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Shukhevych and the Nachtigall Battalion: Moscow Fabrications about the Ukrainian Resistance Movement

In this article I will not be responding to the numerous fabricated stories that are still being published in newspapers and books in Russia and elsewhere, which portray the freedom fighters of the Ukrainian resistance movement — the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) or the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) — as “fascists.” Even in Ukraine today there are still significant numbers of people who maliciously defame those who sacrificed their lives for their country’s freedom and independence. Clearly, certain individuals find it easier to make their “scholarly” careers by issuing groundless accusations. Where some of these accusers are concerned, this type of allegation is an unmistakable holdover from the Soviet propaganda era.

In the Russian Federation, in particular, it is a matter of state policy to denigrate all past and present efforts of Ukrainians to be free in their own independent state. The decree issued on 14 October 2006 by President Viktor Yushchenko of Ukraine, whose goal was to bring about reconciliation between the veterans of the Red Army and the members of the Ukrainian resistance movement, was immediately criticized in an article published in a Moscow newspaper.¹ Thus, it is hardly a surprise — indeed, it was to be expected — that several individuals recently publicly accused the Commander in Chief of the UPA General Roman Shukhevych and the Nachtigall Battalion for crimes they did not commit.

Should one waste time arguing with people who make baseless accusations against Ukraine’s resistance movement? I think not. It is more effective to convey to readers who desire to learn the truth about the dramatic and often tragic events of World War II in Ukraine by showing them evidence based on solid documentation.

The most enduring object of slander against the Ukrainian national liberation movement has been Stepan Bandera, who for many people remains a flag-bearer and symbol of the struggle for Ukraine’s national dignity and political independence. Bandera and his followers have been

¹ Nataliia Pechorna, “Nad Ukrainoi vitaet prizrak Bandery” *VPK* 157 (no. 41), 25-31 October 2006. See also the article published on 15 October 2007 by the Russian Orthodox information agency Russkaia Liniia. Also Oficiyne Internet Predstavnytstvo Prezydenta Ukrainy Victora Yushchenka 14 October 2006. Ukaz Prezydenta Ukrainy Nr. 879/2006.

characterized variously as “fascists,” “Hitlerites,” “collaborators,” “Nazis,” etc. However, like Hetman Ivan Mazepa or Symon Petliura, Bandera has become part of Ukrainian political history — a symbol that is applied to anyone who was ever committed to the ideal of national independence. The Russians regarded even Ukraine’s Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko as a “Banderite” (*banderivka*), wrote journalist Yuriy Korohodsky.²

A storm of criticism against the Ukrainian resistance movement erupted in the Russian media in 2007, when President Yushchenko posthumously conferred the title of “Hero of Ukraine” on General Roman Shukhevych (nom de guerre: Taras Chuprynka), the Commander in Chief of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army, who died in a shoot-out with special units of the MVD in March 1950. The award was presented to his son Yuriy Shukhevych on 14 October 2007. On that occasion President Yushchenko called upon the parliament and government to grant official recognition to the members of the UPA, who had fought for the independence of Ukraine.³

Russia’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs responded negatively to President Yushchenko’s suggestion, viewing it as the latest in a string of anti-Russian manifestations, which, according to Russia, are cropping up in Ukraine. In its declaration of 14 December 2007 Russia expressed particular concern over the “rehabilitation of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army” because, as the Russians maintained, “it [is] well known that the bandit formations of the UPA participated in the Nazis’ punitive actions.”⁴ On 23 June 2008 the Russian government again criticized President Yushchenko for his decision to grant an award to Shukhevych whom they identified as a “captain of the SS.” It would have been constructive if the Russians had provided evidence to back their accusations. The commentary also stated that it is absolutely unacceptable to treat “Nazi criminals and the fighters of the OUN-UPA, and the veterans of the Great Patriotic War” as equals. What is particularly interesting to a historian is the Russian objection to “efforts to re-examine the consequences of World War II.”⁵

The position of Russia’s foreign ministry was restated by Vitaly Churkin, the Ambassador of the RF to the UN at a press conference held on 28 October 2008, during which he went so far as to call Roman Shukhevych “a Nazi.” Furthermore, he said that “throughout the Second World War

² Yuriy Korohodsky, “Nebezpechnyi dreif Tymoshenko,” *Ukrainska Pravda*, 29 September 2008.

³ “Yushchenko doruchyv Tymoshenko vyznaty UPA,” *Ukrainska Pravda*, 14 October 2007.

⁴ “Zaiavlenie Ministerstva inostrannykh del Rossii v sviazi s antirossiiskimi proiavleniiami na Ukraine,” http://www.mid.ru/brp_4.nsf/sps/8Bo2FF594F151D36C32573B1004930DC.

⁵ <http://www.in.mid.ru/brp4.nsf/0/75EABB35DB1CACCB1C325747100594B1A>. See also “Rosiiia skarzhytsia svitu na Ukrainu za OUN-UPA,” www.PRAVDA.com.ua (24 June 2008).

they,” i.e., the members of the Ukrainian resistance movement, “were part of the Nazi movement...” The ambassador also stated that “the majority of those people who were killing Jews in Babyn Yar were Ukrainian Nazis.”⁶ Where did these Ukrainian Nazis come from? It was in September 1941, the Nazis just entered Kyiv.

This latest chapter in the vilification campaign against Shukhevych and the Nachtigall Battalion was started by Yosef Lapid, claiming to be the Chairman of the Yad Vashem Council, who, during President Yushchenko’s state visit to Israel and his side-trip to Yad Vashem in November 2007, protested against the granting of the title “Hero of Ukraine” to Shukhevych. Lapid maintained that Shukhevych and the Nachtigall Battalion had participated in the murder of 4,000 Jews in Lviv⁷ in 1941. On 6 December 2007 he restated his position during a program aired by the international broadcaster Deutsche Welle: “We have a whole dossier which shows that Shukhevych was one of those implicated in mass murder. Ukraine has not yet asked us to hand over these documents.”⁸

The Ukrainian government, which had been cooperating with Yad Vashem, having already delivered 126,000 pages of various documents to Israel, decided to send an official delegation to Yad Vashem to uncover the truth about what really happened in Lviv. On 27 February 2008 Ihor Yukhnovsky, chairman of Ukraine’s Institute of National Memory, and Volodymyr Viatrovykh left for Israel. The next day they met with Yad Vashem’s director Avner Shalev, who informed the Ukrainian delegation that there is no separate dossier on Shukhevych and that Yosef Lapid, who had raised the issue, is not a member of Yad Vashem.⁹ The following question arises: whom can we trust when we, historians, try in an honest fashion to recreate the complexities of the past?

The Russian archives recently released, but most likely recently fabricated, documents that characterize the Ukrainian resistance movement as a tool of Nazi Germany, since the Germans controlled the leadership of the OUN, which had created the UPA.¹⁰ These documents, as well as the position of the Russian foreign ministry and Churkin’s statement about the

⁶ <http://www.un.org/webcast/2008.html>.

⁷ Lviv is the current name of this Ukrainian city. Under Polish rule it was known as Lwów; under Austrian and German rule it was called Lemberg. In Russian it is known as Lvov.

⁸ See Halyna Coynash’s lengthy and carefully documented article, “Shukhevych charges a phantom of Soviet propaganda needing closure” in *Kyiv Post*, 19 March 2008.

⁹ Maksym Medynsky, “Taky heroi—ne karatel! V arkhivi izrailskoho memoriialnoho kompleksu Yad Vashem nemaie dosie na Romana Shukhevycha,” *Ukraina Moloda*, 5 March 2008. See also Volodymyr Viatrovykh, “Kinets lehendy pro Nachtigall,” *Den* (Kyiv), 19 March 2008.

¹⁰ Central Archive of the Federal Security Service (FSB) of the Russian Federation, fond 4, list 3, file 818, fols. 177-186.

OUN, UPA, and General Shukhevych, in which Russia's Ambassador to the UN connects the Ukrainians' efforts to gain recognition for the Holodomor (the genocide by starvation in 1932-1933) with the alleged efforts of the Ukrainian leadership "to glorify... individuals who supported the Nazis," are all fabrications whose objective is to create a negative image of the Ukrainian resistance movement, the central objective of which was the establishment of an Independent Ukrainian State.

How could the Germans have controlled the leadership of the OUN when in July 1941 they had already placed under house arrest the two leaders of the organization, Stepan Bandera and Yaroslav Stetsko, who were then sent to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp in January 1942? Their arrests were followed by mass arrests of other leading members of the OUN.¹¹ Only Mykola Lebed, whom Stetsko designated as the leader of the OUN, escaped arrest. During their manhunt for Lebed, on 4 October 1941 the German security services issued an all-points bulletin with Lebed's picture, warning that he was armed and dangerous.¹² He disappeared into the underground, from where he successfully conducted OUN operations and later, UPA actions. Lebed's wife Daria was less fortunate: the Germans captured her and sent her to the Ravensbrück concentration camp. So how did the OUN conduct its collaboration with the Nazis — from inside the concentration camps or from the underground?

All of these events happened unexpectedly and within a short period of time, and they were triggered by the unilateral decision of the OUN leadership to proclaim in Lviv on 30 June 1941 the Restoration of the Ukrainian State without consulting the German authorities. By this act, the OUN challenged the Germans' policy of converting Eastern Europe into a German colony, and the Germans responded instantly.¹³ Yaroslav Stetsko, who signed the Act of Restoration of the Ukrainian State, was told on the spot by the German intelligence officer, Hans Koch, that he was making a mistake. Koch demanded that the assembly be cancelled and warned Stetsko: "You are playing with fire."¹⁴ The German authorities interpreted the Proclamation of 30 June and the efforts of the OUN to establish a local

¹¹ See Bundesarchiv, R58/214, Ereignismeldung UdSSR, Nr. 11, pp. 3-4. For a partial record of OUN-B members arrested during 1941-1943, see Bundesarchiv, R58/223, Meldungen aus den besetzten Ostgebieten Nr. 41; see also The National Archives, Washington, D.C., T 175/274; T 175/146.

¹² Copy of the "Fahndungsersuchen des Reichskriminalpolizeiamtes" from the author's private collection.

¹³ It should be noted that some highly-placed Germans supported the idea of an independent Ukraine. See the letter of Admiral Canaris, the head of the Abwehr (German military intelligence service), "Akttenotiz über die Besprechung mit dem Reichsleiter Rosenberg am 30. Mai 1941," Militär Archiv, Freiburg, RW 4/v.760.

¹⁴ For more details, see Yaroslav S. Stetsko, *30 chervnia 1941: Proholoshennia Derzhavnosti Ukrainy* (Toronto: Ukrainiska Vydavnycha Spilka, 1967), pp. 175-98.

government and police force as the Bandera leadership's attempt to "present the German authorities with a *fait accompli*."¹⁵

Berlin, hoping that the OUN would change its plans, dispatched Undersecretary of State Ernst Kundt to Cracow, where he held talks with Stepan Bandera, Volodymyr Horbovy, Vasyl Mudry, Stepan Shukhevych and Viktor Andriievsky. The meeting turned into a confrontation between Kundt and Bandera. While Kundt insisted that Germany alone had the right to decide the political future of Ukraine, Bandera explained that the struggle in which the Ukrainians were engaged was the struggle for a free and independent Ukraine. Furthermore, he declared that "the basis for full cooperation with German institutions was the goal of establishing an independent Ukrainian state..."¹⁶ Bandera also explained to Kundt that in his decisions he did not depend on any German authority. "I wish once again to clarify," Bandera declared, "that in all of the orders issued by me, I did not rely on any German authority or any consent of the German authorities, but only on the mandate that I received from the Ukrainian people..."¹⁷

I would suggest that those who make cavalier statements about the leadership of the OUN and UPA being pro-Nazi, particularly representatives of states or important institutions, should first examine the contents of reliable archival documents. After 30 June 1941 the Germans knew whose cause the OUN represented. That is why as early as 5 August 1941 a report issued by Armeoberkommando 17 talks about "Traveling Bandera-Propaganda Groups." On 7 September 1941 one finds "Ukrainian political agents of the Bandera Movement" in the category of undesirable individuals.¹⁸

The radicalization of the relations between the German authorities and the OUN proceeded apace, as we learn from a report that was introduced at the Nuremberg Trials. On 25 November 1941 the Einsatzkommando C/5 issued an order to its branches, stating: "It has been established with certainty that the Bandera Movement is preparing an uprising in the Reichskommissariat, whose ultimate objective is to create an independent Ukraine. All functionaries of the Bandera Movement are to be immediately arrested and, after a thorough interrogation, secretly liquidated as pillagers."¹⁹

¹⁵ SD report of 3 July 1941 in Bundesarchiv, R58/214, Ereignismeldung UdSSR, Nr. 11, p. 58.

¹⁶ "Niederschrift über die Rücksprache mit Mitgliedern des ukrainischen Nationalkomitees und Stepan Bandera vom 3.7.1941," Hoover Institute on War and Revolution, NSDAP No. 52, pp. 7-10.

¹⁷ Ibid. p.14.

¹⁸ See "Ukrainische politische Agitatoren" and "Überwachung des Zivilverkehrs" in Freiburg, AOK 17/14499/51.

¹⁹ *Internationaler Militär-Gerichtshof Nürnberg*. Nürnberg 1949, vol. XXXIX, pp. 265, 269-70.

German concerns over a possible revolution planned by Bandera's followers were reflected in various reports of the German security services. A report dated 16 January 1942, for example, states that on the basis of information provided by "the arrested followers of Bandera no definite date for an outbreak of the planned revolution has been named. The signal for the uprising should be given by Bandera whose release the OUN is hoping for."²⁰ Of course, that signal could not come because Bandera remained in the concentration camp until October 1944. After his release Bandera had a conversation with Obergruppenführer Gottlob Berger on 6 October 1944, during which the Ukrainian leader expressed great hopes for the success of the Ukrainian resistance movement. Berger summed up his impression of Bandera, noting that "he is dedicated to his idea to the very end" and that "he hates the Russians as much as the Germans."²¹ It is worth noting that in the German security service (*Sicherheitsdienst*, SD) report of January-March 1942 the OUN(B) is already characterized as the most active and dangerous.²² Generally speaking, beginning in the spring of 1942, there is a significant increase in the number of reports about the activities of the OUN, which is characterized as a dangerous resistance movement.²³ Also intriguing is an SD report dated 31 July 1942, which quotes an article from issue no. 4 of the OUN(B)'s illegal publication *Bulletin*. "The year 1941," the article states, "brought us change: one totalitarianism disappeared [and] a second took its place...In their basic objectives both are similar, only tactics separate them."²⁴

A lengthy report on the "National-Ukrainian resistance movement UPA," dated 1 November 1944, makes for fascinating reading. The document was prepared for Fremde Heere Ost (German Intelligence Evaluation Service, Eastern Section) by Colonel Reinhard Gehlen. The document states that "the objective of the OUN is to create an independent national Great-Ukraine [Grossukraine]."²⁵ The author also explains that "as the relations between Germans and Ukrainians gradually worsened, the OUN took a position of hostility not only against the Poles and Bolshevism,

²⁰ See "Tätigkeit der OUN," Bundesarchiv R 58/220, Ereignismeldung UdSSR Nr. 156, January 1942, pp. 193-94. One can find additional reports about the anti-German activities of Bandera's followers, i.e., the OUN(B), in Ereignismeldung UdSSR, Nr. 52, 56, 66, 78, and others.

²¹ "Besprechung mit Bandera," Bundesarchiv, NS 19/1513, fol. 1.

²² Bundesarchiv, Koblenz, SD Reports 70/31, p. 31. See also "Tätigkeits-und Lagebericht Nr. 8 der Einsatzgruppen der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD in der UdSSR," p. 132.

²³ The National Archives of the United States, T 175/16/ 2519868-2519872; Meldungen aus den besetzten Ostgebieten Nr. 4 "Widerstandsbewegung in der Ukraine," a) Bandera-Bewegung.

²⁴ "Meldungen aus den besetzten Ostgebieten," No. 14. T 175/17/ 2520097, p. 5.

²⁵ The National Archives of the United States, T 78/562, "Die national-ukrainische Widerstandsbewegung UPA," Stand: 1. Nov. 1944, p. 2.

but also against the German administration. By this time the organization's fight was directed against the Germans, Soviets, and Poles. After repeated occupation of Ukraine by the RA [Red Army] she [UPA] is fighting exclusively against the Soviets...²⁶

These sources provide far better evidence concerning the real objective, as well as the relationship between the OUN leadership and the German authorities, than rehashed Soviet propaganda.

Since the Russian Ambassador to the UN wildly ascribes the murder of Jews in Babyn Yar to Ukrainian nationalists, in order to provide true and accurate information I shall simply quote the findings of the Nuremberg Trials. The report on Kyiv states: "Consequently all Jews of Kiev were requested, in agreement with the city commander, to appear on Monday, 29 September by 8 o'clock at a designated place. These announcements were posted by members of the militia of Kiev in the entire city. Simultaneously it was announced orally that all Jews were to be removed. In collaboration with the group [Gruppen] staff and 2 Kommandos of the police regiment South, the Sonderkommando 4a executed on 29 and 30 September, 33,771 Jews."²⁷ The account clearly indicates who committed this horrendous crime in Kyiv.

Since the assault on the Ukrainian resistance movement, known as the OUN and the UPA, was launched with an attack against Shukhevych and his service in the Nachtigall Battalion, I propose to examine the origins of this issue. Roman Shukhevych, the focus of these Moscow-engineered attacks and actions by certain irresponsible individuals, was from his youth dedicated to the cause of Ukrainian independence. When he was eighteen years old, Shukhevych joined the Ukrainian Military Organization (UVO), where he was known for his dedication and organizational skills.²⁸ Later he joined the ranks of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists, which was founded in Vienna in 1929. As a member of the OUN, Shukhevych not only performed the numerous duties that were expected of him, but also dedicated his entire life to gaining freedom for the Ukrainian nation. His first military service in defense of the Ukrainian cause took place during the struggle for the independence of Carpathian Ukraine in 1939. After a brief battle against

²⁶ Ibid., p.3.

²⁷ *Trials of War Criminals before the Nuernberg Military Tribunals under Control Council Law No. 10*, Nürnberg, October 1946-April 1949, p. 148.

²⁸ About Shukhevych's early life, see Petro Arsenych, *Rid Shukhevychiv* (Ivano Frankivsk: Nova zoria, 2005).

units of the Hungarian army, Shukhevych left for Cracow, where he carried out liaison duties for the OUN.²⁹

The political situation in 1939 was a stormy period in European history, but a real doomsday arrived when Stalin and Hitler signed the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact on 23 August 1939, dividing Eastern and Central Europe into spheres of domination and influence. As a result of the Pact, Eastern Poland, which was inhabited primarily by Ukrainians and Belarusians, as well as Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, and, after a short but bloody war, part of Finland came under Soviet control.³⁰ It must be kept in mind that, with Stalin on his side, Hitler knew he would not have to fight on two fronts, as was the case during World War I. Therefore, without delaying his plans, Hitler launched his invasion of Poland one week after the pact was signed. On 17 September Stalin joined Hitler and sent the Red Army against Poland, thereby implementing the first stage of the Pact's "Secret Protocols," which entailed the partition of Poland.³¹ After annihilating the Polish army, the commanders of the German and Soviet armies met in the Belarusian cities of Grodno and Brest to celebrate their victory.³² Thus, while Hitler was waging war in the West against Great Britain and France, the Stalin-Hitler alliance, which continued until June 22, 1941, was sealed with Polish blood.³³

The OUN, which earlier had cherished some hope of gaining German support in its struggle for independence, now found itself in a hopeless situation because the Germans, who were at war with France and Great Britain, were being supplied with raw materials by the Soviets, and therefore

²⁹ Bohdan Kravtsiv, *Liudyna i voiak: Zbirnyk na poshanu gen. Romana Shukhevycha* (Munich-London: Ukrainiska Vydavnycha Spilka, Ukrainskyi Instytut Osvitnoi Polityky, 1990).

³⁰ For more details, see William R. Keylor, *The Twentieth-Century World: An International History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 172-77. See also Frank P. Chambers, Christina Phelps Grant, and Charles C. Bayley, *This Age of Conflict: A Contemporary World History, 1914-1943* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1943), pp. 812-20. See also Vcoctor S. Mamatey, *Soviet Russian Imperialism*. D. Van Nostrand Co., Inc., Princeton, NJ 1964 and Hugh Seton-Watson, *The New Imperialism*, New York, 1967.

³¹ V. I. Kucher, ed., et al., *Ukraina u Druhii svitovii viini (1939-1945)*, vol. 4 (Kyiv: Heneza, 2003), pp. 55-60.

³² Yurii Shapoval, *Dolia iak Istoria* (Kyiv: Heneza, 2006), pp. 154-63. The Soviet secret service (NKVD) recorded some very negative views among the population about the Nazi-Soviet collaboration. Professor Tsekhanovych from Mykolaiv said that "the Soviet Union placed itself against all the democratic states of the world by starting, in alliance with Germany, the war against Poland..." State Archive of the Security Service of Ukraine (DA SBU), fond 16, list 32 (1951), file 13, fols. 183-198. Volkov, an intellectual from Kyiv, said: "...With this fraternization with the fascists, the USSR and its leaders disgraced themselves in the eyes of all the democratic states..." Ibid., p. 9.

³³ Report of L. Beria to Stalin (5 March 1940) about the numbers of Polish prisoners, Narodnyi Kommissariat Vnutrennikh Del (Moscow), no. 794/5. In his report to Nikita Khrushchev dated 3 March 1959, the KGB chief Aleksandr Shelepin stated that, in accordance with a decision passed in 1940, 21,857 Polish prisoners had been executed.

Hitler was not about to antagonize Stalin by establishing any overt relations with the Ukrainians. A handful of discreet contacts between Colonel Riko-Jaryj, acting on behalf of the OUN, and some German intelligence representatives resulted in an agreement to provide covert military and intelligence training for small groups of OUN members. The situation changed after Germany's victories in the West. When the French government capitulated on 22 June 1940, the Germans became more receptive to OUN proposals.³⁴ In April 1941 Bandera authorized Riko-Jaryj to conduct negotiations with several representatives of the German Wehrmacht—professors Theodor Oberländer, Hans Koch, and Georg Gerulis—with the objective of forming a Ukrainian military unit within the Wehrmacht. The undertaking was successful, and an understanding was reached about the formation of two battalions, Nachtigall and Roland.³⁵

Initially, the Ukrainian recruits were trained secretly in small groups called “Arbeitsdienst” or were simply kept in isolation. In April 1941 some 700 Bandera followers (OUN-B) were recruited into the program; in mid-May they were divided into two groups and sent for additional training in special operations. It is important to note that, although the training was conducted with the support of the Abwehr (German Military Intelligence), headed by Admiral Wilhelm Canaris, the Abwehr did not attach the two battalions to any army unit.³⁶ They were obviously designated for special tasks. The recruits were divided and sent to two separate places for final training. One group, named Nachtigall, was sent to Neuhammer, in Silesia. The other group, called Roland, was sent to Saubersdorf Castle located south of Vienna, and was placed under the command of Major Ievhen Pobihushchy. During the OUN(B)'s negotiations with the Germans, an understanding was reached, according to which the members of the Nachtigall and Roland battalions would swear allegiance only to the Ukrainian state, not to Germany or Hitler.³⁷

The Nachtigall Battalion, whose code name was “Special Gruppe Nachtigall,” was under the command of Dr. Hans-Albrecht Herzner whose chief consultant and liaison officer was Prof. Theodore Oberländer, who held the rank of First Lieutenant. For the Ukrainians, the real commander

³⁴ In 1940 the OUN split into two organizations with the same name. One was headed by Colonel Andrii Melnyk (OUN(M)), and the other, by Stepan Bandera (OUN(B)).

³⁵ Roman Ilnytzkyj, *Deutschland und die Ukraine: 1934-1945. Tatsachen europäischer Ostpolitik, ein Vorbericht*, vol. 2 (Munich: Osteuropa-Institut, 1956), pp. 139-40.

³⁶ Volodymyr Kosyk, *Ukraina pid chas Druhoi svitovoi viiny 1938-1948* (New York: n.p., 1992), p. 153.

³⁷ Ilnytzkyj, *Deutschland und die Ukraine*, p. 140. For details about the Roland Battalion, see Ievhen Pobihushchy, *Druzhyny Ukrainykh Natsionalistiv 1941-1942* (Toronto: Nasha Knyhozbornia, 1953).

was Roman Shukhevych, one of the leading members of the OUN(B).³⁸ Both battalions spent only a short time in their new training bases. By 7 June 1941 Roland was on its way to Romania, expecting to take part in operations in southern Ukraine, and on 18 June Nachtigall was dispatched to the Soviet-German border: Operation Barbarossa was about to start.

The members of the Nachtigall Battalion headed out eagerly to the Soviet border, hoping the war would start soon, since they knew about the massive arrests being conducted by the NKVD and the deportations of the population from Western Ukraine to Siberia. Between 1939 and 1941 some 550,000 people were deported.³⁹ As expected, the German attack on the Soviet Union began on 22 June 1941. Without having taken part in any battles, the Nachtigall Battalion crossed the Soviet border on its way to Lviv, where it arrived in the early hours of 30 June. Following instructions, the battalion gained control over several strategically important objectives: railroad stations, gas and electric stations, St. George's Cathedral, and the city hall.⁴⁰

In Lviv the soldiers of the Nachtigall Battalion saw the results of the Soviet reign of terror. The prisons were filled with mutilated and decomposing corpses of prisoners.⁴¹ Several members of the battalion who went to Brygidky Prison found the corpse of Yurii Shukhevych, their commander's brother.⁴² The NKVD director of jails, Filippov, reported on 5 July 1941 that 2,464 prisoners had been executed in the prisons of Lviv. The report also provides details on executions of prisoners in other cities of Western Ukraine.⁴³ The terror that had been unleashed by the Soviets, and the mass executions of prisoners, angered the population of Lviv. Overcome with fury and anxiety, some relatives of murdered prisoners as well as ordinary residents of Lviv⁴⁴ seized Jews whom they encountered on the streets and forced them to go to the jail cellars to bring out the decomposing bodies. This was all happening amidst ruthless violence and abuse. The

³⁸ Myroslav Kalba, *U lavakh Druzhynnykiv: Spohady uchasnykiv* (Denver, CO.: Vyd. Druzhyn ukrainskykh natsionalistiv, 1982) pp. 25-26.

³⁹ V. A. Smolii, *Politychnyi teror i terorizm v Ukraini XIX-XX st.* (Kyiv: Natsionalna Akademiia Nauk Ukrainy, Instytut Istorii Ukrainy, 2002), pp. 584-85.

⁴⁰ Kalba, *U lavakh Druzhynnykiv*, p. 28.

⁴¹ For photographs of murdered prisoners, see The National Archives, Washington, D.C. T312/674-8308287.

⁴² *Ibid.*, pp. 80-81.

⁴³ Ivan Bilas, *Represyyno-karalna systema v Ukraini 1917-1953*, vol. 1 (Kyiv: Lybid, 1994), pp. 128-29. For more details, see Bundesarchiv, R58/214, Der Chef der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD Berlin, der 12 Juli 1941. Ereignismeldung UdSSR, Nr. 20. For photographs of prisoners murdered in other Western Ukrainian cities, see The National Archives, Washington, D.C., T 312/617/8308287-8308296.

⁴⁴ Kost Pankivsky, *Vid derzhavy do Komitetu* (New York-Toronto: Kliuchi, 1957), p. 35. See also Bundesarchiv, Ereignismeldung UdSSR. Nr. 24, p. 191.

stereotype of the “Jewish Bolshevik” turned innocent people into victims because those who were guilty of these criminal acts, irrespective of their nationality, had been evacuated by the Soviets before the German army entered Lviv.

The Nachtigall Battalion spent one week in Lviv providing security for the bases for which they were responsible. Some soldiers also participated in the historic event known as the Proclamation of the Restoration of the Ukrainian State, which was carried out by Yaroslav Stetsko on 30 June 1941.⁴⁵ The Germans viewed the proclamation, which was secretly authorized by Stepan Bandera, as an act by the Bandera leadership whose objective was to “present the German authorities with a *fait accompli*.”⁴⁶ This was indeed the case, and it determined the relationship between the OUN(B) and the German authorities for the duration of the war. After witnessing the tragic events in Lviv, Nachtigall moved eastward with the advancing German troops until it reached Vinnytsia. It then headed for Yuzvyn (Vinnytsia oblast), where it remained stationed for two weeks.

At this time the members of the Nachtigall and Roland battalions learned that the Germans had arrested Bandera, Stetsko, and other leading members of the OUN-B, and that by a decree issued on 17 July Galicia had been incorporated into the General Government. The leadership of the two battalions reacted immediately to this unexpected news. Captain Roman Shukhevych, the recognized political leader of both battalions, wrote a letter to the Wehrmacht high command, protesting the developments in Galicia and stating that under those circumstances Ukrainians could not remain in German service.⁴⁷ As a result, both battalions were withdrawn from the front, disarmed, and sent to Frankfurt-an-der Oder, where they were given a choice: either to sign a one-year contract to serve as *Schutzpolizei* (guard police force) or be sent to Germany as forced laborers. As could be expected, they chose to serve as *Schutzpolizei*.⁴⁸ This was the end of the existence of the Nachtigall and Rolland battalions.

The new battalion, under the command of Major Ievhen Pobihushchyi and Captain Roman Shukhevych departed for Belarus, arriving on 19 April 1942 in Lepel, a small town in the vicinity of which they performed security

⁴⁵ For details connected with the proclamation and the reaction of the German authorities, see Stetsko, pp. 175-194. See also Roman Rakhmany, *Derzhavnytska slava UPA* (London: Ukrainska vydavnycha spilka, 1984), pp. 7-8.

⁴⁶ Bundesarchiv, R58/214, Ereignismeldung UdSSR., Nr.11, p. 58.

⁴⁷ Ilnytzkyj, *Deutschland und die Ukraine*, pp. 195-200.

⁴⁸ Kalba, *U lavakh Druzhynnykiv*, pp. 36-39, 85-100, 115-24, 135-43; Pobihushchyi, *Druzhynny Ukrainskykh Natsionalistiv*, pp. 19-22, 37-41, 52-64.

services, such as protecting trains and guarding storehouses.⁴⁹ Its contract expired in late 1942, and since the Ukrainian soldiers refused to renew it, they were transported in small groups back to Lviv.⁵⁰ The first group left on 5 December 1942, and on 6 January 1943 the officers left Belarus, arriving in Lviv on Ukrainian Christmas.⁵¹ Shukhevych took advantage of the Christmas holidays to ask the German guard for permission to go home, since he lived in the vicinity and had told his wife to expect a guest. Promising to return at once, Shukhevych departed, but did not return, thus avoiding imprisonment in the Loncki jail to which all the other officers were sent.⁵²

After escaping the Germans, Shukhevych went underground. He quickly re-established contact with the OUN(B) and by May he joined the Bureau of the OUN Leadership. He reached his peak of power within the Ukrainian resistance movement in August 1943, at the Third Extraordinary Congress of the OUN, where he was chosen to head the Bureau. At the same time, he was appointed Commander in Chief of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army.⁵³ Thus, a new period began in Shukhevych's life, marked by his leadership of the Ukrainian armed struggle on two fronts: against the Nazis and the Soviet totalitarian regime.

In view of the criticisms that have been leveled at Shukhevych as an officer in the Nachtigall Battalion, which is accused of allegedly participating in the killings of Jews and Polish intellectuals in Lviv in July 1941, I propose to examine historical records in order to establish the truth.

After the Soviets reoccupied Lviv in the fall of 1944 an Extraordinary State Commission on German atrocities perpetrated on the territory of Lviv region was created by the Soviet government. The commission consisted of members of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and other influential members of the Soviet government. The results of their investigation were published in booklet form in Kyiv in 1945.⁵⁴ On the basis of the investigation, which consisted of research, eyewitness accounts, and medical reports, the

⁴⁹ Kalba, *U lavakh Druzhynnykiv*, p. 91.

⁵⁰ Pobihushchy, *Druzhyny Ukrainykykh Natsionalistiv*, p. 98.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Kalba, *U lavakh Druzhynnykiv*, pp. 137-38.

⁵³ Petro J. Potichnyj and Mykola Posivnych, eds., *Heneral Roman Shukhevych-“Taras Chuprynka”-Holovnyi Komandyr UPA*, vol. 45 of *Litopys Ukrainskoi Povstanskoj Armii* (Toronto-Lviv: Litopys UPA, 2007), p. 30. This 560-page volume is a vast collection of reminiscences about Shukhevych. Recently, the Ukrainian researcher Volodymyr Serhiichuk edited two volumes of documents from the archives of the NKVD and KGB. See his *Roman Shukhevych u dokumentakh radianskykh orhaniv derzhavnoi bezpeky (1940-1950)* (Kyiv: PP Serhiichuk M. I., 2007).

⁵⁴ *Pro zlochynstva nimtsiv na terytorii Lvivskoi oblasti. Povidomlennia Nadzvychainoi Derzhavnoi Komisii po vstanovlenniu i rozsliduvanniu zlochynstv nimetsko-fashyystykykh zaharbynykiv* (Kyiv: Ukrainske derzhavne vydavnytstvo, 1945).

commission concluded that Gestapo detachments had prepared lists of Lviv intellectuals who were slated for destruction even before the Germans entered the city.⁵⁵ The findings of the Extraordinary State Commission served as the basis for arguments advanced by General Roman Rudenko, who served as Chief Prosecutor for the USSR at the Nuremberg Trials. Addressing the Lviv problem, Rudenko stated: “Immediately after the occupation of Lvov by the Germans, mass arrests and shooting of professors, physicians, lawyers, writers, and artists started...An investigation ... showed that over 70 prominent scientists, technicians, and artists had been killed by the Germans, their bodies being subsequently burned by the Gestapo.”⁵⁶ The tragic deaths of Lviv’s outstanding intellectuals were also discussed in Nuremberg by Chief Counselor of Justice (USSR) Lev N. Smirnov, who provided some details about the victims.⁵⁷

In its published report the Extraordinary State Commission not only drew up a list of victims with some descriptions of their sufferings, but also provided a record of individuals from various branches of the German security services, who had participated in the criminal activities in Lviv.⁵⁸ It should be noted that neither the report of the Extraordinary State Commission nor Rudenko or Smirnov — nor anyone else, for that matter — mentioned anything during the Nuremberg Trials about any criminal acts perpetrated by Nachtigall or Roman Shukhevych. This fabrication was created later. The campaign to besmirch both was launched on 2 October 1959, when an instruction was issued by the Second Chief Directorate of the KGB of the USSR requesting a search for documents as well as witnesses in connection with Theodor Oberländer, the Minister for Displaced Persons, Refugees and Victims of War for the Federal Republic of Germany, who was accused of organizing the mass extermination of the civilian population in Lviv in 1941.⁵⁹ On 16 November 1959 a second directive was sent from Moscow by Lieutenant-General Fedor Shcherbak, deputy head of the Second Chief Directorate of the KGB of the USSR, urging that eyewitnesses be prepared for interrogation about Nachtigall.⁶⁰

⁵⁵ Ibid., pp. 4-7. See also *Niurnbergskii protsess nad glavnyimi nemetskimi voennymi prestupnikami*, 7 vols., ed. R. A. Rudenko, vol. 4 (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatelstvo iuridicheskoi literatury, 1959), pp. 67-82.

⁵⁶ *Trial of the Major War Criminals before the International Military Tribunal* (Nuremberg, 14 November-1 October 1946), vol. XXII (Nuremberg, 1946), pp. 341-45.

⁵⁷ Ibid., vol. VII, pp. 490-91.

⁵⁸ *Pro zlochynstva nimtsiv*, pp. 32-35.

⁵⁹ Haluzevyi Derzhavnyi Arkhiv Sluzhby Bezpeky Ukrainy (henceforward HDA SBU), fond 1, list 4, file 3, vol. 5, fol. 55.

⁶⁰ HDA SBU, fond 1, list 4, file 3, vol. 5, fol. 88.

The real objective of the KGB in pursuing the matter of Oberländer and the Nachtigall Battalion was stated in a letter sent from the KGB office of Lviv region to the chairman of the KGB of the Ukrainian SSR, Vitalii Nikitchenko. The letter clearly states that the instructions had been fulfilled with respect to gathering “evidence about the criminal acts in Lviv and on the territory of its region, which were committed by Oberländer and the Nachtigall Battalion. With the objective of compromising Oberländer and the Ukrainian nationalists, the documents gathered by the UKGB have been widely used in the local and central press, movie chronicles, and at a press conference in Moscow.”⁶¹

Having thus established a prefabricated documentary basis, Moscow was ready to launch international condemnation of Ukrainian nationalism for the alleged murder of Polish intellectuals and members of Jewish community of Lviv by linking the Nachtigall Battalion with Theodor Oberländer. Using Nachtigall and Oberländer as background, what the KGB was preparing was part of the Kremlin’s diabolical scheme whose objective was the assassination of Stepan Bandera, the leader of the OUN(B), which was preceded by the murder of Professor Lev Rebet, the head of the OUN Abroad.⁶² In January 1959 Bohdan Stashynsky, a well trained KGB assassin, who had already proved his killing skills on 12 October 1957, when he assassinated Lev Rebet in Munich, was instructed by his KGB handler Sergei A. Demon to go to Munich and determine the whereabouts of Stepan Bandera.⁶³ In October 1959 Stashynsky was told by his handler to travel to Munich and carry out Moscow’s order by killing Bandera. On 15 October he executed his mission. In December Stashynsky was summoned to Moscow, where Aleksandr Shelepin, the head of the KGB, “awarded him the Order of the Red Banner for fulfilling an important government mission.”⁶⁴

What a strange series of interconnected events: in Munich, the Ukrainians were mourning the death of their leader, not realizing that he had been assassinated by a KGB agent, while in Moscow, Shelepin and his KGB subordinates were celebrating their success in Munich. On 22 October 1959 Professor Albert Norden held a press conference in East Berlin, which marked the beginning of a campaign against the members of the Nachtigall Battalion and Professor Oberländer, who were accused of the mass murder

⁶¹ HDA SBU, fond 1, list 4, file 3, vol. 5, fols. 195-196.

⁶² Karl Anders, *Murder to Order* (London: Ampersand, 1965), p. 92.

⁶³ Danylo Chaikovskiy, ed., et al. *Moskovski vbyvtisi Bandery pered sudom* (Munich: Ukr. vyd-vo, 1965), p. 11.

⁶⁴ Chaikovskiy, *Moskovski vbyvtisi Bandery*, p. 205. See also Anders, *Murder to Order*, p. 93.

of Jews and Poles in Lviv in July 1941. These well orchestrated events melded the Ukrainian tragedy with Moscow's political objectives.⁶⁵

Immediately after Bandera's assassination both Moscow and Soviet-controlled East Germany accused Oberländer of having committed the crime in Lviv. The official organ of the Soviet Ministry of Defense, the newspaper *Krasnaia zvezda*, declared that because Bandera had entered Lviv with Nachtigall, he knew too much about Oberländer's criminal acts and was therefore killed.⁶⁶ The accusation leveled by the German Democratic Republic stated:

“Jointly with the notorious fascist and racial ideologist, Professor Hans Koch, Oberländer, in the beginning organized the Nachtigall battalion, using for this purpose the units of the Ukrainian terrorist and chauvinist, Bandera. As its military commanding officer, he drilled this battalion in the service of fascist ideology, indoctrinating it with anti-communism, and hatred against the intellectual strata of the East European nations...”

*Oberländer headed the murder battalion Nachtigall when this unit attacked the Soviet university town of Lwow during the hours of the morning of June 30, 1941. Under his leadership, the members of the Nachtigall battalion started pogroms against the Jewish population, and a systematic extermination campaign against the leading representatives of the town's intelligentsia, using for this purpose lists of names which had been prepared in advance”.*⁶⁷

For these alleged criminal acts Oberländer was found guilty by the East German court, which handed down its decision on 29 April 1960. The ruling was widely publicized throughout the communist bloc. A book about Oberländer was published in Poland, slandering Oberländer, Bandera, and Ukrainian nationalists.⁶⁸ The attacks against Oberländer continued within the Ukrainian context of the Nachtigall Battalion, but in reality the Soviet communists were seeking to defame his high position as a minister of the West German government, as well as Chancellor Adenauer, argues Hermann Raschhofer, who had been a professor of International Law in German-

⁶⁵ The German journalist Claus Larass wrote a fascinating article dealing with the details and complexities of the problem. See “Im Ostberliner Kino überkam den Mörder die Reue,” *Welt am Sonntag*, 14 October 1984 (no. 42), p. 27.

⁶⁶ Hermann Raschhofer, *Political Assassination: The Legal Background of the Oberländer and Stashinsky Cases*, trans. Ernst Schlosser (Tübingen: F. Schlichtenmayer, 1964), p. 8.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

⁶⁸ Aleksander Drozdzyński and Jan Zaborowski, *Oberländer przez “Ostforschung” wywiad i NSDAP do rządu NRF* (Poznan-Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Zachodnie, 1960).

occupied Prague in 1941.⁶⁹ The high point of this prefabricated slander was reached when the left wing of the Association of Victims of the Nazi Regime (VVN) delivered evidence against Oberländer to the Public Prosecutor of West Germany, charging him with crimes committed in Lviv in 1941.⁷⁰ Thus, the same person was the central figure to be tried in three courts of law for the same crimes that he had allegedly committed. The first took place in East Germany during a show trial, where he was found guilty in absentia by the Supreme Court of the German Democratic Republic. The next two times Oberländer was ready to testify before the Chief Public Prosecutor of District Courts in Bonn and Munich.

The war of slander waged by VVN functionaries was successful, and by May 1960 Oberländer resigned his position as minister of the West German government. But this was only the beginning of a long trial in Bonn during which all the charges were carefully re-examined. It should be noted that while Oberländer was the central figure in those legal proceedings, he was always judged as the commanding officer of the Nachtigall Battalion within the context of the events in Lviv. Therefore, Ukrainians were never left out of the picture.

As a result of the careful examination of various eyewitnesses, both military and civilian, the court came to the conclusion that there were no grounds for accusing Nachtigall of any criminal acts against Jews or Polish professors in Lviv in July 1941.⁷¹ Similarly, all accusations against Professor Oberländer's conduct were rejected as baseless.⁷² The international community learned the details about the false accusations against Oberländer only during the trial of Bandera's assassin Bohdan Stashynsky, which took place in Karlsruhe on 8-19 October 1962.⁷³ During the trial the presiding judge, Dr. Heinrich Jagusch, stated that "*the Soviet Secret Service no longer commits murder at its own discretion. Murder is now carried out on express government orders. Political murder has, so to speak, now become institutionalized.*"⁷⁴

During the investigation of the crimes in Lviv, the court established that it was the German Security Service (SD), the Security Police, and the Einsatzkommando 5 that had perpetrated the mass murder of Jews and

⁶⁹ Raschhofer, *Political Assassination*, pp. 6-7.

⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 3.

⁷¹ I was fortunate to obtain copies of the original documents of the judicial proceedings in Bonn and Munich. See Landgericht Fulda, "In der Sache Oberländer," 63/64 (Fu), pp. 8-15, 53.

⁷² Landgericht Fulda., pp. 16-17.

⁷³ Anders, *Murder to Order*, pp. 86-87.

⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 107.

Polish professors.⁷⁵ During the discussion of these tragic events the court also addressed the terrible mass murders of prisoners that the Soviets committed in the prisons of Lviv before the German troops entered the city.⁷⁶ After his trial began, Oberländer approached Wolfgang Müller, the General Secretary of the German Section of the URPE, the “Union de la Résistance pour une Europe unie” (an organization consisting of prominent World War II anti-Nazi resistance fighters and intellectuals) in Düsseldorf, with a proposal to form an independent international commission to ascertain the truth of what really happened in Lviv in 1941.⁷⁷ The commission members included the Norwegian lawyer Hans Cappelen, former Danish foreign minister and president of the Danish parliament Ole Bjørn Kraft, the Dutch socialist Karel van Staal, the Belgian law professor Flor Peeters, and the Swiss jurist and Member of Parliament Kurt Schoch.⁷⁸

In order to be free of German or any other influence, the members of the commission, who met on 27-28 November 1959, decided that all their work would be conducted in The Hague (the Netherlands).⁷⁹ The commission interviewed witnesses and re-examined various records from November 1959 to March 1960, and came to the following conclusion: “After four months of inquiries and the evaluation of 232 statements by witnesses from all circles involved, it can be established that the accusations against the Battalion *Nachtigall* and against the then Lieutenant and currently Federal Minister Oberländer have no foundation in fact.”⁸⁰ Having thoroughly documented the mass murder in Lviv by the communists,⁸¹ the commission also rejected as unfounded⁸² the accusation that Oberländer and Ukrainian nationalists were responsible for murdering Jews and Polish professors, as was stated by Alexander Dallin in his book, *German Rule in Russia, 1941-1945*.⁸³

The international commission also tried to make sense of “the deeper cause for the Kremlin’s defamation campaign against the Ukrainian unit

⁷⁵ Landgericht Fulda, “In der Sache Oberländer,” pp. 55-57. The court findings basically restated the findings of the Soviet Extraordinary State Commission on German Atrocities in Lviv Region, pp. 32-35.

⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 58. “...die Sowjetrussen vor dem Einmarsch der deutschen Truppen in Lemberg ungeheure Greuelthaten begangen hatten. Es lagen mehrere Tausend Leichen in den Gefängnissen der Stadt...”

⁷⁷ *Lemberg 1941 und Oberländer: Das Ergebnis einer Untersuchung*, Preface by Joop Zwart (Amstelveen, NL, 1960), p. 19.

⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 24.

⁷⁹ Ibid., pp. 20-21.

⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 31. For more details, see also Alfred M. de Zayas, *The Wehrmacht War Crimes Bureau, 1939-1945* (Rockport, ME: Picton Press, 2000).

⁸¹ *Lemberg 1941 und Oberländer*, pp. 28, 38-50.

⁸² Ibid., pp. 10-15.

⁸³ Alexander Dallin, *German Rule in Russia, 1941-1945: A Study of Occupation Policies*, 1st ed. (London: Macmillan & Co., Ltd., 1957).

connected with the German Wehrmacht.”⁸⁴ The commission members treated Minister Oberländer only as a side issue in the overall significance of the case. In their opinion, the KGB, in planning to murder Stepan Bandera, wanted to turn public attention away from itself and connect the murder with the Germans through Oberländer. Thus, Bandera’s assassination was prepared in such a way as to make Oberländer guilty of this crime.⁸⁵ The commission also stated that by slandering Nachtigall, the Kremlin tried to defame the symbol of the Ukrainians’ armed struggle for freedom and General Roman Shukhevych/Taras Chuprynka, the heroic Commander in Chief of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army, “which became an immortal banner carrier of the Ukrainian fight for freedom.”⁸⁶

The Oberländer trial and the subsequent findings of the International Commission, which declared Lieutenant Oberländer and the members of the Nachtigall Battalion innocent of the crimes committed in Lviv in July 1941, did not stop the communists and various irresponsible individuals from spreading calumny about them. In one case, Oberländer sued his slanderer, the writer Bernt Engelmann, who was found guilty since he could not prove that the stories he was spreading about Oberländer and Nachtigall were true. As punishment, the writer had to pay monetary damages for character defamation.⁸⁷

Neither the investigations that were carried out during the court proceedings in Bonn, Karlsruhe, and Munich, nor the research compiled by the international commission at The Hague or the materials of the Nuremberg trials (42 volumes) even once mentioned any criminal act by the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists or any of its leaders. Despite the overwhelming evidence exonerating the OUN and Roman Shukhevych, there are still individuals, particularly those with communist leanings or followers of the Moscow trend to condemn the Ukrainians’ struggle for independence, who continue to slander the leaders of the Ukrainian resistance movement.

Of course, one can always learn more about the past. In order to facilitate this process, the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) has opened its archives to all historians, and, in cooperation with the Institute of National Memory, it has established the Social Historical Hearings, which include lectures and exhibitions of documents. The goal of this project, as stated by

⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 86. “Worin liegt die tiefere Ursache der Verleumdungskampagne des Kreml gegen die in die deutsche Wehrmacht eingegliederte ukrainische Einheit *Nachtigall*?”

⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 87.

⁸⁶ Ibid., pp. 86-87.

⁸⁷ For details pertaining to the decision, see “Oberlandesgericht München Im Namen des Volkes Urteil.” Verkündet am 19. September 1983.

Valentyn Nalyvaichenko, the head of the SBU, is to learn the truth. During the opening of an exhibit of SBU archival documents and photographs devoted to the Ukrainian Insurgent Army Nalyvaichenko declared that the various speculations, myths, and stereotypes created about the OUN and UPA have prevented the Ukrainian people from learning the truth about their historical past.⁸⁸

The Historical Hearings held on 6 February 2008, which were dedicated to “the accusations against Nachtigall — historical truth or political technology,” are extremely appropriate for our discussion. The Ukrainian historian Ivan Patryliak, who teaches at Kyiv University, gave an extensive lecture on the history of the Nachtigall Battalion, which provided the hearing participants with an excellent foundation for a scholarly discussion of the problem.⁸⁹ This commendable action underscores the need always to seek out the truth and to refrain from making off-the-cuff statements that reinforce stereotypes and create animosity.

⁸⁸ http://www.pravda.com.ua/news_print/2008/5/28/76650.htm. See also http://www.ssu.gov.ua/sbu/control/uk/publish/printable_article?art_id=78839 <http://www.ssu.gov.ua/> 6 February 2008.