



ОРГАНІЗАЦІЯ УКРАЇНСЬКИХ НАЦІОНАЛІСТІВ

ГОЛОВНИЙ ПРОВІД

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The Honorable Jerzy Buzek
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March 9, 2010

Dear Mr. President,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN), the organization headed at one time by Stepan Bandera.

No doubt by now, you have received ample correspondence criticizing Poland's action in the European Parliament: the introduction of a resolution (# 20) depicting the Ukrainian nation and those who strived for its independence as Nazi collaborators and fascists. The resolution also called on the new administration in Ukraine to rescind the honor afforded to Stepan Bandera as a *Hero of Ukraine*.

The resolution and its implications are libelous, and we are presently examining what action can be taken.

Apart from being another example of disinformation and propaganda, which has been disproven by international commissions and trials such as Canada's *Commission of Inquiry on War Criminals* presided over by Justice Jules Deschenes, the Nuremberg Trials and others, you nevertheless persist at continuing to initiate tensions and international disharmony at the highest level, when in fact your role is to do the opposite.

While this is an emotional issue, it is of utmost importance that facts and not fiction be the basis of our discussions.

Your calling on Ukraine's new administration to rescind the decree of a former President, a President whom you hosted, respected and worked with to integrate Ukraine into the European community, is totally disrespectful to all concerned, especially to those who laid down their lives for Ukraine in battle, to Stepan Bandera and his family, and generally to Ukrainians in Ukraine and in the Diaspora. But most importantly, you have entered a realm of discussion that puts into question freedom fighters who aspired to independence throughout the world. In your homeland of Poland, there are many who aspired for a free Poland.

Recently, positive Ukrainian-Polish-Jewish relations have developed at the highest level. This is most important as we strive for a world that is harmonious, a world that recognizes history based

on facts and not Soviet propaganda, a world which condemns atrocities and crimes against humanity, such as Stalin's policies which saw millions perish in the Famine Genocide of 1932-33 in Ukraine, called the Holodomor. The international community agrees that we can only have a better future when we understand our past and never allow the same mistakes to be repeated. Commentary must be based on historical facts. Our qualm is that your resolution lacks in this regard.

The struggles of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) and the efforts of Bandera are now well-documented. The archives of the Security Service of Ukraine are now open and accessible. Your resolution perpetuates the disinformation and propaganda which in the past did not allow the world to know the truth, leaving the world with a tainted perspective. We believe you have been caught up in a pro-Russian propaganda attempt, carried out through the hands of others.

This can be proved or disproved by you answering a simple question: ***Who initiated the discussion which led to proposing this resolution and in what situation did this conversation arise ?***

Recent efforts to discredit General Roman Shukhevych, commander of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) were again proven to be false when representatives of the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) and the National Institute of Memory travelled to Israel and provided pertinent archival documents to Yad Vashem. Yad Vashem, Director Tom Lapid indicated there was no dossier on Shukhevych in Israel's archives, yet many allegations had been made. (Links to Yad Vashem's acknowledgment of no dossier is listed below . Two years have passed and still no evidence, only innuendo.

Secondly, Petro Symonenko, Head of Ukraine's Communist Party has been ordered by the Courts in Kyiv, Ukraine to apologise to Shukhevych's family for his slanderous, unfounded lies about Shukhevych. He was ordered to do this from the floor of Ukraine's Verchovna Rada. Moysey (Moses) Fishbeyn an influential and renowned Ukrainian poet and translator of Jewish origin reported this recently. There are similar situations relating to Stepan Bandera, disinformation, fabricated stories which have been disproven, yet being perpetuated.

It would have been prudent for the European Parliament to avoid making the same mistake by obtaining official archival information from Ukrainian officials, before making such unsubstantiated claims.

Your call on the new administration in Ukraine has now caused a divide in some political circles, but it must be stressed that support for rescinding the decree is not widely supported. Regional governments in Ukraine have passed motions condemning any such move. Grass-roots activity in many regions of Ukraine opposes both your resolution and the comments made by President Viktor Yanukovych in this regard.

The newly elected President vowed to be a President for **all** Ukrainians. He cannot discount the millions of Ukrainians who recognize that the efforts of Bandera and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army led to the eventual liberation of Ukraine. The 1991 Proclamation of Independence was the result of many generations of Ukrainians, over a long period of time, striving to achieve the same goal. They deserve recognition, and Mr. Yanukovych, as President, must keep true to his election mantra of governing on behalf of **all** Ukrainians. Your resolution only complicates this issue. Many in the Ukrainian media have condemned your intrusion into the internal affairs of a sovereign Ukrainian state.

The Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists, as part of its role, devotes a great deal of time to education, history and archival matters. Fact and not fiction, information and not disinformation,

accuracy and not propaganda are standards we aspire to. We would encourage the leadership of the European Parliament to adhere to the same principles and standards. We are arranging for materials and information to be sent to all members of the European Parliament. A biography and other information on Stepan Bandera are attached to this letter for your perusal. We are calling on our communities internationally to contact the many members of the European Parliament to provide them with background information.

President Yanukovych, during an international media conference indicated he would not be a puppet of the Russian Federation's leadership. We have now called upon him to show that he is neither a puppet of the Russian Federation nor of the European Parliament.

As we explore our legal options regarding this slanderous resolution, we are providing you and your fellow members of parliament with factual information. We call on you to revisit this matter in parliament, and call for a vote to rescind this resolution. This will be an act of good will, an act in line with international and European standards.

It is in the interest of some to perpetuate the anti-Ukraine hysteria, to discredit Ukraine, to historically paint a picture of hate, Nazi collaboration and racism. This pro-Soviet propaganda machine did not stop in 1991 following Ukraine's independence. It continues today. One only needs to follow the anti-Ukrainian venom unleashed by the propaganda machine of the Russian Federation during the commemorations of the 75th anniversary of the Holodomor. Similar pressures, as the one made on you in the matter of OUN-UPA and Bandera, were being made by the Russian Federation on the highest levels of government worldwide, aimed at discrediting the Holodomor. This is called, "**Pulling the levers while being the silent partner.**" The discrediting of Shukhevych, Bandera and OUN-UPA is part of the same process.

In conclusion I provide an interesting piece of writing in relation to the various attempts by Russia to discredit a hero - Pope Pius XII-

Persecuting a Pope

Then again, if a story that broke in 2007 is to be believed, maybe it doesn't. That year, the highest-ranking communist intelligence officer to ever defect to the West, Ion Mihail Pacepa, claimed that the attack on Pius was no accident — it was Soviet agitprop. He revealed, wrote John Follain in the Sunday Times of London, "that he was involved in the operation code-named Seat12, a Kremlin scheme launched in 1960 to portray Pius XII 'as a cold-hearted Nazi sympathiser.' The result, according to Pacepa, was the 1963 play The Deputy, by Rolf Hochhuth." Oh, I should add that the motto of this Cold War plot was "Dead men cannot defend themselves." No, they can't — but men with dead souls can attack very well.

The point is that the communists viewed the Catholic Church as a major (if not the main) impediment to their aims. Also remember that, as Soviet defector Yuri Bezmenov pointed out years ago, 85 percent of the KGB's resources were devoted not to intrigue but to subversion, efforts at, as he put it, "demoralization." That is, efforts such as the attack on Pius.

The same modus operandi can now be proven in relation to discrediting Ukraine and Ukraine's history.

We are seeking to meet with you as soon as possible at a location of your choice to discuss this situation. We look forward to a meaningful discussion and speedy resolution of this matter.

Yours sincerely,



Stefan Romaniw
Head of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists

Information on meetings with Yad Vashem

http://www.ssu.gov.ua/sbu/control/uk/publish/article?art_id=75332&cat_id=75738&mustWords=%D1%8F%D0%B4+%D0%B2%D0%B0%D1%88%D0%B5%D0%BC&searchPublishing=1http://www.bbc.co.uk/ukrainian/domestic/story/2008/03/080304_shukhevyeh_israel_oh.shtml

<http://www.day.kiev.ua/198386/>

<http://www.gazeta.lviv.ua/articles/2008/03/06/29736/>

<http://www.dt.ua/3000/3150/62036/>

Biography of Stepan Bandera (translation from Ukrainian)

Stepan Andriyovych Bandera (January 1, 1909, Staryi Uhryniv — † October 15, 1959, Munich) was a Ukrainian politician, ideologue of the Ukrainian national liberation movement, and a leader of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists.

Stepan Bandera was born into a clerical family on January 1, 1909. He was born in western Ukraine, which at the time was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and called the Kingdom of Galicia and Lodomeria. The peoples of that empire enjoyed certain rights of self-determination and the Ukrainians living therein knew something about democracy, unlike the Ukrainians living under Tsarist Russia. Bandera's father was a Ukrainian Catholic priest and civic activist. He supported the co-operative movement among small farmers, educational organizations and agricultural associations. After the collapse of Austro-Hungary and the declaration of the Western-Ukrainian National Republic (ZUNR), the elder Bandera helped establish Ukrainian rule and became a member of the new parliament representing the Kalush district. During the ensuing war, Fr. Andriy Bandera served as a chaplain in the Ukrainian Galician Army. Thus, as a young boy, Stepan Bandera saw his parents' generation try to establish an independent Ukrainian state, only to see them lose it to the Bolsheviks in the east and Poland in the west.

In 1919 Stepan Bandera began his secondary school studies at the Ukrainian- language Hymnaziya in the city of Stryi, where his grandfather lived (70 km south of Lviv). Bandera subsequently joined the Ukrainian scouting organization Plast. In 1927 Bandera completed his secondary school studies and applied to study at the Ukrainian Economic Academy in Podebrady (Czechoslovakia), but Polish authorities refused him a passport for travel abroad. The following year, Stepan Bandera enrolled in the Agronomy Department of Lviv Polytechnic University. He was arrested along with his father by the Poles for conducting a memorial service for fallen Ukrainian soldiers. Bandera became an active member of various Ukrainian student and civic organizations that strove to combat forced polonization and discrimination against Ukrainians. He studied in Lviv until his arrest in 1934.

During his student years, Bandera became a member of the Ukrainian national liberation organization, the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN). In June 1933 he became that organization's chief for western Ukraine. Under his leadership the organization concentrated

primarily on social-propagandistic work, but became known for its violent protests against the Famine Genocide in Soviet Ukraine (the Holodomor), as well as against the pacification of Ukrainians by Polish authorities. The first protest was the 1933 assassination of the Soviet representative in Lviv and member of the NKVD (predecessor of the KGB), Alexei Mailov. The second protest was the 1934 assassination of the Minister of Internal Affairs of Poland, Bronislaw Pieracki, in response to the actions of Polish police against defenseless Ukrainian peasants. After Bandera's arrest in 1934, the Polish court sentenced him to death for his role in organizing these violent acts of retribution. The sentence was later commuted to life-long imprisonment.

After the partition of the Polish state by the Soviets and Nazis in accordance with the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact in 1939, Bandera broke free from prison and moved to Lviv in the Soviet zone to resume his work in the underground. Later he moved to the German zone to organize those Ukrainians who fled the Soviet terror that Bolshevik rule brought to western Ukraine. Bandera helped to organize a future Ukrainian government that would seize power in the event of a Soviet-German war. Between 1939 and 1941, the Soviets executed and deported tens of thousands of Ukrainians, and demonstrated they would never allow Ukraine to be independent. The Nazis had no interest in a free Ukraine which they viewed as a "living space" for Aryans. Seeking to avoid war against the world's two largest armies, the OUN attempted to use German interests in the war against the USSR to train army officers and form the core of a future independent Ukrainian army. But in less than half a year, the OUN was fighting against both Germany and the USSR. On June 30, 1941, on the ninth day of the war between the USSR and Germany, OUN declared the Act for the Renewal of an Independent Ukrainian State and established a multi-party government in Lviv. The Nazis promptly arrested Stepan Bandera and Prime Minister Yaroslav Stetsko, and demanded the act be revoked. Bandera and Stetsko refused and were imprisoned in the Sachsenhausen concentration camp, together with other ministers of the Ukrainian government. Stepan Bandera's two brothers Oleksandr and Vasyl were imprisoned in Auschwitz with other OUN members, where his brothers perished. The German Gestapo joined the Soviet NKVD in the hunt for OUN members. The Soviets executed Stepan Bandera's father Andriy Bandera in Kyiv just because he was the father of the OUN leader.

OUN nevertheless continued its struggle against Nazi occupation. On the eve of the Battle of Stalingrad, in the Fall of 1942, the OUN united existing groups of guerillas into what became the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA), an army that eventually liberated large districts of northwestern Ukraine from German occupation. General Roman Shukhevych, a close comrade-in-arms of Stepan Bandera, became the UPA's commander-in-chief. A number of high-ranking officers in the UPA obtained their military training in the German army prior to the war. But the UPA also included numerous officers trained in the Soviet Red Army, as well as the Polish and Czechoslovak armies. That was the reality of creating a national army without the backing of a national state.

After German troops retreated from Ukraine, the Soviets sought to suppress Ukraine's independence. The Soviets dispatched special military units of the NKVD to fight against the OUN. This war lasted into the mid-1950s when the KGB arrested the last UPA commander Vasyl Kuk. OUN members continued their struggle in the Soviet GULAG concentration

camps, organizing strikes and anti-Soviet subversion under the slogan “Freedom to nations – freedom to individuals!” The Soviet totalitarian regime imprisoned OUN members for 25-year terms that were often extended. In the camps, Ukrainian nationalists met and worked with Soviet dissidents of different nationalities, and struggled together with them in defense of national and human rights.

After Hitler’s defeat, Stepan Bandera and many other OUN members ended up in the American zone of post-war Germany. They established organizations to promote the cause of Ukraine’s independence. Bandera’s writings and activities proved dangerous to the USSR and its leaders. The order for his assassination was approved at the highest level by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The KGB dispatched Bohdan Stashynsky, a trained killer, to Germany with a weapon to administer an undetectable poison that would simulate a natural heart failure. Bandera was killed in Munich on October 15, 1959 in the stairwell of his apartment building. Foul play was suspected, but nobody knew the truth for sure. It wasn’t until 1961, just two days before the Berlin Wall was erected, that the killer fled from East to West Berlin and surrendered to German authorities. He revealed the details of his murder of Bandera and another Ukrainian leader Lev Rebet in 1957. His trial took place in Karlsruhe, where the German justice system ruled that the Soviet government had ordered and organized the murders. The trial of Bohdan Stashynsky received international coverage, and the world learned about the Soviet Union’s policy of assassinating political opponents, both at home and abroad.

The KGB may have killed Stepan Bandera, but it could not destroy the Ukrainian peoples’ pursuit of independence. That centuries-old dream was finally realized in 1991. Today, independent Ukraine flies the blue and yellow flag – the same flag for which Stepan Bandera fought. Today, Ukraine’s national anthem is the same anthem sung by Bandera and his generation, and Ukraine’s coat-of-arms is a symbol of statehood that dates back over a thousand years. These were also the symbols of the short-lived Ukrainian National Republic during World War I. Finally, these are the same symbols of independent Ukrainian statehood that Hitler demanded Bandera revoke in July 1941. Bandera remained firm and thus became a symbol for all Ukrainian patriots because, in the face of adversity and against all odds, he dared to stand up for Ukraine’s right to be independent. That is why today across Ukraine, monuments to him stand in cities and villages, streets bear his name, songs are sung, films are made and plays are written about him. As a symbol, Stepan Bandera has few equivalents in Ukraine’s history: a prisoner in Poland, then in Hitler’s concentration camp, and finally assassinated by the Soviet KGB. In spite of what foreign politicians may think, Bandera will remain a symbol of the Ukrainian peoples’ fight for freedom.

Kyiv Post

March 4, 2010

Honoring heroes

Yesterday at 22:39

The continent that spawned Hitler has no business telling Ukraine who should and shouldn't be its heroes.

Ukraine is short of heroes. Many have been murdered, while others have had their memories blackened in other peoples' histories. This is what is now happening with World War II-era freedom fighter Stepan Bandera, who led a difficult struggle during a violent period to sow the seeds of his nation's present, yet painfully fragile independence.

Bandera symbolized the plight of millions of Ukrainians who suffered under various foreign occupiers for most of their history. For this, Bandera – killed in 1959 by a KGB agent while living in exile – received Ukraine's highest honor, the Hero of Ukraine, posthumously awarded during Victor Yushchenko's last days as president.

Bandera headed the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists and backed its military wing, the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA), which fought against Poles, Soviets and Nazis, who in turn fought against each other. But now the Poles, the Kremlin and more recently the European Union are together in condemning these insurgents as Nazi collaborators. The European Parliament voted on Feb. 25 to ask Kyiv to rescind the award.

Sadly, many Ukrainians have also succumbed to the historical condemnation of others. The history of World War II is complex, particularly in the region of modern-day western Ukraine. It was bloody on all sides, and few who led the charge into battle came out with clean hands. However, the post-war Nuremberg trials never condemned Bandera's movement for war crimes. Bandera's supporters briefly fought alongside Nazi soldiers to oust the Soviets from western Ukraine, where Russian czars had never ruled. In this, the UPA was little different to similar partisan movements in the Baltic countries. In contrast, the Soviets under Josef Stalin were aggressors on par with the Third Reich, with whom Stalin forged the secretive and sinister Molotov-Ribbentrop alliance in 1939 to carve up Eastern Europe.

Stalin's regime also watched passively as the Third Reich attempted to wipe out European Jews. Now Kremlin leaders honor Stalin. There is no clear evidence of mass murder of Jews or Nazi collaboration by Bandera's movement. There is clear evidence that his movement was aimed at attaining Ukrainian independence, much like Jews fought for an independent Israeli state.

When Bandera's movement declared national independence, the Nazis imprisoned him. But his army fought against all enemies of his homeland with vigor. How much of a Nazi collaborator was Bandera, if he and close associates spent much of the war in a Nazi prison, and if close relatives died in Nazi camps?

Now, when his nation seeks to honor him, the campaign to tarnish him and thus Ukrainian sovereignty is being renewed. He wasn't a Nazi, a Bolshevik or a Pole. He was a Ukrainian who deserves to be judged by the nation he served.