child found the body with visible injuries to the head. The man with thinning hair and stocky build is according to the entries in his residence was a journalist — Stepan Popal. In reality, however, he is the 50-year-old Stepan Bandera, the head of the strongest Ukrainian emigre organization — the OUN (Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists). With this incident, like the assassination of the Slovakian emigre leader Matus Cernak, the death of a leading member of a strong emigre organization in Germany has brought him back as a center of public interest. Stepan Bandera, who had the inspiration of so many Ukrainians behind him who carried on the efforts to secure the independence of their people, had himself become an anarchist and stood always in the path of danger. In 1909 Bandera was born in the town of Ukyuiv in southwestern Ukraine. He passed his examination as an agricultural engineer in 1935. He was already, as a student, a member of the Ukrainian military organization (UWO), which sought to fight with terrorist means for the independence of the Ukraine against the Poles as well as the Russians. In 1929 he entered the OUN which had assumed the function as the political work organization of the UWO. Since then, his entire life has been devoted to the struggle.

He rose comparatively rapidly to leadership of the OUN. Since 1931 he occupied the position of provisional leader of the organization of the western areas of Poland. There he was named chairman in 1932 after the arrest of some of his colleagues. His great hours came when he organized the assassination of the Polish Minister of Education PIERACKI /sic Minister of Interior Bronislaw Pieracki/ in 1934; the motive for this act was connected with the battle for an independent Ukrainian school system within Poland. He was arrested and after two trials in Warsaw and Lemberg, he was sentenced to death. This punishment was later changed to life imprisonment from which he was freed by the entry of the Germans into Warsaw.

**THE GOAL: FREE UKRAINE**

Since the bomb assassination of the former chief of the OUN Colonel Konovaletz in Rotterdam in 1938, he has practically been the leader of the entire organization. Bandera now the long-awaited opportunity to reach

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reach his goal of a free Ukraine when he proclaimed in the presence of the German officers the independence of his country on the 30th of June 1941. Shortly thereafter he was arrested, because such plans were not in line with those of the national socialist leadership, which no longer wanted to allow support to continue to the Ukrainian nationalists. He was later elected as chairman of the domestic as well as the foreign organization in 1943. Even in the concentration camps bitter warfare between the Poles and the Ukrainians was carried on. In the concentration camp at Auschwitz the younger brothers of Bandera, Alexander and Vasilli were murdered. In Sachsenhausen the battle against the Russians continued. Bandera himself was released from the concentration camp in 1944, but only with the understanding that he was ready to collaborate with the Germans, who at the last minute were prepared to allow an independent Ukraine. At that point, the objectivity and clear-sightedness of the Ukrainian Nationalist leader won out: he declined.

From the beginning of 1945 he was in Berlin, at which time, he dove into the whirlpool of the collapse, coming into prominence again after the end of the war as he sought to build anew the organization in western Europe and America. In these early years, contacts with the homeland were possible and he travelled more and more. That the OUN even now is still active there is illustrated -- here one must depend on the testimony of Ukrainians living in Germany -- in two prominent trials in which members of the organization were condemned to death. In 1950 Bandera once more tried to create a new type of warfare against Communism when he, in a mountain hotel in the Bavarian Alps, sent an appeal to the western powers.

#### HIS OPERATIONS AREA EMBRACED ALL OF EUROPE

As suddenly as he had appeared, he suddenly disappeared again. From that time on one heard scarcely anything about him. Even his co-workers are reluctant to discuss his activity. One thing seems clear: that since the end of the war, he has not been in the Ukraine. His scope of activity was all of Europe, and only his wife, whom he had married in 1939, and his three children, had made their permanent residence in Kreittmayratraase.

Bandera led the strongest of all the emigre groups. One estimates the Ukrainian emigration to total almost 4,000,000. The preponderant portion is supposed to have belonged to his membership, even though they were not all organized. Bandera controlled the roof organization of the OUN, into which he had brought the American branch (founded in 1930) under the leadership of the 68-year-old Melnik; the OUN foreign organization, since 1954 under the leadership of the 50-year-old Iebidj; and other groups which had originally stood in opposition to him. Twice already has the Ukrainian nationalist leader been confined in his office.

Today

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Date: 07/07/2017  
Author: MURKIN

Today the blue/gold banner of the Ukrainians and the black cross of the organization with its red field flutters forlornly from the window of his office on Zoppelinstrasse. On Thursday at 12 noon Bandera had left this place, an hour later he was dead. He had become accustomed to attacks and assassination attempts. First, in March of this year, someone had attempted to kidnap one of his children. Even more recently, they had again had the premonition that something was in the air. The guard on Bandera was strengthened. But he, who had outlived so many of his comrades, felt that his life was charmed. With him the Ukrainian national movement -- according to statements of the specialists -- loses a man who was respected in all emigre circles as an uncompromising ideological leader and prophet.

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from AmOceGen MUNICH

THE UKRAINIANS SAY: HE DIED A HEROES DEATH

THE POISONED EXILED POLITICIAN STEPAN BANDERA WAS BORN TO HIS GRAVE  
UNDER POLICE PROTECTION.

Translation of an article in the  
Sueddeutscher Zeitung on October 1959.

Quietly, with hands folded, they stood in the cemetery. Protocol required that the Ukrainian national democrat Idvokyj take the lead. Idvokyj has for years been the leader of the Ukrainian Government-in-Exile in whose parliament sit together the politicians of the National Democratic Federation, the Ukrainian Revolutionary Democratic Party, the Ukrainian Peasant Party, the Socialist Party, and the National Democratic Union. The man who was laid to rest here in the Munich Forest Cemetery by his supporters -- a hundred police placed themselves discreetly in the background -- was indeed for decades the political opponent of Idvokyj. However, as the grave was closed over Stepan Bandera, they placed over him a wreath. Whoever reads the inscription on the tombstone can be convinced that it could not have been given by the emigres out of political vindictiveness.

On Thursday of last week at about one o'clock in the afternoon the 50-year-old Bandera collapsed with a scream at the entrance of his house in Kreittmayrstrasse in Munich and died on the way to the hospital. The autopsy on the body showed that Bandera died from cyanide poisoning. Was this assassination? Four years ago a similar scene took place in the Munich Forest Cemetery. As happened yesterday, several thousand emigres had then visited the grave of the exiled Slovakian politician Matus Cernak. A few days before, he had been blown to pieces by a bomb which exploded in a Munich post office.

The danger of assassination hung over Bandera almost daily. A few months ago an unknown person had warned him of an attempt to kidnap one of his children. Consequently, the number of the bodyguard of the Ukrainian was increased. Bandera did not take a step without being watched by two of his own people. In the interest of security he had even taken the cover name of Popel and described himself as a journalist. On Thursday of last week, however, Bandera had left his bodyguard behind in his printing establishment. He went into town to buy something. As he entered his house at about one o'clock he collapsed.

One has read often in the last few days that the Ukrainians had feted Bandera as one of their heroes of freedom. That applies to every segment of the one and a half million exiled Ukrainians which he had

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Amsterdam, NETHERLANDS

he had brought together in a militant organization spread over Germany, England and America. The democratic exiled politicians of the Ukraine, however, wanted to have as little to do with Bandera as possible because he was one of the most radical nationalist politicians who, if he felt it was necessary, would resort to terrorizing the masses. If they would not agree with his political opinions. It is perhaps also worth noting that Bandera's organization, the OUP, was not a member of the exiled Ukrainian national council (Ukrainka). Indeed, both the government in exile as well as Bandera wanted the same thing namely, freedom for their homeland but with divergent views as to how this should be done.

Bandera was known by every Ukrainian who lived in Polish west Ukraine after 1923 as a man who belonged to a pro-military underground organization associated with the OUP and carried out bitter partisan warfare against the Poles. Bandera was at that time a young student. The OUP was under the command of Colonel Komorowski who carried on a battle for the freedom of the Ukraine, principally from Exagan and Berlin. Like his predecessor Petliura, who commanded the partisan army until 1925 and who fell in Berlin, the victim of an assassination, Komorowski was also killed in Rotterdam in 1938 by means of an infernal machine. A Soviet Agent had infiltrated the ranks of the OUP and gave Komorowski a package in a Rotterdam Cafe. Obviously, the package was filled with secret material from the homeland. In the package, however, a time bomb had been placed.

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UKRAINIAN SOIL COVERS BANDERA.

OVER 1500 MOURNERS -- UNDER POLICE PROTECTION

Translation of an article in the Muenchner  
Merkur on October 21, 1959.

Far from his Ukrainian home for which he had fought for his entire life, Stepan Bandera was buried yesterday afternoon in the Forest Cemetery after his death through a mysterious poisoning. Over 1,500 mourners, including representatives of Ukrainians in Canada, the United States, Belgium, England, Holland, France and West Germany, paid their last respects. The old blue and yellow Ukrainian flag covered his coffin. About 250 wreaths -- including also a wreath from the Federation of Exiles -- were brought to the grave. Leading exile politicians from all over the world were expected, and police protection was on hand to thwart possible attempts to disturb the ceremony. Funeral hymns were sung in the Ukrainian language as eight co-workers of the dead man bore the coffin to the grave on their shoulders. Placed on pillows were urns containing earth from the Ukraine and from the grave of Simon Petliura, who as national leader of the Ukrainian Republic was murdered in Paris in 1926 (as was Colonel Eugene Konovalets, who in 1938 fell victim to an assassination in Rotterdam). Ten clergymen of the Catholic Uniates and two of the Greek Orthodox Church joined the funeral procession. The Vicar General of the Catholic Uniate Church in Munich, Peter Holinski, conducted the burial ceremony. The wife of Bandera, gray-clad, followed the coffin, and their three children were followed by Ukrainian representatives of Turkish, Rumanian, and Bulgarian fraternal organizations. The banner of the Ukrainian resistance movement with a red cross on a black background -- symbolizing blood and earth -- and the banners of the earlier Ukrainian republic were carried in the funeral procession. The president of the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc of Nations (ABN), Yaroslav Stetsko, gave the eulogy and recalled the murder of Ukrainian nationalists throughout the past years. "Moscow has tried to break us spiritually and in this effort has torn from us the powerful Stepan Bandera. It was thought that the Ukrainian nation would be spiritually destroyed by this act and she would cease her battle for freedom. The murder of Bandera was undertaken by Moscow with the conviction that during a time of peaceful co-existence this crime would have no external conflict as a consequence." As a last gesture the president sprinkled earth from the Ukraine and water from the Black Sea into the open grave. At the end of the burial, which was carried through without any incidents, all the Ukrainians sang their old national anthem.

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The leadership of the foreign groups of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists, of whom Bandera was the chairman, gave out a communique yesterday, in which, among other things, it was said:

"All supposition that Stepan Bandera ended his life through suicide is senseless and without substantial basis. He fell in a battle which is being waged not only for the liberation of the Ukraine and other peoples who are under Moscow's yoke, but also for the freedom of the civilized world, which is being threatened by Russian-Bolshevik imperialism."

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CHRONOLOGICAL BIOGRAPHY OF STEFAN BANDERA

- 1909 - September 1, born in Jaroslav, Poland (also given as Uhryuiw, West Ukraine.)
- 1923 - 1928 - Lived in Stryj, in West Ukraine.
- 1929 - 1934 - Lived in Lwiw (Lemberg) in West Ukraine. Became active in the OUN under the leadership of Col. Euhem KONOVALETS. Rose rapidly in the hierarchy of the Party which carried on terroristic activities against both Poles and Russians in an effort to free the Ukraine. He studied agricultural engineering, passing his examinations in 1933.
- 1934 - Arrested in connection with the assassination plot against the Polish Minister of Interior, Bronislaw PIRACKI and sentenced to death after two trials in Warsaw and Lemberg. This sentence was changed to life imprisonment as a result of his legal appeal.
- 1934 - 1940 - September released from Polish imprisonment by Nazis, after serving his sentence at Warsaw, Wronki, and Krakow prisons.
- 1940 - 1941 - Brief period of freedom and renewed political activity. He joined the two pro-German Ukrainian Support Battalions called Roland and Nachtigall. He tried to set up a free Ukrainian government but was arrested and imprisoned by the Nazis. He split the OUN by forming OUN/B. OUN was under Col. Konovalets' leadership until his assassination in 1938. This branch still exists under name OUN/M under Melnyk, and UHVR in New York City and Europe under Rebet Matla group. Married JAROSLAWA nee BANACH, born September 14, 1917, in Sanok, West Ukraine.
- 1941 - 1944 - Imprisoned by the Gestapo in Berlin, Sachsenhausen and Oranienburg concentration camps. Bandera's parents were killed by the NKVD, and his two brothers, Alexander and Wassily, murdered in Auschwitz in 1943.
- 1945 - present - Lived throughout West Germany, primarily in Munich and Regensburg. Editor for Ukrainian Publishing Co., Munich.
- 1947 - OUN/B split when Rebet Matla wing broke away to affiliate with UHVR.

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- 1956 - Rejected for U.S. visa at Munich on grounds that this was "prejudicial to public interest." (Section 212 (a) (27) of Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1952). Several reviews of this case upheld this decision. Resided 7 Kreitzmaystrasse, Munich 2, with wife and three children: Natalia, born May 26, 1941, in Sanok, West Ukraine; Audry, born May 16, 1946, in Munich; and Anna-Lesia, born August 27, 1947, in Regensburg.
- 1959 - October 15, 1959, Bandera murdered. Buried on October 20, 1959.

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