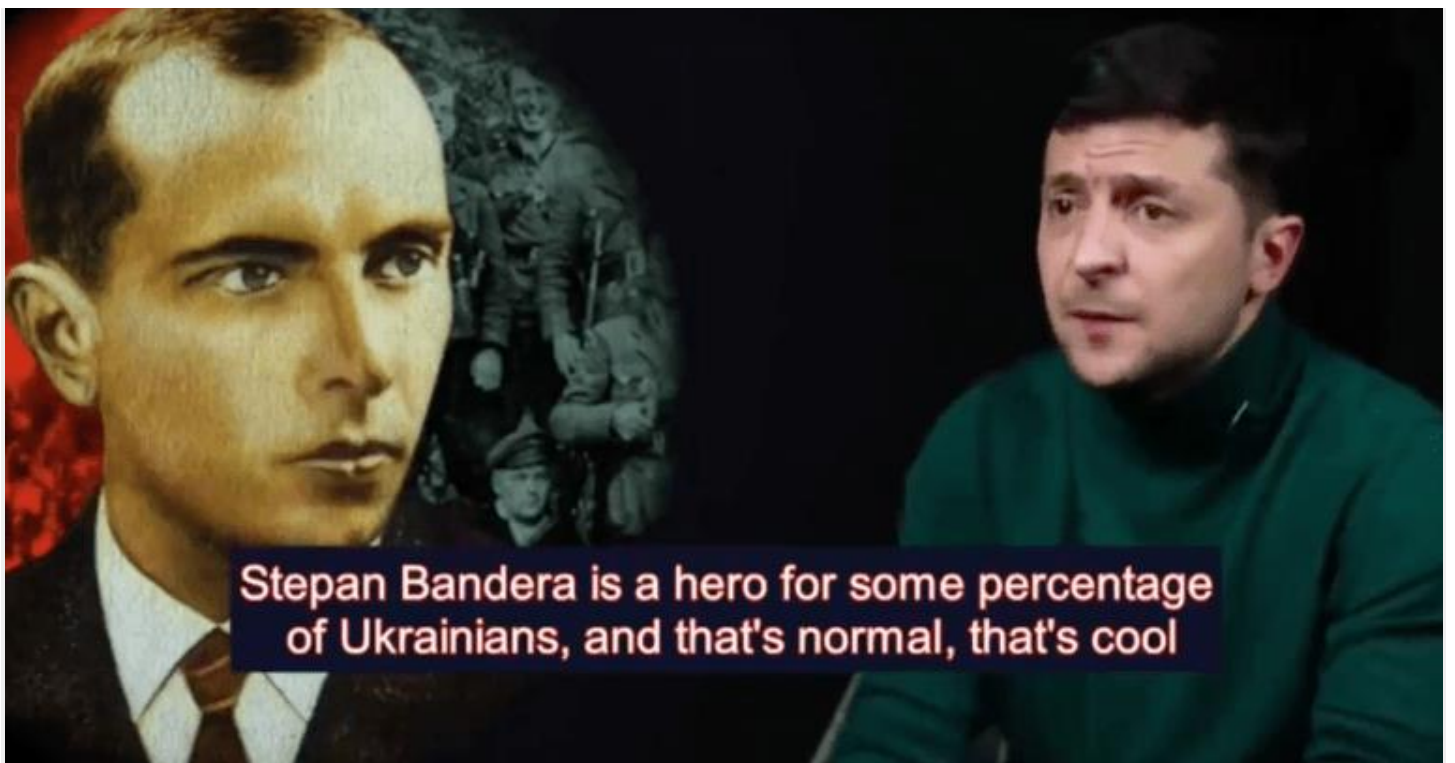


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Stepan Bandera is a hero for some percentage of Ukrainians, and that's normal, that's cool

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky discusses Stepan Bandera, OUN founder and WWII-era Nazi collaborator

Partnering with neo-Nazis in Ukraine: an inconvenient history

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Volodymyr Zelensky defeated Petro Poroshenko in the 2019 election on a platform that included making peace with Russia and signing the Minsk Agreements. The Minsk Agreements would have granted a degree of autonomy to the Donetsk and Lugansk regions of the Donbas that had voted for independence from Ukraine after the 2014 US backed coup put a government in power that was handpicked by the US and that was pro-West and anti-Russian. It was intense pressure from the far right wing ultra-nationalists that bent Zelensky from a Minsk backer into the shape of a Minsk rejecter. Under that pressure from neo-Nazi parties that have large power that is disproportionate to their small support, Zelensky abandoned his campaign peace promise and refused to talk to the leaders of the Donbas and implement the Minsk Agreements.

Those ultranationalist organizations, including Svoboda Party and the Right Sector, during the 2014 coup, again cast a shadow much larger and darker than their popular support. They commandeered and reshaped the peaceful protest. They rejected the peaceful settlement that would have called for a ceasefire and early elections. Several lines of evidence now strongly suggest that the snipers in the February 20, 2014 massacre that sent the protests spinning toward civil war were not government forces but members of the ultranationalist insurgency. And it was they who occupied the government building and forced the elected president to flee Ukraine.

After the coup, those neo-Nazi forces would brutally spearhead the fight against separatist forces in the Donbas. They were in a position to lead the fight because the most famous of them, the Azov Battalion, had been officially incorporated into the Ukrainian

National Guard. These ultranationalists had become, not only, as Richard Sakwa says in *Frontline Ukraine*, “a legitimate part of the Maidan [protest]” and “the new normal of Ukrainian state development,” they had become an official part of the Ukraine military.

They would become an official part of Ukraine government too. Sakwa says that several core ministerial positions in the Ukrainian coup government were taken by the Right Sector and Svoboda, both openly neo-Nazi parties, including top national security, defense and legal posts. The deputy prime minister and the minister of justice were both members of Svoboda. Andriy Parubiy, one of the founders of Svoboda with what Sakwa calls “a long history of ultra-nationalist activism” became secretary of the National Security Defense Council. Sakwa calls Parubiy’s appointment “astonishing.”

Stephen Cohen, who was Professor Emeritus of Russian studies and politics at Princeton, in an article on Ukraine called “[America’s Collusion With Neo-Nazis](#),” says that the coup government in Ukraine has systematically rehabilitated and memorialized Ukrainian Nazi Germany collaborators. Among the Nazi collaborators memorialized by the government of Ukraine is Stepan Bandera who allied with the Nazis and committed atrocities against Jews, Poles and Russians. Sakwa reports that “a giant portrait of Bandera was . . . on the stage during the Maidan protests.”

Stepan Bandera and the less known Mikola Lebed were prominent members of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN). In 1940, the OUN split, and Bandera became the leader of the more radical OUN-B faction. The Bandera OUN allied with the Nazis. And though the alliance may have been formed primarily on the opportunity to establish a Ukrainian state, Bandera’s OUN proved to be very willing collaborators.

According to Sakwa, “Bandera espoused a virulent form of integral nationalism, an exclusive and ethnically centered definition of the Ukrainian nation, accompanied by the murderous denigration of those who allegedly undermined his vision, notably Poles, Jews and Russians. . . .” Bandera’s forces would participate in the mass killings of those people.

In *Covert Regime Change*, Lindsey O'Rourke cites the July 1941 OUN-B declaration that Jews "have to be treated harshly. . . . We must finish them off. . . . Regarding the Jews, we will adopt any methods that lead to their destruction." She says that "In the days following the German invasion, OUN-B troops launched pogroms throughout East Galacia, killing an estimated 12,000 Jewish civilians.

The OUN-B and others would later join into the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) to fight for Ukrainian independence from both the Russians and the Nazis. To realize their dream of an ethnically exclusive nation, O'Rourke says they "engaged in widespread terrorism, mass killing, and ethnic cleansing amongst the Polish, German, Soviet, and Jewish populations in the region." Their call was "Long live greater independent Ukraine without Jews, Poles and Germans: Poles behind the San, Germans to Berlin, Jews to the gallows." OUN-A leader, Mikola Lebed declared, according to O'Rourke, that they should "cleans[e] the entire revolutionary territory of the Polish population." And they tried. "In the first half of 1943, UPA partisans . . . murdered about 40,000 Poles in Volhynia."

But why would anyone get the idea today, among Putin's perhaps exaggerated claim about denazifying the Ukrainian government and forces, that the US and its allies would partner with neo-Nazi elements in Ukraine in order to fight the Russians or bring about regime change in Russia? Because they have.

Between Bandera and Lebed's Nazi collaboration and the ultranationalist hijacking of the 2014 coup is a less told story of US and UK collaboration with Bandera and Lebed's OUN to fight the Soviet Union during the Cold War.

In September 1947, US intelligence encountered a group of Ukrainian partisans in Germany. In *Safe for Democracy*, CIA expert John Prados says the Ukrainian Supreme Liberation Council had ordered the partisans to go west "in order to get the attention of the Allied intelligence services." It worked. And there began the top-secret story of the covert marriage between the US and UK and the Ukrainians who had collaborated with the Nazis in their Cold War fight against the Soviet Union.

Even earlier, in 1946, Prados reports, the Soviets had demanded the extradition of Stepan Bandera. But in an operation code-named “Anyface,” US intelligence protected him even though they were in possession of information that potentially implicated him as a war criminal.

The US and UK would then each choose a partner. After the initial US help, the UK would go on to work with Bandera and the OUN-B; the US would work with Mikola Lebed, the chief of the security branch of the OUN-B.

In *Legacy of Ashes: the History of the CIA*, Tim Weiner says that “*Nightingale* was the code name of a Ukrainian resistance force [Secretary of Defense] Forestal had authorized to carry out a secret war against Stalin. Its leaders,” he says, “included Nazi collaborators who had murdered thousands of people. . . .” A 1947 US Counter Intelligence Corp. (CIC) report already notes the “close connection with the Bandera movement.”

According to O’Rourke, in February 1947, Lebed “approached the CIC about the possibility of collaboration.” The CIC agreed, and, according to Weiner, the CIA smuggled Lebed into the US, telling US immigration officials that Lebed was “rendering valuable assistance to this Agency in Europe.”

As was the case with Bandera, the CIA was not ignorant of Lebed’s past. Weiner says, “The agency’s own files described the Ukrainian faction led by Lebed as a ‘terrorist organization’.” And they knew Lebed had allied with the Nazis. “The Justice Department,” Weiner reports, “determined that he was a war criminal who had slaughtered Ukrainians, Poles, and Jews.” They even attempted to deport Lebed, but Allen Dulles intervened, telling the federal immigration commissioner that Lebed was “of inestimable value to this Agency.”

A top-secret April 1948 CIA report to the National Security Council quoted by O’Rourke would outline the proposed Cold War collaboration with the ultranationalist Ukrainian Nazi collaborators and suggest “their possible value to the US Government for the purposes of propaganda, sabotage and anti-Communist political activity.”

That operation would go on to receive the code name “Operation AERODYNAMIC” and would be launched by the CIA in 1948.

O’Rourke quotes the CIA’s Frank Wisner as saying that “In view of the extent and activity of the resistance movement in Ukraine, we consider this to be a top priority project.” She cites a CIA document acquired under the Freedom of Information Act that reveals operational plans for “the exploitation and expansion of the Ukrainian resistance movement” for “political and psychological warfare [and] resistance and guerilla warfare.”

Operation Aerodynamic was a failure, or “ill-fated and tragic,” as the CIA called it.

The story of the OUN’s Nazi collaboration during World War II and the story of the ultranationalist role in the 2014 coup and the subsequent Ukrainian military and government have been told, though rarely by the mainstream media. But chronologically between those two events is the much less told story of the US and its allies partnering with Ukrainian ultranationalist Nazi collaborators to fight against the Soviet Union in the Cold War.

Why would anyone believe that the US and its allies would collaborate with ultra-nationalists in Ukraine to fight the Russians? Because they have.

[AZOV BATTALION NAZIS NEO-NAZIS OUN - BPETRO POROSHENKO RUSSIA STEPAN BANDERA UKRAINE UKRAINIAN NEO-NAZIS](#)



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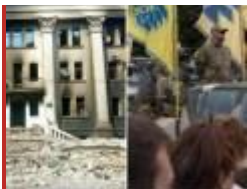
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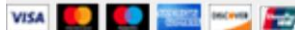
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