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ASSASSIN: 80

BONN, Germany AP - A Soviet assassin convicted in 1961 of slaying two Ukrainian emigre leaders with a poison gas gun has been released from prison and a West German magazine says he is living in the United States.

The West German Justice Ministry confirmed today that Bogdan B. Stashinsky, 37, was released from prison two years ago after serving five years of an eight-year prison term and left West Germany. The ministry said he was eligible for release because he had served two-thirds of his sentence.

The ministry said he was allowed to leave West Germany because his life was in danger here. It would not say where he went.

The Hamburg weekly magazine Stern reported in its current issue that Stashinsky and his wife went to the United States.

"He was met by agents of the U.S. intelligence service CIA and immediately taken to the United States in a military plane," the magazine said.

In October, 1961, the West German Supreme Court sentenced Stashinsky to eight years for the killings in Munich of Ukrainian nationalist leaders Lev Rebet in 1957 and Stefan Bandera in 1959.

Stashinsky, who turned himself in and admitted the slayings, said he had killed on orders of the Soviet secret service with pistols that sprayed potassium cyanide and caused instant death.

In imposing what was considered a comparatively light sentence, the court said it decided that Stanshinsky was only a toll in the hands of the Soviet government.

Stashinsky testified he was blackmailed into joining the secret service in 1950 after he was caught making an illegal trip to his native Ukraine.

He fled to West Berlin with his East German wife in August 1961, less than 24 hours before the Communists erected the Berlin wall. He was stationed in East Berlin and said he fell into disfavor with the Kremlin by marrying the East German woman.

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