Cryptologia
Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:
http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/ucry20

Operation Stonka. An Ultimate Deception Spy Game
Jan Bury

To cite this article: Jan Bury (2011): Operation Stonka. An Ultimate Deception Spy Game, Cryptologia, 35:4, 297-327
To link to this article: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01611194.2011.583709

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE

Full terms and conditions of use: http://www.tandfonline.com/page/terms-and-conditions

This article may be used for research, teaching, and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproduction, redistribution, reselling, loan, sub-licensing, systematic supply, or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden.

The publisher does not give any warranty express or implied or make any representation that the contents will be complete or accurate or up to date. The accuracy of any instructions, formulae, and drug doses should be independently verified with primary sources. The publisher shall not be liable for any loss, actions, claims, proceedings, demand, or costs or damages whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with or arising out of the use of this material.
Operation *Stonka*. An Ultimate Deception Spy Game

JAN BURY

**Abstract** The article discusses a Cold War counterintelligence operation conducted by Polish and Soviet secret services against the Stepan Bandera Faction of the Ukrainian Nationalists Organization between 1959 and 1961. It emphasizes the methods implemented and used by communist security services, including signals intelligence, as well as the mistakes committed by the Ukrainian party. The article also briefs the measures related to code breaking employed during the operation.

**Keywords** Cold War espionage, Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists, signals intelligence, the Stepan Bandera Faction

[Supplementary materials are available for this article. Go to the publisher’s online edition of *Cryptologia* to view the free supplementary files.]

**Introduction**

The declassification of the former communist Polish security services’ files in recent years sheds light on previously unknown Cold War secret operations, which took place in Central Europe. The files from previously closed archives enable a new interpretation of the recent history of Poland and its relations with the Ukrainans. They also allow us a broader look at the capabilities and methods used by the communist block’s secret services against their adversaries.

The communist secret services’ Cold War operation Stonka (potatoe-beetle) of 1959–1961, which ultimately targeted the militant Ukrainian underground, is presented. While the author is not a historian of the 20th century Ukrainian movements, his intention is to discuss the tradecraft and methods used both by Cold War spies and counterintelligence services of the Warsaw Pact, particularly with respect to covert communications and code breaking.

This article is based on the vast documents on the case [8, 10], which were recently declassified. While these files survived communism in mixed order, with many flashbacks and flashforwards in their contents, there is no evidence they could have been forged or ‘doctored’ in any way by the Poles except that the files on the final stage of the operation seem sanitized. Furthermore, there were some hints to the case in open sources, which prove that the operation indeed has taken place [6, 11]. A recently declassified internal manual of communist Polish intelligence of 1979 [5] also discussed the case, but in a slightly altered way. The sources were supplemented by the recently released personal files of those involved in the operation [7, 9].

Address correspondence to Jan Bury, Faculty of Law and Administration, Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University, 1/3 Woycickiego Str., Bldg. 17, 01-938 Warsaw, Poland. E-mail: j.bury@uksw.edu.pl
Since the case involved many threads and individuals, which made the analysis laborious, the author focused on the most important events. Any mistakes, therefore, belong to him.

The first section is devoted to an introductory history of Polish-Ukrainian relations following Poland’s independence of 11 November 1918. The second discusses an early communist Polish security’s ‘C–1’ operation of 1950–1954, which targeted Ukrainian underground courier routes and communications channels. The following two sections discuss Ukrainian courier-agents missions of 1957 and 1959, which became the prelude to the Stonka operation. Finally, operation Stonka and its aftermath are elaborated.

The Uneasy Polish–Ukrainian Relations before and during World War II

Following World War I, the Ukrainians only enjoyed a short-lived Ukrainian statehood, which was eventually suppressed by the Soviets, while Western Ukraine became a part of Polish Second Republic (1918–1939). The moderate Ukrainians supported the mainstream Ukrainian National Democratic Alliance (UND0), created in 1925, which continued activities till the seizure of Western Ukraine by the Soviets in 1939. The Alliance aimed at the creation of an independent, democratic Ukraine and struggled for the respect of the constitutional rights of the Ukrainians in the Polish Second Republic. Furthermore, due to its legal status, it enjoyed representation in the Polish parliament.

However, the radical Ukrainians within Polish Second Republic supported the Ukrainian Military Organization (UVO), created in 1920, with Col. Yevhen Konovalets and Andriy Melyk among its leaders, which was responsible for a number of terrorist activities in Poland. The UVO was later incorporated into the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN), established in 1929 during a congress in Vienna. This nationalist organization with military inclination adopted violence to achieve its political goal, the establishment of the independent Ukrainian state within eastern Poland and the western part of the Soviet Union. Its terror campaign against Polish authorities in the 1930s, together with a number of sabotage acts against Polish property, led to harsh policies of the Warsaw government, causing punitive actions by Polish police against the Ukrainian minority in Poland. However, collective punishment of innocent Ukrainians resulted in an exacerbation of animosity between the Poles and the Ukrainian minority in the Second Polish Republic, despite the minimal number of deaths, if any, during the operation.

Furthermore, the adoption of collective farming in Soviet controlled Ukraine led to the famine (Holodomor) in the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic in the early 1930s. The Ukrainians were subjected to Soviet disintegration policies, the Russification, while Ukrainian intelligentsia had perished. Such circumstances caused the moderate Ukrainians within Poland to seek reconciliation with the Poles, which eventually took place in 1935. As a consequence, Vasil Mudriy, Chairman of the UNDO, became the Deputy Speaker of the Polish Parliament. The agreement with the Ukrainians was to be a prelude to the final fulfillment of international agreements by the Polish authorities, who were to grant autonomy over Galitsya, consisting of Polish Lwow, Tarnopol, and Stanislawow Voivodships.

Unfortunately, the good situation collapsed in 1938 after the Polish authorities moved to the political right. The Polish Army policed the southern region of the country to consolidate the nation in the unfavorable international circumstances
before the war. The operation merely antagonized the Ukrainian minority (ca. 4.5 million according to the 1931 census) against the Polish authorities, which had tremendous consequences after the outbreak of hostilities the next year. The Polish policy of normalization eventually failed.

The OUN opposed rapprochement with the Polish authorities. Its terror campaign caused victims among Polish moderate politicians, like Tadeusz Holowko, an advocate for improving relations with Poland’s ethnic minorities, who was assassinated in 1931. In June 1934, OUN’s members assassinated the Polish minister of internal affairs, Col. Bronislaw Pieracki, in Warsaw. It is not out of the question that the plan was devised in Berlin a year before, with the Abwehr’s assistance. In the aftermath, the authorities established the Bereza Kartuska detention facility to accommodate the inmates whose activities or conduct threatened the public security, peace, or order of the Second Republic. One of them was Stepan Bandera (1909–1959), who was convicted by a Polish court for his participation in the plot to kill minister Pieracki in 1934 and for his membership in an illegal militant organization, the OUN.

At the time of Pieracki’s assassination, Bandera was the head of OUN’s national executive (the National Provid) and a citizen of Poland. Although sentenced to death in 1936, Bandera’s verdict was commuted to life imprisonment upon an amnesty. The attempts of his comrades to free him failed. Nevertheless, at the outbreak of World War II, in September 1939, Bandera was released from prison, while his units sabotaged the Polish army, police or infrastructure in Eastern Poland. His later activities took place in occupied Poland. He met with the OUN leader, Andriy Melnyk; however, due to the differences in their views, the organization split into two factions in 1940, the OUN-M led by Melnyk, which called for alliance with the Germans, and the radical militant OUN-B\(^{1}\) led by Bandera, and both enjoyed support from the Nazis. This eventually led to the formation of Ukrainian units within the Wehrmacht, the Nachtigall and Roland. Both were formed in occupied Cracow in March 1941 and took part in the Nazi advance into the Soviet-held portion of Poland in June, particularly in Lwow (now Lviv in Ukraine), with an alleged war crimes record. At the same time, the security service within OUN was established, the Sluzhba Bezpeky OUN, which was tasked with both intelligence and counterintelligence, and considered itself a legitimate judicial authority in the eastern parts of occupied Poland. To make matters worse, impulsive, violent, and ruthless youth were recruited to SB OUN.

The Nazi’s Operation Barbarossa commenced on 22 June 1941, and the OUN announced the independence of Ukraine at Lwow on 30 June. However, the situation was unfavorable to the Ukrainians, as Adolf Hitler was uninterested in establishing the Ukrainian statehood, and the Ukrainian government operated for only 12 days. Bandera was arrested by the Nazis, imprisoned in Berlin, and later sent to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp after he refused to retract the announcement of independence. His two brothers were later murdered by the Nazis at Auschwitz. The OUN-B executive was rounded by the Nazis and the remaining activists went underground under the leadership of Mykola Lebed. At the same time the OUN-M members continued the cooperation with the Nazis, and were involved in the creation of

\(^{1}\)Sometimes referred to as the OUN-R, for the ‘Revolutionaries.’ Anyway, the OUN was dealt a blow before the war as in 1938 Yevhen Konovalets, the OUN leader and a former commander of Sich Riflemen and UVO, was assassinated by a Soviet agent in the Netherlands.
the 14th *Waffen-Grenadier-Division der SS* (i.e., the First Ukrainian, a.k.a. *SS-Galizien*) in April 1943.

In secrecy, the OUN-B changed its ideology and political sympathies during the second congress held in April 1942. They apparently broke off the collaboration with the Nazis, seen as the conquerors of the Ukraine. However, the struggle against the ‘enemies’ of Ukraine to include, apart from the Third Reich, the USSR and Romania, was announced. This also involved OUN’s fight against Poland.

At the end of 1942, the military formation related to OUN-B was created, the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (*UPA*), under the command of Roman Shukhevych (1907–1950), with an estimated strength of 35,000 men and thousands of sympathizers. UPA, gathering mainly Polish Second Republic citizens of Ukrainian descent, is responsible for the massacres of the Polish population in Volhynia (Eastern part of the Polish Second Republic), mainly in 1943 and 1944, in which about 50,000 Poles lost their lives, as well as a number of Polish citizens of Ukrainian, Jewish, Czech, or Russian descent. Bandera was at that time imprisoned by the Nazis, however, his organization is believed to have significantly inspired the genocide of the Poles by UPA. The issue is still being investigated by the prosecution branch of the Polish Institute of National Remembrance at the time of this writing.

In July 1944 UPA was subordinated to the underground Ukrainian Main Liberation Council (*UHVR*), which was both anti-Soviet and anti-Nazi. After the war, the UHVR settled itself in Munich and slowly adopted democratic attitudes towards Ukrainian national issues.

Surprisingly, Bandera and his colleagues were released from Nazi concentration camps in the autumn of 1944, when the Nazis altered their policies with regards to the auxiliary units of their military. The war approached its end, with the Third Reich being the obvious loser. At the turn of 1944/1945, Bandera took part in negotiations with the Nazis, which led to the formation of the Ukrainian National Committee (*UNK*) in March 1945. The UNK represented the Ukrainian nation in the Third Reich. The Ukrainian National Army (*UNA*), which incorporated the former *SS-Galizien* division, was subordinated to the UNK.

During a decisive battle with the Red Army at Brody in the Ukraine in July 1944, *SS-Galizien* suffered heavy losses. Reinforced in September with Ukrainian volunteers, it took part in fighting in Slovakia, Austria, and the Balkans. In May 1945 the division, then named 1. Ukrainian National Army Division, surrendered to the Western allies in Italy. Only thanks to the intervention of Gen. Władysław Anders, the commander of the Polish Second Corps in Italy, the Ukrainian soldiers were considered Polish citizens and were not returned to the Soviets, and thus, their lives were not spared. The unit’s Ukrainian commander, Gen. Pavlo Shandruk, actually served under Anders’ command in the Polish Army before the outbreak of war, which probably facilitated the act of the latter.²

UPA, however, continued its campaign of terror within post-war Southern Poland (nicknamed *Zakerzony Kray*, i.e., ‘the land west of the Curzon line,’ which was delineated yet in 1920), as well as in Soviet-controlled Ukraine. In mid-1947

²In 1965 Shandruk was awarded the highest Polish military decoration, the Virtuti Militari Cross, by Gen. Anders, for his activities during the September 1939 Polish Defensive War. He commanded the 29th Infantry Brigade of the Polish Army as a Colonel. On 23 September 1939 he saved his unit during the battle of Tomaszow Lubelski, when it was entrapped by the German forces.
communist Polish authorities decided to finally crush the Ukrainian underground in south-east Poland under the Operation Vistula. A forced deportation of 140 thousand Ukrainians to the territories granted to Poland after the war took place then. At the same time Soviet security forces crushed the UPA in Ukrainian SSR. Roman Shukhevych, known in the Ukrainian Underground as ‘Taras Chuprynka,’ was killed in March 1950 during an NKVD operation aimed at capturing him, and was succeeded by Vasyl Kuk (1913–2007).

Bandera settled down in West Germany after the hostilities ended. He and his collaborators established the Zakordonny Chastyny OUN, the Foreign Formations of OUN, often abbreviated to Z.Ch. OUN. Bandera led the Z.Ch. OUN till 1950, bearing the title Providnyk or chairman, and was followed by Stepan Lenkavsky (1904–1977), a UNK former member and a former inmate at Auschwitz released in December 1944. From 1951 till 1986, Z.Ch. OUN was directed by Yaroslav Stetsko (1912–1986), a former Nachtigall member and the Independent Ukrainian Republic prime minister for only 12 days in 1941. In parallel, the OUN-M recreated the Provid of Ukrainian Nationalists (PUN).

The Early Deception: Operation C–1

After the war, the UPA insurgency was crushed by both the Soviets and the Poles in the late 1940s. However, the Munich-based OUN-B continued sending couriers and intelligence agents to Poland and the Ukraine, thanks to the support of British intelligence, believing in the exaggerated capabilities of the underground to gather intelligence behind the Iron Curtain and to unleash an uprising one day. This was a particular concern of the communist intelligence services of the USSR and Poland.

In order to learn the plans of the Ukrainians and the western intelligence services, their methods and capabilities, the communist Polish Public Security Ministry (MBP) mounted a large provocation in the early 1950s. It targeted the remnants of the Ukrainian underground in Poland, the Munich-based Bandera faction of the OUN, as well as British and U.S. intelligence, who were believed to be providing assistance to emigre Ukrainians.

The operation was code-named ‘C–1’ and thanks to the collaboration of Soviet and Czech intelligence, a fictitious Ukrainian underground structure in Poland was founded, remaining under control of the Polish security service. The ‘structure’ acted as a bridge between the emigre Ukrainians and the remaining underground in the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic. According to the detailed research by Igor Halagida [3], the operation seemed successful to the communist security. From the very beginning, the ‘structure’ in Poland was led by a former SB OUN member, Leonid Lapinsky (OUN covername ‘Zenon’), who was turned by the Polish MBP

3 Communist Polish Public Security Ministry (MBP) existed between 1945 and 1954, and was then restructured into the Committee for State Security (KdbBP). In 1956, another transformation took place, and the Committee was turned into the Ministry of Interior (MSW).

4 At that time, the Poles ran a similar provocation targeting the western intelligence services and the remnants of the western-backed Polish underground, which suffered heavy losses in Stalinist Poland. During the operation code-named ‘Cezary,’ a fictitious underground structure, the 5th HQ of the underground WiN organization was established, which lured the couriers from the West into a trap and was also used for disinformation and disintegration purposes.
in October 1948 as an asset cover-named ‘Boguslaw,’ after being captured by Czech security during his attempt to escape to the West. Then, ‘Zenon’/’Boguslaw’ contacted two Ukrainian emigre couriers at the turn of 1948/1949 and managed to get in touch with Z.Ch. OUN. Subsequently he was named the Provydnyk of the OUN in Poland in the following year. Following this, he started, upon orders from Polish security, to build up an illegal underground structure, which involved several people unaware of the real scope of the operation and Lapinski’s true loyalties. By exploiting his contacts with emigre Ukrainians and the underground within the Ukraine, Polish security was able to control the exchange of orders, funds, reports, radio-communications equipment, and ciphers, small arms or OUN propaganda publications banned in socialist countries.

The courier-agents from the West arrived in Poland by illicitly crossing the border, by airdrops from allied special duty aircraft, by submarine, and, eventually, by hot-air balloons (Figure SI1). The security service was ruthless in dealing with these men. Up to 1954, a total of 14 Ukrainian agent groups (altogether ca. 36 persons) arrived in Poland from the West. Some of them were captured or liquidated, others were let into the Ukraine to find a similar fate. Those who perished were the parachute jumpers dropped in May 1951 in the Sieniawia forests in Eastern Poland and the multi-person beach landing from a submarine on the coast of the Baltic Sea. The balloonists, who were captured, were dispatched from allied vessels from the Baltic Sea [2, 3, 4]. The number of victims of the operation increased by those martyred by the Soviets directly after getting into Ukraine. These were mostly the men deployed under the British intelligence ‘Integral’ operation [2].

The ‘C–1’ operation was closed in April 1954 and it was revealed to the media that a British intelligence network in Poland was liquidated, whilst over eighty arrested people received harsh sentences later. The Poles seized twelve radio sets and other spy paraphernalia, as well as large sums of money. In order to protect the assets, Polish security faked Lapinski’s suicide [3]. He was later repatriated to the USSR. Furthermore, the Soviets captured Vasyl Kuk, the last UPA commander in the Ukraine, in the same year.

However, other parts of the underground network in the Ukraine, like of Myron Matviyeyka (1914–1984),6 as well as that of a local commander known as ‘Vsevolod,’ appear to have remained intact.

Following the failures in Poland and the Ukraine, and the conflict within emigre Banderites, the emigre Ukrainian movement was further divided in 1954 as a splinter Foreign OUN (OUN-Zakordonna or OUN-Z), also known as ‘dviykary,’ emerged from Z.Ch. OUN, and was subsidized by ex-UHVR members. The new OUN-Z had Dr Lev Rebet in the leadership. The group, related to the UHVR, adopted a democratic stance towards the issue of gaining freedom for the Ukraine. Therefore, Bandera’s militarized faction became isolated and began desperately trying to regain its past influence.

---

5Surprisingly, the same special duty flight from the Mediterranean delivered Myron Matviyeyka, the chief SB OUN officer, to the Ukraine.

6He was an SB OUN member and its communications officer, who was air-dropped into Ukraine from an RAF aircraft in May 1951 and who acted as Bandera’s envoy to reconcile various opposition groups within the Ukraine and to rebuild the underground structures.
The 1957 Expedition

Following the failures of the early 1950s, Bandera blamed the British, whom he believed had been penetrated by communist intelligence agents, for compromising his network. He broke off contact with his British and American sponsors, and considered dispatching a group of trusted OUN-B members to Poland and the Ukraine in 1955 to ascertain the reasons for the failure and compromise, and ultimately to create a new underground network. He tried to find another sponsor and applied to Italian SISMI for assistance.

Unfortunately for Bandera, Polish intelligence monitored the remnants of the ‘organization’ created in the early 1950s, so they expected the arrival of the new courier-agents.

Allegedly, the Banderites deployed another SISMI-trained team to the Ukraine via Czechoslovakia in 1955, which consisted of ‘Bruno,’ ‘Giuseppe,’ ‘Frederico–1,’ and ‘Antonio.’ The group was apprehended by the Soviets.

Bandera managed to deploy a four-member team to Poland only in the summer of 1957, with a long range radio set, ciphers, chemical components for secret writing, OUN propaganda literature, and the mail for the underground in the Ukraine. The team members were:

1. Michael Typish, OUN cover-name ‘Bohdan,’ (a.k.a. Bohdan Tsypera, OUN cover-name ‘Yastrub’) who previously operated as ‘Zenon’s lieutenant in his network in Poland;
2. Ivan (Ian) Hanyak, OUN cover-names ‘Gustavo’ and ‘Voron’ (raven);
3. Vasyl Malysevich—‘Walter,’ ‘Zrub,’ a radioman;
4. Vladymyr Nebesny—‘Max,’ ‘Lypa,’ also a radioman.

The group carried a long-range two-way radio set (a wartime British SOE Type 3 B Mk II) with a power generator, as well as a wide array of hand weapons. They infiltrated Czechoslovakia in August and, after a few days, they got to the Czech-Polish border on foot while walking at night. The group crossed the poorly protected border in the Sudety Mountains and got to the area of the Kwieciszowice village near Jelenia Gora in Poland. The members unsuccessfully tried to contact the regional OUN Provydnyk in western Poland, a relatively low ranking member, Michael Dzhiman, at Legnica, who, however, declined any desire for further contact.

It is not impossible, as Dr Igor Halagida of Gdansk University in Poland has argued, that the main source for the Soviets on the scope of illicit underground Ukrainian operations at the time, was ‘Kim’ Philby (communications with the author of November 2009). Such a thesis is confirmed in [2].

Before 1945 this area was a part of Germany, therefore it can be assumed that western intelligence organizations possessed good data on the local topography or remaining infrastructure.

Michael Dzhiman, OUN cover-name ‘Levko,’ was born in 1920. Until 1939 he resided at his family’s farm. Then, he attended a teachers’ school at Krynica in occupied Poland. As an OUN member, he was responsible for organizational issues. Between 1945 and 1946 he acted as an OUN regional Provydnyk in southern Poland until his arrest by Polish security forces. In 1947 he was sentenced to 10 years imprisonment by a military court in Rzeszow, Poland. Dzhiman was released in 1952 upon the amnesty provisions and left Poland for North America. I owe this reference to Dr Igor Halagida of Gdansk University, Poland. It came out from the Polish files [8, Vol. 2] that Dzhiman was a Polish security’s double agent cover named ‘Kazik.’ However, he was described as an unreliable and biased source by the Poles and was further repressed [8].
‘Bohdan’ and ‘Voron’ remained in Poland to investigate the reasons for the compromise of ‘Zenon’s network a few years earlier while the two others went to the Ukraine to contact ‘Myron,’ and then disappeared. ‘Bohdan’ and ‘Voron’ got in touch with the Ukrainians living in southern and northern Poland and set up communication dead drops in south-east Poland. They were hosted by a Ukrainian family at a village near Przemysl, in south-east Poland, who were considered a bridge between the emigre OUN and the underground cells in the Ukraine.

After a two-month mission in Poland, in October ‘Bohdan’ and ‘Voron’ safely returned to West Germany through clandestine routes between Poland and Czechoslovakia, without being detected by the Polish security’s surveillance. They reported on the journey to Bandera, who was not content because of their prompt return without reaching the Ukraine. Allegedly, he was also upset because the dead drop in south-east Poland, controlled by OUN underground groups from the Ukraine, turned out to have been empty.

In the mean time, one of the emigre Ukrainian movement leaders, Dr Lev Rebet, was assassinated by a KGB hit-man Bohdan Stashynsky in Munich in October 1957, further damaging the organization.

The 1959 Expedition

Since the 1957 operation was eventually flawed for the OUN due to the disappearance of their two radiomen, and Bandera still believed in the value of armed struggle, he considered the deployment of another trusted group of courier-agents to Poland and the Ukraine to investigate the condition of the Ukrainian underground and to learn about the reasons of the compromise in the past years. He also wanted to test the reliability of his supporters in the Ukraine.

A detailed account of the 1959 mission, according to the declassified former communist Polish secret service’s files [8, 10], is presented below. The files are preserved at the Archives of the Polish Institute of National Remembrance.

The new mission team consisted of three trusted courier-agents:

1. Ivan (Ian) Hanyak—‘Voron,’ the team commander, also acting as a radioman, who was a veteran agent and clandestine visitor to Poland in the past;
2. Michael Davydyak—‘Bystriy,’ a radioman and a general purpose agent;
3. Piotr Lewicki—‘Charnota,’ an agent, who was to remain in Poland to rebuild the network and to secure the transfer of OUN men from the USSR to West Germany.

Their training and preparation for the mission deserves analysis. It is also reasonable to provide some available information on who these OUN agents were.

‘Voron’ was born in 1924 in the Ukraine. He completed elementary and intermediate education. Furthermore, he possessed a command of Ukrainian, Polish, Russian, Italian, and English. He served in SS-Galizien from 1943 until May 1944, and was trained in Koblenz to serve later in the 3rd Company of the 14th Battalion of SS-Galizien. The unit was deployed to the Brody area in the Ukraine in May 1944 and in the following months the Division was crushed by the Red Army. ‘Voron’ managed to escape and got to Slovakia, where the unit was reinforced and he received further military training within the German army. In early 1945, his unit was deployed to Austria, where it found the defeat of the Third Reich. He was taken as a POW and was detained at a camp in Rimini. Then, still a POW, he worked on a
farm in Britain. Upon release, he continued working in the UK, and, in 1951, moved to the continent, first to France, and then to Belgium, where he found employment at a coal mine.

During the holidays in 1954, he went to Munich and a friend from a mine met him with the OUN people, one of them being a veteran agent who safely returned from a mission to Poland two years earlier. The organization promised to improve his living conditions and to find him a better job, if he agreed to undergo special training. Following his consent, he was promised training as a radioman. Yet in the same year, the training commenced, and he met Bandera. At the turn of 1954/1955, he was trained in Italy near Rome, along with four other OUN agents, apparently by Italian military intelligence (SISMI). Allegedly, other members of the group were sent to the Ukraine through Czechoslovakia in 1955. In the following year, ‘Voron’ continued his ‘special’ education at Rome and the nearby San Vito.

His future assignment included the tasks of a clandestine OUN radioman in the Ukraine for two years. He was also to verify the bona fides of the Ukrainian network, since Bandera suspected them of being controlled by the Soviet or Polish security service. ‘Voron’ claimed to have served as Bandera’s bodyguard and to have lived with Bandera’s family. In 1957 he participated in a mission in Poland described above. However, since he did not find any message at a dead drop in south-east Poland, he decided to abort his mission and to return to Munich with his fellow ‘Bohdan.’ Then, the two were given jobs at the Shlyakh Peremohy (‘The Road to Victory’) Ukrainian newspaper issued in Germany. At the end of 1958, he went again to Italy to be trained at Vasto in radio communications and ciphers, topography, first aid, on improving physical condition and general medicine, parachute jumping, and weapons. The training lasted until April 1959, and ‘Voron’ and his future team-members were transferred to Germany, where they continued the training at Rosenheim in Bavaria. A significant addition was made then to his ‘special’ knowledge, as the Germans who had run the spy school, changed the ciphering methods he had known from the Italian training. It came out that OUN agents were to collect military-related intelligence, especially on aviation, railroads, road transportation, and on energy matters. He completed the training in June 1959. At its end, Bandera arrived and warned ‘Voron’ and his colleagues about the Polish security service (Sluzba Bezpieczenstwa MSW), as well as the KGB’s capabilities. Bandera also blamed past failures on the British, which prompted the break-up of the Ukrainian emigre movement. Furthermore, he strictly prohibited any terrorist activities in Poland or the Soviet Union and allegedly encouraged the couriers to call the Poles for a mutual struggle along with the Ukrainians against communism. The chances of success of the latter were doubtful given a general anti-Ukrainian sentiment within Polish society.

‘Voron’ got quantities of equipment, including his own ciphers,\(^\text{10}\) the tools to produce forged documents, and a miniature Minox camera with a tripod.

‘Bystriy’ was born in 1921 in the Ukraine and completed only five classes of elementary school. During World War II, he served briefly in the Red Army around 1944, and then, after being taken a POW by the Germans, he was eventually forced into SS-Galizien. In the spring of 1945, he was taken as a POW by the Allied forces and was sent to a POW camp in Rimini in Italy, and then to Britain. In 1948

\(^{10}\) He was given one-time pads and conversion tables each to be used with two-way radio communications, blind transmissions reception, secret writing, microdots, as well as a separate cipher to conceal contact addresses and other personal information.
‘Bystriy’ was released and worked in Bradford and Manchester. Over there, he was
talent-spotted by OUN and in 1957 became a full member of the organization.
Reportedly, he was also a successful businessman, who easily raised money for the
OUN. He opened a pub in Manchester and was able to purchase real estate for
the organization from the profits. He even refused to accept a prize from OUN
for his efforts. Apparently, Bandera himself gave him his cover-name within the
organization at Manchester in 1958 and recruited him for clandestine work in the
Ukraine. In October, he went to Munich and met ‘Voron.’ Then, both were trained
in Italy by SISMI. In May 1959 he went to West Germany for a short training at
Aschau. What is remarkable, is that the Germans changed the ciphering techniques
he had learned while in Italy. He also attended a lecture by Bandera at Munich then.
His training in Italy and in West Germany consisted of classes in intelligence,
especially on how to gather information on transportation, industry, especially
petrochemical, and on various military issues. Furthermore, he was also trained in
radio telegraphy and radio equipment, in codes and ciphers, as well as in secret writ-
ing techniques. Firearms were not a novelty to him. During the first training in Italy,
he was given a course in survival, escape and evasion, and the basics of hand-to-hand
combat. A unique class was conducted on the preparation of airdrop sites.

The third member of the 1959 expedition, ‘Charnota’ (a.k.a ‘Mario’; alleged true
name Piotr Lewicki), was also born in the Ukraine to a Polish-Ukrainian family. He
served during the war with SS-Galizien in an air defense unit. He was taken as a
POW by the Allies and was held in Britain for several years. Then, he worked in
a coal mine near Manchester. During his stay in Britain, he became an OUN mem-
ber. After his recruitment by OUN, he was trained in Rome.

In July 1959 ‘Voron,’ ‘Bystriy,’ and ‘Charnota’ were taken to Austria to await the
date of their deployment to Poland. Each of the members of the group was met by
Bandera, who gave them unique intelligence orders. ‘Voron’ was appointed the com-
mander of the group, assisted by ‘Bystriy’ as a radioman. Both were eventually to
reach the Ukraine to establish contact with the previously deployed OUN agents,
and to gather intelligence related to military, transportation, and industrial affairs.
They were also to ascertain the reason for past failures and to check the reliability
of the remaining underground cells in the Ukraine. In case of trouble with the radio,
they were to send their reports hidden in ordinary letters mailed to contact addresses in
Western Europe.

‘Charnota’ was tasked with contacting OUN people within Poland, and with
controlling the dead drops. He was to facilitate the transfers of OUN men to and
from the Ukraine. Apparently, Bandera ordered him to marry an OUN connection
in order to legalize his stay in Poland. Reportedly, the Provydnyk was not sure about
the underground in the Ukraine and was determined to create a new trusted net-
work, consisting of small cells of 2 to 3 people, communicating with the OUN center
through dead drops or letters [8, Vol. 1, 2].

The courier-agents received a wide assortment of equipment for their mission in
Poland, including forged documents (Figs. SI2–SI8). ‘Voron’ appeared with a forged
Polish ID of a Stefan Debicki, while ‘Bystriy’s’ Polish alias was Marian Migdal, born
in 1924. The third courier-agent’s fake Polish identity was Karol Nawrocki, born in
1920, and his Czech fake alias was Josef Kolacyk, born in 1925. Each courier was
armed with two pistols with extra ammunition: one full-frame cal. 9 mm Parabellum
(e.g., an ex-Polish military FB Radom wz. 1935 VIS or an ex-German P08 Luger)
and one compact, cal. 7.65 mm made by Browning. ‘Charnota’ carried a Walter
PP. The group also carried hand grenades to break up a possible contact with the border guards or security personnel, and, allegedly, a Sten Mk. II submachine gun, which they buried after getting into Poland.

The communications equipment consisted of a long range, two-way German-made radio set type 12WG, with thirty crystals and spares to send reports to the Munich center in conventional CW telegraphy; a small commercial receiver with a separate converter to receive blind transmissions from the center; as well as a number of ciphers in the form of one-time pads and equipment to prepare letters with invisible ink. Such equipment, in the case of ‘Bystriy,’ consisted of a Pelikan pen and a Montblanc pen, the latter filled with salt solution as invisible ink. He also had a bottle of white powder, which was to be rubbed into a sheet of paper to produce a carbon paper for hidden letters. The agents were also given first aid kits with medicine, and survival equipment, including a signal mirror. The group carried detailed military maps, especially of south-east Poland, compasses, Minox cameras with spare films, and a number of items and tools used in document forgery, including clean ID documents and various stamps, combat knives, as well as Gedore’s compact wire cutters insulated to withstand up to 2000 Volts. Since the center also considered sending letters to them, they were given a small microscope to read microdots. They also carried money in various currencies, and microfilmed OUN literature in metal tins.

They set off for Poland on 20 July 1959. The agents either traveled nightly on foot, or took a train, e.g., from Ceske Budejovice to Prague, and then to the border area with Poland. During the night of 29/30 July 1959, they illegally got to Poland in the Sudety mountains of Lower Silesia, some 10 km from the village of Kwieciszowice, just like the teams in the early 1950s. They slept in the forest, and then took a train from Kwieciszowice to Jelenia Gora (known before 1945 as Hirschberg) on the following day. From there, they took a train to Wroclaw (Breslau), and by 1 August they reached Przemysl in the south-east part of Poland via Cracow.

The agents got to a small village near Przemysl, to a Ukrainian family, whose daughter Mary was an OUN connection in Poland. In 1957, during the previous mission, ‘Voron’ and ‘Bohdan’ left another radio set there, which was concealed by the family.

The group rested, and tried to check the dead drops previously established in the vicinity, but found them empty. These dead drops, although laying inside Polish territory, were to contain messages from the underground in Ukraine (e.g., left by ‘Zrub,’ a radioman from the 1957 expedition) and the group was to leave there the mail from the Munich center, as well as other items and equipment. The group hesitated, and since the dead drops were empty, they were considered compromised.

Nevertheless, they decided to try to cross the border at night to get into the Ukraine. ‘Voron’ and ‘Bystriy’ were determined to get in, as the border was only a few miles away from the village. During an attempt on the night of 27/28 August, ‘Bystriy’ tripped on something, fell down, and his cocked gun fired, fortunately...
without harming anybody. The courier-agents were afraid this might have compro-
mised their attempt, so they retreated. As the weather was becoming colder, they
decided to find a feasible hideout for winter and to try to get into the Ukraine in
the spring of 1960. Obviously, they needed Polish currency and tried to make the
exchange for it unofficially, by contacting Michael Dzhiman at Legnica in western
Poland, who, however, did not let them in.

The two also repeated the attempt to slip into the Ukraine from Poland on the
night of 11/12 October 1959, again without success.

They radioed a few messages to the center from the area, but never from within
the village, due to security considerations. They were aware of the communist bloc
SIGINT capabilities, so they tried to change the wavelengths and transmission sites
frequently. Furthermore, their one-time pad-based ciphers produced numeric out-
put, which they believed, was easily concealable in the ether and secure. Surprisingly,
they stopped radio communications with the OUN in the West on 23 October 1959.
Yet the released files revealed that that Polish SIGINT was picking up their trans-
missions as of 14 September 1959 putting the security service on alert [9].

In the meantime, ‘Charota’ went to his contacts in western Poland around 20
August 1959. One of his duties was to contact two OUN agents who infiltrated
Poland in 1947 and since then remained as sleepers. Surprisingly, one of them had
sent a hidden message to the OUN center in early 1959, and the Munich center
intended to bring them back to duty. ‘Charnota’ visited him at his residence at Zloty
Stok (formerly Reichenstein) near Zabkowice Slaskie (formerly Frankenstein) in
Lower Silesia and left some of his equipment, including a 7.65 mm gun, radio crystals
(but no radio set), code books, chemical components for secret writing, the maps,
and a microdot scope, as well as some money. He also informed the sleeper that
the OUN had worked for U.S. and British intelligence. Furthermore, at the end of
October 1959 he told him about an OUN female connection in a village in south-east
Poland. ‘Charota’ trained the sleeper in secret writing and on 25 August he went to
visit another sleeper in a nearby city of Walbrzych (known as Waldenburg before
1945). Thanks to this OUN supporter, who was an official at the ‘Victoria’ Coal
Mine, his stay in Poland would be legalized. Shortly afterwards, ‘Charnota’ got a
job as a warehouse-keeper at the mine in Walbrzych, as well as an apartment. He
also told his supporter about an OUN female connection in south-east Poland,
who received parcels mailed by the center, and that Bandera told him to marry
her. ‘Charnota’s mission in Poland was to rebuild the network and even to prepare
his connection’s brother to leave for Germany. He was also to operate the radio set
brought in 1957 and hidden by the connection’s family. ‘Charnota’ mailed the rest of
the group and asked Mary, the connection, to visit him in western Poland at Legnica
(formerly Liegnitz) in mid-November. This failed, and on 27 November ‘Charnota’
dispatched another OUN sleeper, a female, from nearby Zlotoryja (formerly Goldberg),
whom he regarded as a cousin, to pick up Mary. On the following
day, the woman arrived in the village near Przemysl and talked with Mary, who
was further excited to learn about the validation of the stay by ‘Charnota.’

On 22 October ‘Voron’ received a radio message from the Munich center
informing them of the death of Provydnyk Bandera.\footnote{Bandera was assassinated in Munich by a KGB hit-man Bohdan Stashinsky on 15
October 1959.} Upon decrypting the news, ‘Voron’ lost consciousness and he later suffered from illnesses.
The OUN courier-agents also learned from the Polish press about the arrest by communist authorities of Ivan Shpontak ‘Zaliznyak’ (1919–1989), a UPA commander with a rich war crimes record, who was extradited to Poland in early October.\textsuperscript{14} They radioed this news to the Munich center on 26 October.

In November ‘Voron’ felt better, so he decided to contact his own connection in western Poland. He went with Mary to Gorzów (formerly Landsberg an der Warthe) to meet with Halina J., a widowed former teacher, who managed a restaurant there. He had received her address from her sister, Lydia T., an OUN sympathizer from Austria. They passed the time with amusement. Mary pretended to be ‘Voron’s wife for safety. Then, she returned home, but ‘Voron’ remained at Gorzów.

‘Bystriy’ was, at that time, at the village in south-east Poland near Przemysł. Then Mary got a letter in which Mrs. J. asked ‘Bystriy’ to bring his colleague’s belongings to Gorzów, as he had managed to find them a shelter for winter. ‘Bystriy’ was to meet his colleagues at Wroclaw’s central train station on 11 December at 0100. Thus, he went to Przemysł on 10 December, bought a ticket and awaited the train at the station, while Mary, who assisted him, went to the bathroom. Suddenly, two men grasped his arms and arrested him at 1330. He was taken to a local police station. ‘Bystriy,’ although armed, did not manage to grab his weapon to shoot himself, for which he was psychically prepared.

**Operation Stonka Begins**

‘Bystriy’ was taken to police HQ in Rzeszów for questioning, and then transferred to the infamous security prison at Rakowiecka Street in Warsaw. He was accused of espionage and his arrest was prolonged for four months. The authorities seized his equipment, and were particularly interested in his mission, as well as in his codes and ciphers.

Surprisingly to ‘Bystriy,’ he was detained in the same cell between 11 and 20 December 1959 as a Belgian citizen, Menashe Gleser, who was accused of illicit transactions in Poland. Gleser was to be deported after his release, and ‘Bystriy’ asked him on 29 December to inform the OUN abroad of his fate.\textsuperscript{15}

According to the preserved files \textsuperscript{8}, ‘Bystriy’ was debriefed by a military prosecutor and the officers of the investigation branch of Warsaw’s interior ministry (MSW), during which Polish intelligence learned more about him, his group, and its mission, which had commenced in August 1959. He was depressed, as the Poles threatened to pass him to the Soviets. They reminded him that he had no passport, so he was not a citizen of any state. The officers asserted, therefore, that he lacked legal protection as an agent of a non-state actor. There is no information in the files as to whether the Poles exercised any physical abuse on him, except that he was handcuffed during interrogations.

‘Bystriy’ suspected that his arrest could have been caused by a compromise of the network and that a similar fate reached his two colleagues. It came out later that on 2 December 1959 ‘Voron’ was arrested at Gorzów by the chief of the Ukrainian

---

\textsuperscript{14}Shpontak was arrested in Czechoslovakia in 1958 and was handed over to the Poles in 1959, who tried him in June 1960. His capital punishment was commuted to life imprisonment. Shpontak was eventually released in 1981.

\textsuperscript{15}Gleser was eventually released on bail in March 1960, and he left Poland. Then, the Poles unleashed a hunt for him, but it is unattested in the sources, whether this succeeded.
desk of Polish counterintelligence (i.e., Section V of the II Department of Warsaw’s MoI), Maj. Jan Kawala and his deputy, Maj. Czeslaw Bubel, along with Mrs. J., who was apprehended by the police. Polish security service (SB MSW) seized his money, ciphers, the letters from Bandera, intelligence instructions, secret writing manuals, and chemicals, as well as maps and photos, one of them surprisingly depicting Michael Typish, an OUN courier from the 1957 expedition. ‘Voron’ was transported to Warsaw and incarcerated in the Rakowiecka Street prison.

Polish SB was ruthless in dealing with the detained. There was no basis for arresting Mrs. J. except that she, probably unknowingly, helped a foreign agent, rather than just being his mistress. Nevertheless, Mrs. J. was coerced to confess in writing that she was behind ‘Voron’s arrest, following which she was recruited as an asset cover-named TW16 ‘Irena.’17 This would definitely focus any OUN’s suspicions on her, rather than on the genuine perpetrators of the compromise. Furthermore, she was then used for disinformation purposes against the OUN center by mailing the letters forged by the Poles. Thanks to this, the OUN believed in the continuation of the mission of their courier-agents.

On 3 December more arrests followed, including Mary’s brother, who served then in the Polish Army in a company guarding the General Staff’s Academy in Warsaw’s Rembertow. It came out later that he was caching weapons belonging to the courier-agents and had assisted them in a number of tasks. The SB waited until 5 December to arrest Mary during her train journey from Przemysl to Wroclaw.

On the following day the Center changed its mind and decided not to prosecute the arrested, but to instead use them ‘operationally.’ TW ‘Irena,’ and Mary’s brother, who was immediately recruited by SB under coercion as TW ‘Rysiek,’ were detained inside a military unit in Lesnica near Wroclaw. Then, the investigation at Warsaw succeeded.

The Poles dealt ruthlessly with Mary, whom they turned on 6 December. She was given a cover-name TW ‘Basia.’ Her case officer, Cpt. Jozef Penar of Polish counterintelligence’s Ukrainian desk, made use of her to arrest ‘Bystriy’ on 10 December and to find the third agent, who operated in western Poland. Since Mary was already in custody, security forged a letter, in which she asked ‘Bystriy’ to bring the belongings of his colleague to a meeting in Wroclaw on 11 December. They were supposed to travel together. ‘Bystriy’ was therefore lured into a trap and was arrested at a train station in Przemysl, while TW ‘Basia’ was away. Her case officer had to fetch medicine in Przemysl to prevent her from suffering from a heart attack at a safe house, when she realized what had really happened and her role in the events of 10 December.

As the counterintelligence game continued, TW ‘Basia’ was released but remained under the strict control of the Polish security service. She later got a letter from ‘Charnota,’ who asked her to visit him for the holidays and New Year’s Eve.

16The abbreviation TW (Tajny Wspolpracownik, i.e., a secret collaborator) was a term in Polish lingua securitatis reserved for an asset recruited or turned by the ‘civilian’ security service, who voluntarily provided information and could be compensated for his or her efforts. 17She must not be blamed for surrender, as the Polish SB used her teenage children in the coercion. Following her recruitment, she was taken to Zielona Gora (formerly, Grünberg in Schlesien), while her children were looked after by a police officer’s wife, and then she was taken home, where she remained under tight surveillance from Polish counterintelligence and the police [8].
At the time, two TW Basia’s brothers were also recruited by Polish security and later provided additional information on the courier-agents and their equipment, as these were hosted by the family.

The remaining part of the operation was the detection and exploitation of the third agent, ‘Charnota,’ who was at large. The Poles decided to exploit him unwittingly to disinform the OUN.

In fact, it was ‘Charnota’ who compromised the group, when he contacted the alleged ‘sleepers’ in Zloty Stok and Zlotoryja. It came out that these men arrived in Poland in 1947 as OUN couriers, but then declined to work for Bandera. In 1957 they were accidentally compromised as foreign intelligence agents and were subsequently recruited by the Polish security service (SB) under the aliases of TW ‘Janek’ and TW ‘Zbyszek,’ while the female connection, TW ‘Zbyszek’s wife, was recruited as TW ‘Stefa.’ These assets fulfilled their tasks and proved loyal to the Poles. According to the declassified files, TW ‘Janek’ wrote to the ‘Shlyakh Peremohy’ mailing address in December 1958 and asked for an explanation as to why he and his companion were abandoned by the OUN after having settled down in Poland. He received an answer in early 1959, and on 20 August of that year a ‘Karol Nawrocki,’ a.k.a. ‘Charnota,’ arrived at his doorstep.

Therefore, when ‘Charnota’ knocked on the door of the sleeper at Zloty Stok, the Warsaw Center was immediately alerted about the arrival of a new courier. To make matters worse, ‘Charnota’ told TW ‘Janek,’ while giving him training in codes and ciphers, about Mary, the OUN female connection in south-east Poland, who was promptly traced and put on tight surveillance as of 4 November 1959. Yet on 27 August 1959, TW ‘Janek’ provided his case officers with some of ‘Charnota’s’ equipment, especially the codes and ciphers and the glued-together one-time pads, which were surreptitiously copied at a local police station after having been disassembled with acetone and then glued together with an adhesive forged right there from an array of chemical components brought by a security service’s technician. Some pads were therefore copied, but not the ones that were riveted together. The Poles were unable to disassemble and copy such pads. Eventually, TW ‘Janek’s and TW ‘Zbyszek’s treasons led to the compromise of ‘Voron’ and ‘Bystriy’ and their arrests.

TW ‘Basia’ was then used to contact ‘Charnota,’ who was at large. The two met at Walbrzych on 19 December 1959. ‘Charnota’ tried to convince Mary to marry him, but she declined. Nevertheless, she informed ‘Charnota’ that both ‘Voron’ and ‘Bystriy’ had been unable to reach the Ukraine, and that they were still in Poland. She misinformed him that his colleagues had found a safe house in the north-eastern part of the country in the Olsztyn Voivodship.

TW ‘Basia’ visited ‘Charnota’ again on 31 December and they went to a New Year’s Eve party together at TW ‘Zbyszek’s and TW ‘Stefa’s place. ‘Charnota’ again asked about the whereabouts of his friends, but ‘Basia’ lied that they had gone to Olsztyn Voivodship and that they mailed her a letter from Ketrzyn.

---

18 According to an official MoI training manual, which depicted the case [5], the Poles learned in the 1950s that TW ‘Janek’ (i.e., Jan K.) and TW ‘Zbyszek’ (i.e., Zygmunt K.) were sought in the UK by the Polish Red Cross. Furthermore, in 1949, their contact data with a keyword phrase were found with the corpse of an OUN courier, Ivan Smarzh ‘Pimsta,’ who was killed in the USSR. The Poles used the keyword to contact Mr. K. in 1957 and then arrested and turned him as an asset under Polish SB operation ‘Klucz’ (Key). He revealed that he infiltrated Poland in 1947 with two other people to become OUN sleepers.
(formerly Rastenburg). ‘Charnota’ again tried to convince Mary to marry him, but without success.

Furthermore, the Poles orchestrated a meeting between ‘Charnota,’ TW Stefa with ‘Voron’ at Wroclaw in February 1960, which was under tight surveillance from Polish SB.

The main success of the Poles in the early stage of the operation was related to the seizure of ciphering material, especially the one-time pads, which were provided by the turned OUN sleepers. This enabled them to control the steps of the team. By January 1960 the Poles have been reading the messages exchanged between the courier-agents and the Munich center by mail and radio.

However, some ciphers were more difficult to solve, like the mysterious encrypted list possessed by ‘Bystriy’ (Figure 1). Furthermore, he was only semi-cooperative with his interviewers and he tried to deceive them, e.g., by claiming to have been born in 1924 instead of 1921.

‘Voron’ and ‘Bystriy’ were taken out from prison to the MoI compound and remained in the custody of Section V (Ukrainian desk) of the II Department (counterintelligence) of Warsaw’s MoI. Both were coerced to cooperate with the Poles and they started slowly to provide genuine information about themselves and their training or mission.

On 15 January 1960 a breakthrough was achieved. On that day the head of Section II of the Polish MoI Bureau ‘A’ (codes and ciphers), Maj. Jerzy Sawicki, who was responsible for code breaking efforts, solved the mysterious message (Figure 2). It came out that the key to it was ‘Bystriy’s’ genuine birth year, i.e., 1921, and the conversion table was based on the syn vora phrase (in Ukrainian: ‘a son of a thief’). The mysterious message listed OUN contacts in the Ukraine:

1. Proniv, Vasyl Mikhaylovich, Zhupane village, Slavskiy reyon, Drohobych oblast;
2. Tayetskiy, Petro Vikentyevich, Sinevutsko Vyzhne village, Skolevskiy reyon, Drohobych oblast,

![Figure 1. A mysterious encrypted list found in ‘Bystriy’s possession [10].](image-url)
as well as the addresses in Western Europe for Tayetskiy to mail the letters with reports for the OUN center. The Poles apparently learned about ‘Bystriy’s genuine birth year from the Soviets, who checked this with the Red Army files (Figures 3, 4, and SI9). Furthermore, ‘Bystriy’ was detained in the same ward as a so-called ‘cell asset’ (agent celny), a category beloved by communist security, and consisting of inmates who collaborated with the security or police for various profits. That asset reported on him to the authorities.

The Poles eventually managed to turn ‘Voron’ on 11 March 1960 and intended to exploit him in an intelligence game against the OUN center. He was recruited by Cpt. Czeslaw Banas of the Ukrainian desk of Polish counterintelligence and was given the cover-name TW ‘Sliwinski.’ Yet on 11 January 1960 he mailed a 5-part message inspired by Polish SB to the Munich center. Later, he was exploited by the Poles to send numerous encrypted reports misleading the OUN and western intelligence (Figure SI10) [9].

On 16 February 1960 Polish SB organized a meeting between TW ‘Sliwinski’ and Mary at Sopot’s Grand Hotel on the coast of the Baltic Sea. ‘Sliwinski’ tried to

Figure 2. A Polish SIGINT report of 15 January 1960, when a mysterious encrypted list in possession of ‘Bystriy’ was solved. It used his genuine birth date as the repeating key (‘1921’) and the conversion table based on the ‘Syn vora’ phrase [10].
convince TW ‘Basia’ to collaborate with the Poles. He claimed to have cut cooperation with the OUN and that he directly reported to the Polish police. TW ‘Basia,’ upon hearing this, pretended to lose consciousness. Anyway, she had partially contributed to his arrest and was obviously sent to ‘Voron’ by the Poles. Their room was bugged to monitor their steps (the object ‘Neptune,’ i.e., the Grand Hotel, was already fitted with the necessary installation) and the Poles used the collected data to blackmail both ‘Voron’ and Mary, who reportedly wanted to get married to avoid prosecution.

However, in the meantime, ‘Bystriy’ apparently realized during the interrogations that ‘Voron’ and ‘Charnota’ could have been in custody as well, along with Mary. His debriefers simply had provided too many hints in their questions.

The Deception under Operation Stonka

On 12 March 1960 ‘Bystriy’ broke down and, upon coercion, was turned by Polish security under the cover-name TW ‘Ponury’ (i.e., ‘a sad man’). Four days
later he was transferred with his case officer, Cpt. Jozef Penar of Polish security, to Lviv in the Ukrainian SSR [8, Vol. 2]. The new operation, code-named Stonka, began targeting the underground OUN structures within Poland and the Soviet Union.

At that time Polish SIGINT was able to monitor one-way telegraphy communications sent by the ‘LVD1’ transmitter belonging to West German intelligence for the recipient no. ‘630’ (i.e., ‘Voron’) on 3060 kcs. It came out that the OUN Munich center was in doubt. They wondered why ‘Bystriy’ did not send any letters with hidden text or use the radio.

Both ‘Voron,’ recruited by the Poles as TW ‘Sliwinski,’ and ‘Bystriy’ (with the new KGB cover-name ‘Khmurniy’) were to be transferred to the Soviet Union and to be placed under the control of the Ukrainian branch of the KGB in order to cultivate them as the sources. They were to fulfill their initial mission to contact the remnants of the Ukrainian underground in the USSR, particularly ‘Vsevolod’s and ‘Mykhailo’s groups, and report on them to the Soviets. However, the KGB rather intended to lure more OUN couriers, who might arrive, into a trap than arresting anyone.

On 16 March 1960 Cpt. Jozef Penar took ‘Bystriy’ (recruited as TW ‘Ponury’) to Lviv, and then, by air, to Kiev, where the two met with the Ukrainian KGB officers.

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.8\textwidth]{figure4.png}
\caption{A mysterious list was also found in ‘Voron’s possession, but it used his genuine birth date as the repeating key (‘7/9/1924’) and the conversion table based on the ‘Syn vora’ phrase [10].}
\end{figure}
‘Bystriy’ was placed in a safe-house and was cultivated by the Soviets. On 18 April 1960 he wrote a coded letter (with carbon paper) inspired by Penar to the OUN via a contact address in the UK (Figure 5), in which he reported on the following issues:

[starting group from the pad] PNSI ['Bystriy’s security check] FFF [space] April FF ‘Bystriy’ FF to FF Pavlo19 FF [We] received the money FF Part of them FF ‘Voron’ FF gave FF to ‘Charnota’ FF [rpt.] ‘Charnota’ FF Write to the addresses of FF Halina’s FF and FF Mary’s FF [rpt.] Mary’s FF I do not have other addresses FF We are all fine FF S. [lava] FF U. [kra’ini20] FF

The letter was delivered to Warsaw, and then sent by Polish security with a cancellation from the Gorzow post office dated 20 April 1960. The deception therefore

19 ‘Dr. Pavlo,’ a.k.a. ‘Vak,’ believed to have been Grigoriy Vaskovych, was OUN’s chief communications officer in Munich and a close aide to Bandera.

20 Slava Ukra’ini, i.e., ‘Glory to Ukraine,’ was a usual phrase in OUN’s communications.
continued smoothly. The OUN Center ordered ‘Voron’ and ‘Bystriy’ to go to the Ukraine, while they were to pass another radio set hidden at Mary’s, along with other spy paraphernalia, to ‘Charnota.’ This was done in mid-May 1960.

While ‘Bystriy’ was already in the USSR, the Poles decided to send ‘Voron’ to him at the end of May 1960 (Figure SI11). ‘Bystriy’ was convinced that indeed he was behind ‘Voron’s arrest and that this allegedly took place in January 1960, which was not true. Both were coerced to maintain communications with the OUN in the West and to abandon the organization, as their original mission was presented as pointless, and damaging both to the Ukrainian and the Polish nations. They were to identify OUN members and cells in the Ukraine, and their aims and activities, on behalf of Polish and Soviet intelligence. In the meantime, the OUN Center informed the courier-agents in Poland, that the clandestine cell in the Ukraine awaited them and, especially, a radio set. The Soviets counted that the operation would allow them to send their own asset cover-named ‘Zakharchenko’ as a courier to Munich to disintegrate the OUN Center.

‘Bystriy’ returned to Poland for a short time in early June, 1960. He and ‘Voron’ met with Mary and her family to pick up their equipment. It came out from the sources that ‘Voron’ was preoccupied with his mission on behalf of the Poles and that he would reveal the organization in the Ukraine to the Soviets. Reportedly, he considered committing suicide, but declined to, since he wanted to start a new life with Mary after the fulfillment of his task on behalf of the Poles and the Soviets, which frightened him. However, he decided to fulfill the demands of Polish security, as otherwise he expected the worst. ‘Voron’ suspected Mary of being a Polish security asset, particularly since Polish investigators were quite well acquainted with his 1957 expedition and his cooperation with Mary. However, she, upon orders from Warsaw to protect her, blamed Bohdan Tsypera a.k.a. Michael Typish, an OUN courier-agent, who visited her in 1957, as well. She asserted that he had made suspicious visits to Warsaw then and that he had allegedly lived in a luxury hotel there. Therefore, ‘Voron’ concluded that Typish must have been cooperating with the Poles since at least 1952.

During the night of 12/13 June, ‘Bystriy’ and ‘Voron’ were again repatriated by the Polish security service to the Ukraine. After a week they arrived at Tayetsky’s home at Sinevutsko Vyzhne to ask him to get in touch with ‘Vsevolod’ (a clandestine cell leader). Both courier-agents were supervised then by the Ukrainian KGB branch officers and maintained contact with them through dead-drops. Since the contact with ‘Vsevolod’ was not fruitful, they turned to Vasyl Proniv at Zhupane village, asking him for assistance getting in touch with ‘Mikhaylo.’ Finally, they were taken by two OUN members named ‘Ivan’ and ‘Mykola’ to ‘Mikhaylo’s headquarters. They traveled for six days on foot, always at night. The rendezvous with ‘Mikhaylo’ and ‘Kommandir’ (a commander) of the OUN cell in Ukraine took place in a forest, in which the men built a provisional shelter. ‘Voron’ and ‘Bystriy’ spent about three weeks there and were finally visited by ‘Vsevolod.’ The agents passed their equipment, like the high frequency radio set and the one-time ciphers (both for two-way communications and to decrypt the blind transmissions) as well as secret writing chemicals and a magnifying glass to read the microdots to the men. They also passed the mail and propaganda materials from Bandera, his orders and money. ‘Vsevolod’ was interested in the organization in the West and who Bandera’s successor was. It came out, that the new Providnyk, Stepan Lenkavsky, was known to ‘Mikhaylo’ from his time at Munich. However, upon hearing the orders written by Bandera, he refused to
conducted espionage in the Ukraine for Western intelligence services, particularly for West Germany. ‘Voron’ and ‘Bystriy’ were later taken to various safe-houses to meet OUN members. ‘Voron’ trained ‘Mikhaylo’ in codes and ciphers. They also established radio contact with the OUN Munich Center, which assigned new code-names (Figure SI12). ‘Vsevolod’ would appear in the messages as ‘Dunay,’ while ‘Mikhaylo’ as ‘Prut.’ In any case, the Ukrainian OUN cell was suspicious in regard to ‘Voron’ and ‘Bystriy,’ and followed their steps. Both men were frightened, as their weapons had been made useless. They suspected that the main target was actually the OUN cell in the Ukraine, and that their worthiness was limited. They feared being killed in a gunfight with the security forces or by the cell’s SB OUN if the organization found their firearms useless.

The Ukrainian OUN cell’s commanders decided to send ‘Voron’ back to Germany along with the mail and questions, while ‘Bystriy’ was to remain in the Ukraine as an agent and a radioman. ‘Voron’ promised ‘Bystriy’ to exfiltrate him from the Ukraine. On 19 October, ‘Voron’ was back in Poland, alas ill, and, with Mary’s help, he contacted his Polish case officers. He appeared unconcerned about Mary despite previous involvement in an affair with her. It came out that while in the Ukraine, ‘Bystriy’ told ‘Voron’ about the circumstances of his arrest at Przemysl Central Station and that Mary had left him just a while before he was captured by Polish officers. Therefore, he concluded that the central individuals in the compromise were Mary and her brother, whom he rightfully suspected of being Polish MoI assets. He was afraid of taking Mary’s brother to West Germany, as he could have been a provocateur who would damage the OUN. The released files revealed that both ‘Voron’ and ‘Bystriy’ broke contact with the Poles and the KGB while in the Ukraine, which was the reason for closing the operation. However, they remained under tight surveillance from the KGB. The files also revealed that ‘Bystriy’ disappeared while in the Ukraine and the Soviets could not find him (Figure SI13).

In the meantime, the Poles tried to keep the information about the December 1959 arrests secret from ‘Charnota.’ TW ‘Basia’ authenticated this deception by claiming that his two friends found a safe-house in northern Poland in the Olsztyn Voivodship. Polish security closely monitored ‘Charnota’s movements as well as those of other assets, even using surveillance bugs in their apartments. The Poles also tried to put the blame for the compromise on the third party. Yet on 26 July 1960 ‘Charnota’ visited Mary’s place and was even helped by her brothers, who cooperated with Polish security, by checking the nearby dead drops and emptying them. ‘Charnota’ also claimed that a courier from the 1957 mission, ‘Bohdan’ (i.e., Michael Typish) could have been in Poland at the time, which alerted Polish security.21

TW ‘Basia,’ however, suffered mentally from her double role and required counseling and treatment. Her brother, who was recruited by Polish security, was afraid for his life as he feared ‘Voron.’ He even asked the Poles for a handgun for self-defense, which was provided to him, alas with a sawed-off firing pin. TW ‘Basia’ successfully deceived ‘Charnota’ through the first half of 1960 by claiming that his companions were either somewhere in Poland or had gone to the Ukraine to fulfill their mission in June 1960.

21 The Poles also learned from their assets that there could have been other OUN courier teams in the field, like the undetected one led by Leonid Krupa, an OUN member, who allegedly illegally visited Poland in 1958.
In August 1960 the Poles, who inspected the mail sent by their assets, concluded that TW ‘Sliwinski’ (i.e., ‘Voron’) could have incorporated an emergency marker in his letter to an OUN contact address in Toronto, Canada, which could alert the OUN Center to the troubles in Poland. TW ‘Sliwinski,’ however, returned from the Ukraine on 18 October 1960 and was totally convinced of the treason of his contacts in Poland, especially of Mary’s. It came out that TW ‘Ponury’ told ‘Voron’ everything about his arrest by the Poles in December 1959 while in Ukraine. Both blamed OUN’s connections in south-east Poland for compromise. Another mistake by the Poles was revealed at that time, when ‘Voron’ realized that his past party companion from Gorzow was not an employee of a factory, as that person had claimed, but an intelligence officer. It came out upon accidentally seeing that man at the Polish MoI building in Warsaw during the interrogations.

The game became more difficult for the Poles as ‘Charnota’ could realize the compromise and thus damage the entire operation. In July 1960 ‘Charnota’ went to the village in south-east Poland to pick up the equipment left by ‘Voron’ and ‘Bystriy’ to continue his underground task. He took a radio set and then used it in unsuccessful attempts to establish communications with the OUN Munich Center from Lower Silesia. He was assisted by the ‘sleepers,’ i.e., TW ‘Janek’ and TW ‘Zbyszek,’ who cranked the power generator.

‘Charnota’ visited Mary again on 3 November to meet with ‘Voron’ and to pick up the equipment and the mail brought from the Ukraine. However, he was subsequently arrested by the Poles following his visit on 6 November. While in custody, he concluded that the compromise must have taken place in the south-east part of Poland, which was according to the Polish security’s plan to protect TW ‘Janek’ and TW ‘Zbyszek.’ As a matter of fact, the two directly contributed to the failure of the 1959 expedition. TW ‘Janek’ was later removed from the intelligence network when the Poles publicly announced that he was also arrested along with other OUN agents. The Poles revealed their genuine names, not the aliases used for legalization in Poland. TW ‘Janek’ remained a consultant to the Poles and was debriefed on his past activities as a UPA insurgent. He even revealed to the Poles the fact that his UPA unit buried valuable OUN-UPA files under a cottage in eastern Poland when his unit retreated from the Ukraine in the late 1940s. Then, the Poles made efforts to recover these files, alas without success.

While ‘Voron’ and ‘Bystriy’ succeeded in their task in the Ukraine, they faced a lack of vigor among the underground OUN due to harsh living conditions under the Soviet regime and the lack of funds. It came out that the OUN structures were almost non-existent and there was no will within the society for armed struggle. Instead, the remnants of the OUN in the Ukraine supported efforts that could bring wellbeing to the people.

Furthermore, bizarre events took place while in the Ukraine, as both courier-agents from Munich were first stripped of their weapons, and when their handguns were returned to them by the underground, it turned out that they were made useless. This aroused their suspicion. The declassified files revealed the truth that the alleged OUN underground structure was indeed non-existent and that it was merely created by the KGB under the cover-name ‘Tropa’ (‘track’ in Russian) to deceive the emigre OUN and Western intelligence services, which sponsored the Banderites [10]. The deception operation took place in 1960 and 1961 and its results were shared with the Poles. Table 1 depicts significant assets used by the Soviets in the operation.
The Poles, therefore, learned from the Soviets that ‘Voron’ and ‘Bystriy’ were not fully loyal to them. Both courier-agents probably believed at the beginning that they were dealing with a genuine OUN clandestine structure in the Ukraine. It turned out that they have even revealed their escape and evasion route from the Ukraine via Czechoslovakia to the West rather than through Poland. This alarmed the Poles as they were not aware of such a possibility. Furthermore, the courier-agents insisted on gathering various intelligence by the Ukrainian cell, which would be eventually passed to NATO. They asserted that the espionage against the USSR could indeed harm communism. Perhaps Z.Ch. OUN was at the time solely financed by Western intelligence services and the only way to compensate this came through intelligence gathering behind the Iron Curtain. The two courier-agents also revealed a number of details of their past and their true mission in the Ukraine. E.g., ‘Voron’ claimed to have been Bandera’s own bodyguard, living with his family, and that he befriended Dr. Grigoriy Vaskovych, OUN’s chief communications officer at the HQ. ‘Bystriy,’ probably in order to gain ‘Voron’s’ respect, claimed to have been an SB OUN (OUN’s intelligence and counterintelligence) officer at Manchester.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OUN covername</th>
<th>KGB covername</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vsevolod, Dunay</td>
<td>Hromadyanin</td>
<td>OUN structure’s regional <em>providnyk</em> (commander).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myron</td>
<td>Mayskiy</td>
<td>Apparently this asset was indeed Myron Matviyeika, an OUN member who arrived in the Ukraine by air in 1951 and whose treason was essential to the KGB’s deception, although ‘Voron’ and ‘Bystriy’ did not meet him directly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kommandir</td>
<td>Iskra</td>
<td>An SB OUN officer within the structure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mikhaylo, Prut</td>
<td>Lavrin</td>
<td>An ex-Z.Ch. OUN courier from 1951 and a radioman; dispatched from Poland to the Ukraine by Leonid Lapinsky.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mykola</td>
<td>Orel</td>
<td>An OUN cell’s member.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boris</td>
<td>Dalekiy</td>
<td>An OUN member who was in West Germany between 1953 and 1956 and then disappeared. Reportedly, he was trained in the spy school along with ‘Voron.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter</td>
<td>Dulish</td>
<td>A safehouse owner at Sinovudsko-Vyzhne in the Ukraine. Likely, ‘Dulish’ was indeed Tayetsky.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vasilyi</td>
<td>Shust</td>
<td>A safehouse owner at Zhupane, i.e., V. Proniv.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Pavlov</td>
<td>A safehouse owner at Goshiv in the Ukraine.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ivan</td>
<td>Yurko</td>
<td>An SB OUN chief officer within the structure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khazieyka</td>
<td>Halychanka</td>
<td>An OUN underground member.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khazyayn</td>
<td>Soletskiy</td>
<td>An OUN underground member.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The most important duty of the two courier-agents in the Ukraine, which they successfully concealed from the Poles, was to learn more about Myron Matviyeyka (a.k.a. ‘Myron’)—an SB OUN officer, who parachuted into Ukraine in 1951. It came out that the two radiomen, ‘Zrub’ and ‘Lypa,’ from the 1957 expedition, were heading directly to him, but they later disappeared. In fact, they were arrested and turned by the Soviets upon their arrival. Bandera suspected Myron of having been turned by the Soviets. Therefore, he kept ‘Vsevolod’’s group hidden and away from Myron’s knowledge and influence.

The team also wanted to learn about Leonid Lapinsky known as ‘Zenon’ (an agent provocateur between 1949–1954, who led the OUN organization in Poland and was behind the large Polish intelligence provocation known as operation ‘C–1,’ while acting as an asset cover-named ‘Boguslaw’), and ‘Boris,’ an OUN member who spent three years in the West and then disappeared. Remarkably, the couriers were even supposed to bring Myron’s wife to the Ukraine during their 1959 expedition. However, she suffered from illness and could not travel.

While in the Ukraine, it came out that ‘Voron’’s behavior was irresponsible. He abused alcohol and used to leave his safehouse and disappear for a day or two. Eventually, ‘Bystriy’ even suggested to ‘Yurko’ that ‘Voron,’ through his negligence of operational security, could betray the organization. Therefore, he argued ‘it would be rather more feasible to sacrifice one person instead of all the cell’s members.’ It was clear to ‘Vsevolod’ that ‘Bystriy’ asked to kill ‘Voron’ to save the mission and the organization.

A KGB source ‘Hromadyanin’ profiled the two courier-agents in July 1960. ‘Voron’ appeared taciturn, catty, of low intellect, cynical, mingy, and unable to withstand criticism. While the source claimed to have met many devoted OUN members, he described ‘Voron’ as a ‘besotted fanatic,’ who could not accept anything which was not compatible with his nationalistic views. He truly hated the Soviets and was seeking revenge on them. While unable to support his views, he became aggressive.

In contrast, ‘Bystriy’ was rational, self-controlled, and enterprising. He was definitely afraid of ‘Voron’ and hated him. However, he was brave and devoted to the OUN case.

In October the Soviets and the Poles decided to close the operation fearing the OUN Center could have established the scope of the deception. They decided to publicly reveal the operation in order to disintegrate the Banderites. Therefore, on 6 November 1960 ‘Charnota’ was arrested by Cpt. Tadeusz Piaskowski of Polish SB on-board a train in Poland while carrying the mail for the OUN-B Munich base brought by ‘Voron’ from the Ukraine. It was later revealed by communist authorities, as a part of the deception, that ‘Charnota’ was arrested but in Czechoslovakia, which was an escape route from the Ukraine. The Poles made the Banderites believe that ‘Voron’ was heading to Munich (Figure SI6). In the meantime, Matviyeyka and other ex-Banderites went public in the USSR criticizing the OUN.

According to the released files, the Poles learned from decrypted mail addressed to ‘Charnota’ that another OUN courier-agent group was heading to Poland in late 1960 or in 1961. Reportedly, Michael Typish (a.k.a. Bohdan Tsypera) and Vasyl Zbrozhek (‘Zenko’) were to arrive soon. Since Typish was a member of the 1957 expedition to Poland, there were fears he could check an alleged dead drop in a forest at Proszowa near Kwieciszowice, where the team concealed their Sten sub-machine gun, allegedly yet in 1957 (Figure SI15). The Poles recovered the weapon in May 1960, but re-buried it in July at the same place. They were also
not sure about ‘Voron’s and ‘Charnota’s ultimate loyalties with regards to weapons’ caches and suspected there could have been other such sites. Therefore, they decided to close the operation (Figure 6).

While the end of the Stonka case is poorly documented, it can be assumed from the sources [5, 11] that ‘Bystriy’ finally realized that he and ‘Voron’ had been dealing with a fictitious OUN cell. According to these sources, ‘Bystriy’ has allegedly disappeared without leaving any traces. The Soviets and the Poles were unable

Figure 6. An example of a deceptive message inspired by the Poles, prepared in secret writing (secret carbon paper) by ‘Voron’ on 16 December 1960 and mailed by Polish MoI to Austria. The image shows (L to R): a Polish MoI translation, plaintext, OTP calculations, ciphertext [9]. (Color figure available online.)
to find him. It was suspected that he could have arrived in Germany to report on the mystification. Therefore, the Soviets and the Poles decided to shut down the deception and to arrest ‘Charnota,’ who was still at large. It was also important to the communist security services to protect their valuable assets like TW ‘Janek’ and TW ‘Zbyszek.’

In the meantime, former OUN members dispatched from the West to the Ukraine appeared in the Soviet media at the turn of 1960 and 1961, verbally attacking the emigre Ukrainian organizations. These were Vasyl Kuk a.k.a. ‘Lemish’ (captured by the Soviets in 1954) and Myron Matviyeyka, who was later found to have been turned by the Soviets. Furthermore, the two radiomen from the 1957 expedition to the Ukraine, ‘Zrub’ and ‘Lypa,’ were also used for psychological operations against Z.Ch. OUN and it was revealed that they had been arrested shortly after their arrival in the Ukraine in 1957. Nevertheless, the Soviets continued the radio game with the OUN Center at the turn of 1960 and 1961 [9].

The Poles eventually recruited ‘Charnota’ as TW ‘Leszek’ on 15 February 1961. He reported on his activities and known Ukrainian dissidents securing his release from prison. Surprisingly, the Poles eliminated TW ‘Leszek’ from their intelligence network on 12 October 1961. His files reveal that he remained under tight surveillance from the moment of his arrival at TW ‘Janek’s place. His apartment at Walbrzych, overpaid with OUN’s funds following SB’s inspiration, was bugged by the Poles. Altogether, ‘Charnota’ had three meetings with ‘Voron’ in 1960, which were orchestrated and controlled by the SB to validate the deception [7]. Following the latter, ‘Charnota’ was arrested by Polish authorities on 6 November.

The OUN Munich Center learned about ‘Voron’s arrest in Poland and alerted the Ukrainian cell about the fact on 14 February 1961. The contents of the intercepted blind radio message is provided below [9].

[Message] No. 3 of 14 Feb [1961]. To Dunay. Voron [was] arrested in Poland with the materials. Warn those at risk. Report in your cipher about the contents of the mail in Voron’s possession. SU. Pavlo

Yet the radio message from ‘Boris’ (i.e., Stepan Lenkavsky, who assumed the duties of Bandera following his assassination) to ‘Dunay’ of 25 November 1960, which was intercepted and solved by the Poles, revealed early fears of the OUN Center that ‘Voron’ could have been apprehended.

As Igor Halagida has argued, perhaps news of the failure contributed to Col. Harold Gibson’s suicide in 1960. This veteran SIS officer was active in Central Europe from the 1930s and he likely supervised the cooperation with emigre Ukrainians.

The sad truth about the aftermath of the operation is revealed in TW Leszek’s files. Reportedly the KGB found ‘Bystriy,’ who had previously disappeared, hanged in a forest at Truskavets near Stryi in the Ukraine in November 1960. Perhaps in order to protect themselves, KGB officers faked the messages dispatched to the Munich Center that ‘Bystriy’ disappeared and that ‘Voron’ returned to Poland, which was against the strict OUN rules and chain of command [7]. Anyway, considering ‘Bystriy’s vast experience and training, it is doubtful he could have committed suicide. According to decrypted radio messages of January 1961, the Poles learned about OUN-B fears of ‘Bystriy’s fate and their inquiries into the reason of his compromise [7]. It was also convenient for the Poles and the Soviets to make ‘Bystriy’ a scapegoat and blame him for the compromise of the illegal Ukrainian
structures and the arrests in order to lengthen their deceptive radio game (Figure SI16) [9].

On 15 August 1961 Cpt. Adam Garbaczewski of the Polish MoI closed the Stonka case and sent the files to the MoI’s Central Archives two days later. The paramilitary activity of the OUN in Poland has therefore ended. ‘Sliwinski’ remained a Polish asset and was still active as a consultant to the SB as of 1964.22

However, in the 1979 study, Jozef Penar, then promoted to Colonel, who had been involved in the Stonka affair as a case officer, claimed that British intelligence still supported militant Ukrainians against Poland [5].

The Aftermath

Following the arrests at the end of 1960 in Poland, the communist Polish authorities passed some information on the case to the local media at the turn of 1960 and 1961. However, the exact fate of the courier-agents from the 1959 expedition remained unknown in light of the files [8, 10], which were selective on the last stage of the operation and were likely intentionally sanitized by the Poles. The Polish MoI training manual on the case of 1979 [5] stated that one of the courier-agents (‘Bystriy’) had managed to escape without a trace and probably got to the West, as the Soviets and the Poles were unable to apprehend him. Therefore, the operation was to be closed, since the mystification could have been compromised. However, this source altered many facts related to the struggle against the OUN and cannot be considered conclusive.

The recently released files contained a report from TW ‘Mariusz’ of 27 January 1961, a high-grade asset planted by the Poles in Munich yet in the late 1950s to report about exiled Ukrainians. He wrote about heavy purges among the Banderites following the revelations from Myron Matviyeyka and the others [7]. It seems the Poles and the Soviets were the obvious winners of the game. They let the West know that there was no feasible atmosphere among the Ukrainian minorities in Central and Eastern Europe to conduct activities against the authorities. Therefore, the OUN intelligence base at Munich was disintegrated.

The authors of a recently published case study on Soviet operations against the OUN [11] argued that upon realizing the scope of the mystification, one of the courier-agents committed suicide and the second one was captured and put on trial. However, the newly released files revealed that ‘Charnota,’ following his arrest and the recruitment by Polish SB, was given a new identity by the KGB and the Poles and was settled down in Upper Silesia, giving him immunity from prosecution. It remains unattested in the sources whether any court hearings in Poland did occur with regard to the Stonka case [7].

‘Voron’ was also given a new identity forged by the KGB and the Poles, and settled down in southern Poland. There were even some troubles with the fake documents as the Soviets mismatched the first names of the fictitious mothers of the agents and the Poles had to manufacture another set of documents. ‘Voron’ eventually married Mary in 1961 and they started the new life as desired [9].

The deployment of the 1959 team, which ended in disaster, was perhaps the last incident in which militant Ukrainians tried to re-establish their underground

\[22\text{Cf. file IPN BU 00231/248 Vol. 57 stored at the Archives of the Polish Institute of National Remembrance.}\]
structures behind the Iron Curtain. Igor Halagida has argued that Soviet counterintelligence was able to disintegrate the emigre Ukrainians and Western intelligence services, which sponsored them, under a long-lasting Cold War operation code-named ‘Zveno’ (and ‘Meteor’). The core of the success of the Soviets can be attributed to the treason of Myron Matviyeyka, an SB OUN emissary, who got to the Ukraine in 1951 and, following his capture, cooperated with the KGB against the OUN. However, the ultimate targets of the Soviets seem to have been U.S. British, and West German intelligence services, which actually relied on Ukrainian assets and were ruthless in deploying them (as with many other Central Europeans) behind the Iron Curtain to share a similar fatal fate.

Following Bandera’s death, the emigre Ukrainians adopted a more democratic way of bringing independence to their country. In 1963 the emigre Ukrainians convened the IV Convention of the Z.Ch. OUN, which analyzed past failures and the scope of Soviet deceptions. Further, couriers therefore did not smuggle weapons and explosives or two-way radios, but rather photocopying machines into the Ukraine. During a later counterintelligence operation conducted between the 1960s and 1988, less-violent individuals were captured, like Ms. Irene Zelniy, a French citizen, probably an amateur courier arrested in Bytom, Poland, on 19 August 1983. She possessed hidden documents among her belongings for the Ukrainian underground in the USSR, which, according to the official account, she tried to traffic in. Zelniy was later deported from Poland and the Poles described her as being controlled by the U.S. and Western intelligence services [6].

This counterintelligence operation was known as ‘Bumerang’ (Boomerang), as Igor Halagida has argued, and again involved fictitious Ukrainian underground structures, just like in the past decades.

Following the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and the approaching end of the Cold War, the Ukrainians waited till August 1991 for their independent state. Bandera, as a martyr, became a symbol of their controversial struggle for independence.

Conclusions

While the operation lured the Z.Ch. OUN and the remnants of the Banderites in the West into a trap, it is not out of question that communist services targeted and deceived Western intelligence services, as well, as the main target. It must be emphasized that the Banderites, except their close leadership, represented an almost amateurish approach to clandestine work in the 1950s. They relied on prior and suspicious connections or structures in Eastern Europe, and their personnel was poorly trained. Furthermore, they did not learn from the past failures attributed to Leonid Lapinski’s network in Poland, who turned out to have been an agent provocateur. Thus, the emigre Ukrainians forced their emissaries to contact uncertain connections, who betrayed the Ukrainian case. Their courier-agents were unnecessarily martyred and the results of their deployments were flawed. While in Eastern Europe, they were unable to gather valuable intelligence that could have been traded with OUN’s Western sponsors. Instead they were desperately trying to establish communications and to rebuild the clandestine cells. This also involved the 1959 expedition members.

In any case, the militant Banderites were a tiny minority and there were very few people who believed in the success of an armed struggle to free the Ukraine.
Therefore, the Soviets tried to convince the OUN leadership that their sympathizers behind the Iron Curtain preferred to abandon their clandestine work.

Furthermore, it remains a mystery, why Cold War Western intelligence services did not respect their assets and martyred them behind the Iron Curtain so casually. The ill-prepared teams were simply unable to start genuine espionage work, but rather were desperately focused on establishing contact with their OUN base and clandestine cells. To make matters worse, the 1957 and 1959 courier-agent teams were not equipped with up-to-date technology. They were given obsolete CW telegraphy radios, which contributed to their compromise by communist signals intelligence, unless burst transmitters were reserved for high-grade agents only. For example, the Poles were intercepting and pinpointing the 1959 group’s transmitters from at least 14 September 1959. However, the Warsaw Center decided not to use direction finding to locate the transmitter and prohibited arresting the agents at that moment.

To make matters worse, even sophisticated one-time pads did not protect OUN’s communications, as the adversaries were able to acquire them by black bag operations involving the assets within the OUN structures. The weaker ciphers used to conceal clandestine contact addresses did not pose a problem to communist security services, as evidenced by the case. The ‘Stonka’ operation was a great success of Polish communications intelligence, which consisted at the time of Section I of MoI Bureau “T” (radio interception), Section II of MoI Bureau “A” (code breaking), and MoI’s Bureau “W” (postal inspection). These three branches were effectively leveraged in order to keep control of the adversaries’ steps. In 1960 only the Poles managed to intercept and decrypt 70 messages exchanged between the courier-agents in Poland and the OUN Munich Center.

By studying the above case it may be deemed that the Soviets and their Eastern Block allies achieved superiority in clandestine work by using quite unsophisticated methods. Obviously, they enjoyed the police-style environment of the region, which contributed to their successes, but they were also able to target the appropriate people and to turn them as their own assets, who later reported on important events. What is remarkable, is that the Soviets strongly relied on fictitious structures, which were used to thrash out their adversaries.

In order to broaden the research on the Stonka case, the insight of former KGB files is required, particularly those now stored in the Ukraine. However, this is problematic given the present strict Ukrainian legislation on the matter.

Acknowledgments

The author would like to acknowledge Dr. Igor Halagida of Gdansk University, Poland, and Dr. Craig Bauer, the Editor-in-Chief of Cryptologia, for their comments during the preparation of the article. This research was funded from the Polish Government scholarship budget of FY 2010–2011 under the Iuventus Plus program.

About the Author

Jan Bury received his M.A. and Ph.D. from the Oriental Institute, University of Warsaw. He also studied at the universities in Kuwait, Tunis, Oxford, and Nijmegen. Currently, he is Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Law and Administration of Cardinal Stefan Wyszynski University in Warsaw, Poland. His professional interests
are linked to international relations in the contemporary Arab World, and non-military aspects of wars. Dr. Bury is also a member of the Editorial Board of Cryptologia.

References