

# THE SUNDAY TIMES *Magazine*

**ARRESTED**  
Marcantoni

**DEAD**  
Markovic

**DEAD**  
Milosevic

**SCREEN  
GANGSTER**  
Delon

**DIVORCED**  
Nathalie

"To lose one bodyguard,  
M. Delon,  
may be regarded as a misfortune;  
to lose both  
looks like carelessness..."



Alain Delon calls it the Markovic Affair. Everyone else in Paris calls it the Delon Affair. It encompasses the sinister entourage of France's most popular film star; the violent deaths of two of his bodyguards; the dinner engagements of a former prime minister; the divorce of Delon and his wife Nathalie (below); Nathalie's relationship with the second

'victim, Stefan Markovic; the arrest on suspicion of the Corsican Francois Marcantoni. It has prompted whispers of hired killings, drug trafficking, orgies and political conspiracy. It has set all France by the ears and has had the Paris newspapermen working overtime for seven months. On the following pages James Fox sets a major scandal in perspective

## THE DELON AFFAIR





The body of Stefan Markovic was found early in the morning of October 1 last year by a scrap merchant rummaging a rubbish tip at Elancourt, in the Yvelines district of west Paris. It was tied up in a sack, which was wrapped in a plastic mattress cover. A first examination showed that Markovic's head had been battered. A second autopsy revealed that a bullet had lodged in his brains; these had been sewn back by the pathologists into the abdominal cavity. On October 3 the body was identified - Markovic was already on the police files - and four days later came the news that Markovic had been the bodyguard of Alain Delon. He was the second Delon bodyguard to have died mysteriously. In 1966, Milos Milosevic, the first one who had already left Delon's service, had been found dead in a house in Hollywood with Barbara Rooney, Mickey Rooney's wife. Barbara Rooney was found holding a pistol, and the police concluded that it was suicide. But Milosevic's body had been mummified and marks discovered on it later suggested that they had both come to a much more violent end. The Press saw Markovic's death as an epic repeat of the Milosevic story. Then it became known that Markovic, who had been living in a separate flat in Delon's house, had been the lover of Nathalie Delon, the film star's divorced wife. Markovic's brother, Alexander, had already given the police one of his last letters which said that if anything happened to him, Alain Delon, Nathalie and François Marcantoni would be "100,000 per cent. responsible".

### 850 files: the case of Stefan Markovic

That was the first sign of scandal, but it was pale beside the news that followed. One of the first witnesses to be interrogated by the police mentioned the name of Madame Pompidou. The wife of France's former Prime Minister, he said, had been a friend of Stefan Markovic. There was rumour of orgies and photographs; there was conjecture of a scandal worse than the Ballets Russes or the Ben Barka affair and of an ignominious end to Pompidou's career. Stefan, it seemed, had been a black-mailer.

The blackmail rumours were supported by a series of faked pornographic photographs featuring a prostitute who bore a close resemblance to Madame Pompidou, which had filtered on to the Paris freelance market.

Then a friend of Delon's, François Marcantoni, Corsican underworld operator and Resistance fighter, was interrogated, and finally arrested for complicity in the crime on January 17.



Ex-Prime Minister Georges Pompidou and his wife

Marcantoni had known Delon from Marseilles back in 1956 before Delon had even thought of making movies, and he was typical of the Delon entourage. It appeared that Marcantoni had seen Stefan Markovic within two days of his death. Marcantoni denied it. But a pair of binoculars belonging to Stefan were found in Marcantoni's possession after the murder. A Yugoslav friend of Stefan's, Ismet Ismanovich, said that he gave the binoculars back to Stefan on September 20, two days before he disappeared. Marcantoni said no, they had been given to him on the 17th. Then another Yugoslav friend of Stefan, Uros Milosevic, the last person who admits seeing him alive, said that he had seen Stefan getting into a taxi with Marcantoni outside the Delon apartment in the Avenue de Messine on September 22, the day he disappeared. He then withdrew the statement, but later, from the safety of Belgrade, said that Marcantoni had threatened him.

Between January and March the case dragged its feet. Witnesses were questioned by the *juge d'instruction*, who, under French law, is the man solely responsible for directing the police in their investigations. Delon was questioned a number of times, but seemed to know nothing, and the Judge who had amassed 850 files on the case seemed to be getting nowhere in his reconstruction of the last days of Stefan Markovic. His investigations were handicapped by the fact that the

two most important witnesses, Uros Milosevic and another young Yugoslav friend of Markovic, Misha Slovenac, had seemingly been allowed to leave the country. They had both shown that they knew more about Stefan's last days and the nature of his death than anyone else who had so far appeared. Misha had been at St Tropez while Delon was making his latest film, *La Piscine*, and had checked out of his hotel on September 19. Uros went to his grandmother in Belgrade on October 20 with police permission. Misha effected his escape at the end of November after hiding out in the psychiatric ward of a hospital, watching the evidence building up against him. The police had made almost no effort to look for him.

Then, on March 4, came official confirmation of what had got beyond rumour but hadn't yet been established in fact: that Alexander Markovic, the victim's brother and what the French call the civil party, had mentioned that he saw Pompidou and his wife at a dinner party given by the Delons. Marcantoni's lawyers wanted to call Pompidou to show that he was lying, and thus to discredit the rest of his evidence.

Pompidou's statement in reply hinted at a political plot, which was later discussed at length in the political journals. The citing of himself as a witness, he said, "follows a series of untruthful rumours which have been freely disseminated for several weeks,

and whose ends are totally contrary to the interests of Justice". He and his wife, the statement said, knew neither the course nor circumstances of the affair.

More than anything, this affair has been an epic of the life and times of Alain Delon, the central character in the life story of Stefan Markovic. He was becoming the tragic hero in the psychological drama of *l'affaire Delon* or the man many French journalists would simply like to see in prison in *l'affaire Markovic*. It was a time for profiles and life stories. His personality, his tastes and his entourage, all of which seemed to be an explanation of the violence that surrounded him, it was discovered, came out of his past life. As a man, Delon is irresistibly fascinating, enigmatic. The two Yugoslavs who perhaps got closest to him, Milos Milosevic and Stefan Markovic, both died in mysterious circumstances - the first probably murdered, the second undoubtedly murdered. Delon's image is wild, tough and insulting, as professional on the screen as Jean Gabin; he is beautiful, sensual, magnetic, with a hankering after underworld excitement and tough friends. It was as if the legend of his personality, of the impending violence of his life and his entourage, had come to a climactic truth. Delon was not only the star of 24 movies and 10 gangster roles, but now the star of a living scenario where the exotic tastes of Paris society and the literally murderous milieu of underworlds and gangsters had come to an explosive embrace. Delon was the symbol of it, he had always been the symbol of it. He had finally identified himself with the workings of the milieu. "I live in a dangerous jungle," he said, but that's the way he liked it. There was a feeling of unreality about it, except that in the world of Delon people did get killed.

Two of the more intellectual magazines in Paris, *L'Express* and the *Nouvel Observateur* - the only journal apart from THE SUNDAY TIMES MAGAZINE to get an interview with him for three months - who were dissatisfied with the clichés of a movie gangster playing out his role in real life, took a serious look at him as a modern myth. No doubt about it, they found there was something deeply intriguing, if unlikeable, about Delon. But "When is he playing?" complained the *Nouvel Observateur*, "when is he playing at playing?"

Whatever did happen to Stefan Markovic, his death and that of Milos Milosevic represent a tragic side to Delon's life, the hard way of living and the classic side to his image. "I like to live dangerously, fastly, quickly," he says, "not a physical danger you understand. You know you can go a long way, but if you go too fast, ➤

you've got to have such a strong head and shoulders to be able to resist. If you have just one weak point, it's over. Milos went a long way, yes, but too fast."

"Those two guys were very free guys. When they left and came here it was a sort of discovery of another world and it pleased them. But I think it went too fast, probably, and they weren't really ready to receive that sort of different life, that easy life, if you want. But if I have to look inside myself and in front of myself and say what was my real fault, it was certainly to give them that sort of life. Because at a certain point they were just like me, when we were together. But not outside, and that was my biggest fault, because it sort of spoiled them too fast."

Delon is now in his rococo apartment in the Rue François Premier, just across the river from Les Invalides. It's the day of the national strike and the candles give out a morbid light. There's the Russian billiard table, the Géricaults on the wall hiding the projector lenses, and, behind the wall, the two gigantic projectors with ventilation tubes reaching through the roof. Items of the arms collection, Winchesters and Remingtons, are in the back room. Delon is talking American, which is appropriately the way he learned English. His voice sounds like a Bowery-educated Rocco, who ended up in France.

This is the gentle, purring Delon, but he can flash his aggression like an animal. His movements are supple and quick and his presence really astounding. Delon calls the 'bodyguards' story a myth, but the gentleman who serves coffee has a huge physique, two days growth of beard, and frayed blue cuffs with large gold links sticking out from under his Indian jacket.

"My father was the director, not the owner, of the Regina cinema at Bourg à la Reine, my mother prepared prescriptions in a pharmacy." They divorced when he was four. His guardian lived near the Fresnes prison and Delon and his friends played football in the prison yard. He went to religious schools he detested, ran away to go to Chicago and was picked up several car rides later. He was already tormented, undisciplined, wild.

He felt a stranger to his half-brothers and sisters. He felt he didn't belong. At 15 he became an apprentice *charcutier*, then a qualified *charcutier*, and at 17 his mother sent him off to the army. He arrived in Indo-China in 1954, just after Dien Bien Phu. It was an experience of freedom and of friends that he never forgot. In Indo-China he made a first contact with the Corsicans and cultivated the hard habits so important to his image of



A rare photograph of the Delons with François Marcantoni

himself now. "It was the happiest time of my life. I was 20,000 kilometres from home. It was great. You felt anything could happen, and you could play at being a man. You even had a gun." During his military training near Toulon, Delon met Mr and Mrs Charles Marcantoni, who ran a bar, *Le Dauphin* (in an area still known as Chicago), and it was there he met Charles's brother, François Marcantoni, the boss.

Back in Paris, in 1956, Delon met the wife of Yves Allegret, who cast him on sight for her husband's next film. Delon got his first part in Allegret's *Quand la femme s'en mêle*. "I did it to please him. I had no interest in the cinema." He had already moved in with an actress, Brigitte Auber, who was making a name for herself. He had graduated from night work at Les Halles, hauling vegetables, being a waiter. He had already been offered a contract by Selznik for seven years, after a talent scout had seen him at Cannes in a smoking jacket borrowed from Jean-Claude Brialy. "It was Dutch to me," said Delon, and turned it down. Georges Beaume, who became his manager, already knew him at the time of that first trip to Cannes. "Whenever he went into a club with Brigitte," says Beaume, "everybody looked at this boy. He had an authority, a presence. He had friends like Brialy, and Jean-Paul Belmondo. They were already professionals and Alain had never even thought of the cinema. He was a prince, that's what Visconti called him later."

### Delon today: still the wild boy of Indo-China

After Allegret came money, the meetings with Clement and with Visconti, the two most important figures in his career. With Visconti he made *Rocco and his Brothers*. "It was a beautiful part, but more than that a beautiful film. But anyway I would have done anything with Visconti at that time," he said. *La Joie de Vivre*,

*Rocco and his Brothers*, *Plein Soleil*, *Le Samourai*, *L'Insoumi*, *La Piscine* are the films he liked best. In the theatre, *Les Yeux Crevés*, written by Jean Cau, was his favourite part.

But after 12 years of hard work, Delon's character hasn't changed much according to his friends. He's still the wild boy of his Indo-China days, and he clings to the memories as if the source of his talent was there, in his adolescence. Jean Cau, novelist, winner of the Prix Goncourt, playwright, director, who has known Delon for 10 years, says: "The drama of his life is perhaps the difficulty of passing from adolescence to manhood. He never acts with his head, although he is very intelligent. But both in his life and in his profession he is extraordinarily instinctive. He is perhaps the most instinctive person I have ever met. He is a real animal with animal instincts which are incredibly sure, like the homing instincts of a migrating bird. He is a child with a child's genius, a child's instinct and rapid understanding. He's not a rebel. He's untamed, a wild thing with the independence and pride of untamed animals." Others, like the technicians who work with him, for example, are not so charitable.

Delon quotes his favourite passage from Camus's *L'Etranger* to describe himself: "... so that I can feel less lonely, I can only hope that there are many spectators on my execution day, and that they greet me with shouts of hatred." "That book was a sort of date in my life," says Delon, "because sometimes I felt myself so near to the Stranger and that's why I repeat that phrase which I think is so beautiful. When you say it's a sort of persecution, it's probably true, but in that way of persecution I don't want my hate to fall down. I want to face it and say, all right I'm here, come on and hate me and yell at me.

"That hate is very much inside of me. I'm sort of a lonely man if you want, by birth, by nature. I was almost forced to be what I am as an actor. It's almost against 90 per cent.

of my personality and temperament."

But Delon's friendships are lasting and unquestioning; his friends are vital to him. The friendships start instinctively, almost violently. Those with the two Yugoslavs, Milos Milosevic and Stefan Markovic, were relationships almost founded on the rapport of schoolboys. "He doesn't think about friendship," says Cau, "it either happens or it doesn't."

Delon met Milos in 1963 in Belgrade when he was filming *Marco Polo* with producer Raoul Levy. It was a project Delon never finished - the production went bankrupt and was restarted with Horst Buchholz in his place. Milos came back to Paris the same year to look for Delon, who installed him in his apartment in the Avenue de Messine. Milos introduced him to Stefan the same year. And in August Delon married Nathalie.

His affair with Romy Schneider had ended abruptly and his infatuation with Nathalie had been equally rapid. They had a son, Anthony, whom Delon worships above everything else in his life. It was a marriage that Delon believed in, but it was a relationship of violence, passion and jealousy. "She led her own life," said Delon. By the time the divorce suit was filed in August 1967, Stefan had become Nathalie's lover. Delon continued to support Stefan until almost a year later.

"I was hurt by Nathalie," says Delon, "in the sense that it was a flop, which I can't accept myself. I'm not a loser and I lost. But it hurt me more for my son, because that's the same youth I had, and I wanted him to have a different one. Now he's going to have the same start as I had which is a divorced family and separate. So that's the way it hurts me."

When Stefan disappeared Delon was in St Tropez filming *La Piscine* with his old flame Romy Schneider. When he heard the news he came to Paris. He had already had a visit in St Tropez a week earlier from Uros Milosevic, the last person who admits to seeing Stefan alive. Uros must have discovered something, either from Delon or from some of the Yugoslavs who had invaded St Tropez while Delon was filming. Uros had returned to Paris badly disturbed. He told his parents that Stefan had been shot (the police didn't discover this until a month later).

"He will never be found. He has been cut into a thousand pieces and thrown into the Seine," he said.

For Delon, the scandal had begun, the exposés, the rumours. He was interrogated for hours on end, along with Nathalie, Georges Beaume, his photographer, his chauffeur, and dozens of bit players from the Yugoslav milieu. He asked the police for permission to carry a firearm ➤



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after a wheel had been loosened on Nathalie's car. He appeared in tears on television, describing how his son could have been killed.

Nathalie's background was, if anything, even less secure than that of her ex-husband. Her real name is Francine Canovas. Her father was a junior officer in an Algerian artillery regiment based in Casablanca. His name is not known and Francine never knew him. He left when she was two years old and moved to Oran. Her mother did housework to keep the family alive, and Francine grew up suffering and suffocating like every ambitious French girl who dreamed of Paris.

When she was 17, Francine met her first husband, Guy Barthélémy, who is now an insurance inspector in a large private firm in Paris.

He describes their first meeting. "It was at the beginning of 1960. I was 23 and she was 17. We were both *piets-noirs* (White French North Africans). Francine was already very beautiful at the time. I saw her for the first time at the Kon-Tiki swimming pool in the Ain-Biad district of Casablanca.

### Bodyguard no. 1: the death of Milosevic

"In March we were married because Francine was expecting a child. To tell the truth I wasn't very much in love, and I don't think Francine was either, but for her it was a means of escaping from her home life and her divorced mother.

"I could see her true character from the beginning. She always wanted to go out, to spend money, and to spend her time with people who lived in night clubs. I always knew she'd get into trouble. She looked for it all the time, and I say it without bitterness because I've totally forgotten about her."

When Nathalie junior was born - her mother later adopted the same name - Barthélémy went to do his national service in Germany. That was the last of their marriage. Francine disappeared, Barthélémy sued for divorce and got custody of their child.

Nathalie's character had already hardened against the world. She said later, "There are women who are born victims. What I despise most about them is their submission to their husbands. I loathe nothing more than the worthy sort of women."

The next three years of her life before her marriage to Delon were not her most reputable. It is almost certain that Nathalie met François Marcantoni around this time. Marcantoni was living in Morocco, dealing in all sorts of goods. Nathalie's actual

dealings with him are hazy, but she followed him to Marseilles and kept in touch with him. It was there, almost certainly, that she met Delon. The meeting was arranged by Marcantoni, who was a witness at the wedding, with Milos Milosevic acting as liaison man. Delon says he met her in Paris.

Nathalie's daughter, now nine years old, still lives with Barthélémy in Paris. Barthélémy recounts that Stefan often came to pick her up over the weekend to take her to her mother who has said: "I've had lovers and acquaintances, but Stefan was my only real friend."

Nathalie is now trying to make it by herself in the movie world. Last month, before returning for an interrogation by the *juge d'instruction*, she was filming *Les Soeurs* in Rome.

Milos Milosevic was Delon's first Yugoslav factotum and friend. His death in Hollywood in 1963 was not unlike that of Johnny Stompanato, Lana Turner's lover, except that Milosevic was found dead with Barbara Rooney, Mickey Rooney's wife, in her apartment and the shaky verdict was suicide, and Stompanato was stabbed by Lana Turner's 14-year-old daughter. But they were both tragic stories of good looking boys trying for the Hollywood dream and dying in their agonising failure to reach it.

The Milosevic family are still re-investigating the death of Milos, with the help of a private detective. When his mummified body was re-examined in Belgrade in March 1966 it was discovered that Milos had several wounds on his body which indicated a pretty desperate fight against his assailants. Misha Slovenac, whom Stefan had always suspected of knowing the real cause of Milos's death, rang up Milos's sister Zorica in Rome after Stefan's death and told her to stop the enquiries into how Milos had died. "And tell your mother, too," he said.

It was Milos who persuaded Delon to get Stefan out of jail in 1964. He had been locked up under suspicion of committing a jewel theft with Misha and somehow Misha had escaped. Milos also persuaded Delon to let Stefan replace him after he had gone to Hollywood to take up his job with Mickey Rooney. "Put your strength, your style and your vitality to the use of everything that is good and beautiful," Delon warned Milos in a letter in 1963, "you will never regret it. And don't try to go against your heart which is beautiful, big and safe."

After Milos's death, Delon paid for his body to be flown back to Yugoslavia. He also kept a suitcase in the cellar of his house in Paris, full of Milos's personal belongings, as a sentimental souvenir.

François Marcantoni was ➡➡➡

arrested mainly because he seemed to have featured so prominently in the days of Stefan's disappearance. His arrest was a glamorous affair. In order that he shouldn't damage himself or be damaged in any way, two motorcycles and three police vans escorted him to an aerodrome near Toulon for the flight to Paris. An army North Atlas aeroplane flew him there, and five gendarmes with sub-machine guns watched him during the flight. When he arrived at Villacoublay airport, near Paris, a cortege of police motorcyclists was waiting to take him to Versailles to confront the judge. "Lie flat on the floor," snapped one of his guards. Along the road there were more gendarmes armed to the teeth and at Versailles, police cordons. "Qu'est ce que c'est que ce cinéma?" a stunned Marcantoni asked the judge.

Marcantoni is a *caïd du milieu*, a king of the Corsican operators, who was let out of jail twice during his career under a general amnesty for prisoners. When he was born in Alzi, Corsica on May 26, 1920 the midwife, following Corsican tradition, made a prediction. "Your son," she told Marcantoni's parents, "will forever walk the brink of an abyss but shall never fall." When the war started, Marcantoni was 20, and he joined the Resistance. He took on the dangerous missions, arms running, sabotage, anything that involved action and a few bursts of the *mitraillette*. And then he made his first sorties into the world of crime: he started running black market goods between the French forces of the interior and the Gestapo. Colonel Deschamp gave him a citation. In 1944 he was arrested by the French police for stealing a car, which he needed, he said, to track down a Gestapo agent from Lyon. "The cops were on the other side then," said Marcantoni, "and I was condemned to 20 years forced labour."

### Bodyguard no. 2: the persecution complex of Stefan

But the liberation and an amnesty saved him. Marcantoni walked the streets of Marseilles, moved into the cinema world, made friends with the stars of the day, Ginette Leclerc and Viviane Romance. He knew the big time gangsters, Mémé Guerini, Mathieu Costa. To consolidate his position he started a night club, Jimmys, with his brother Charles at Cannes. Another of his brothers, Lucien, had a little café at Toulon called Le Dauphin, which was patronised by sailors. Marcantoni used to drink there from time to time and one day his brother introduced him to Alain Delon, who was at that time a marine cadet. "If I immediately

became friends with Alain Delon," said Marcantoni, "it was because this strange, pleasant guy, who couldn't stop talking, reminded me of when I was 20."

Marcantoni became a star in Delon's world. In Delon's house he met Brigitte Bardot, Bob Zaguri, Mireille Darc, Jean-Claude Brialy. He travelled to the resorts, St Tropez, Cannes, Megève. He could be seen strolling on the turf of Longchamps racecourse on Sunday afternoons.

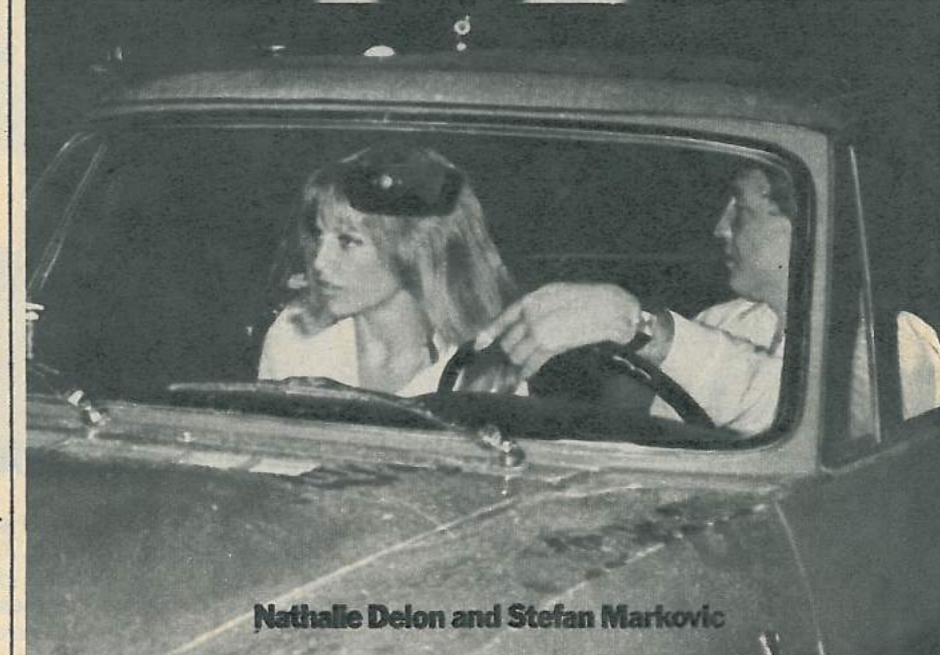
His last official brush with the law was in 1958 when he was convicted of armed robbery, but the General's amnesty after the Algerian war cut his term from five years to a few months. Marcantoni has insisted that he hardly knew Stefan Markovic, except as the "man who opened the door at the Delons". "Anyway, if I had killed him he would never have been found. I've got a lot of hectares of land, and there's grass on top of them all," he said.

During the last weeks of his life Stefan appeared to be losing his grip, and his personality seemed to be disintegrating. The intelligence attributed to him by Delon never seemed to be applied to his criminal activities. He started lunging out without calculation or judgment. He gambled sums he could ill afford (and perhaps finally did not pay) on poker and horses. He came between a friend and his wife. He made himself unpopular with his milieu friends. He had broken the rules and they started treating him like an outcast. The police were getting ready to ask him about a robbery in the Val d'Isère. He was pestering Delon constantly to take him back or provide phoney pay chits to convince the authorities that he was steadily employed, and so avoid any argument over his residence permit. But Delon had dropped him, he didn't trust him any more. Stefan then went through the motions of displaying a classic persecution complex about Delon, whom he had once hero-worshipped, and, perhaps seeing himself on the point of being destroyed, out of well-founded fear or just paranoia, he made attempts to destroy Delon, to hurt him. He contemplated the ludicrous idea of stealing Delon's collection of arms and holding it to ransom, according to his Yugoslav friend, Ismet Ismanovich. He railed against Delon to his friends, he talked of 'taking him over!' This was either fear or derangement.

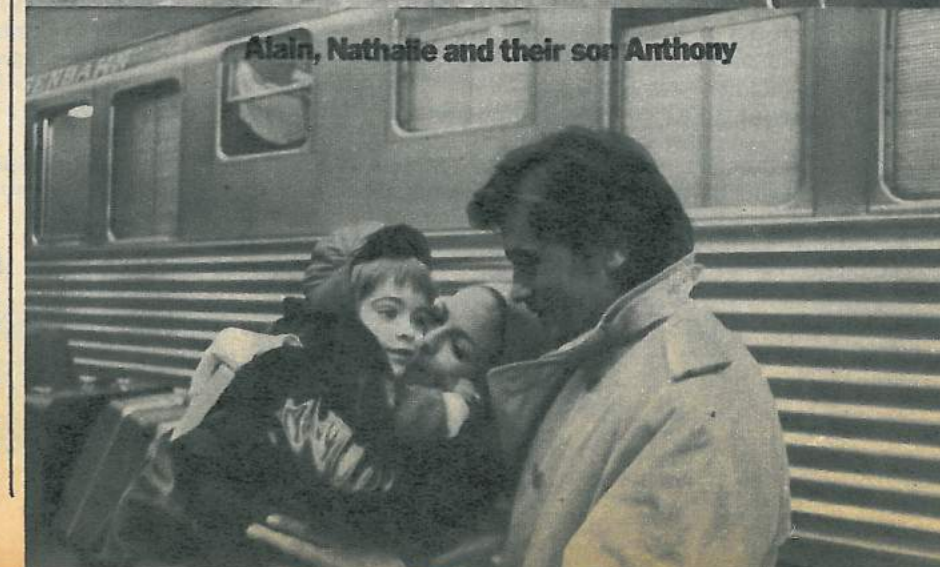
The conviction that he was in danger shows up not only in his elaborate arrangements for telling friends the names of those who would be responsible for his death, but also in the letters to his brother Alexander that spoke of his last wishes, of "intrigues, which were always my weak point". "I am at war," he said, ➡➡➡



Misha Slovenac



Nathalie Delon and Stefan Markovic



Alain, Nathalie and their son Anthony



"and I will die if it's my lot to die." In this letter, in which he mentioned the names of Delon, Nathalie and Marcantoni as being responsible, he said: "We may laugh about it later, but this could also become an essential document - like a certificate of insurance from Lloyds - if someone, among the jealous husbands, wants to insure me."

Stefan's life had been lived in Delon's shadow for four years and now, finding himself penniless and patronless, he returned to petty crime for survival. He fell back on the Yugoslav milieu - a poor and disorganised version of the Corsican criminal set-up - for his facilities.

He had talked about a *gros coup* before he died. According to Uros's stepfather, this was to be the burglary of a country house with contents worth £80,000. It had been proposed to him by two of the men he feared most, and he had told his girl friend Claudie Hoss that he thought these two men were trying to trap him, somewhere, somehow. He spent much of the last week of his life deciding whether or not to undertake the project. He also showed a certain reluctance to join his usual poker partners, one of whom was Marcantoni.

Since his estrangement from the Delons, Stefan had taken up permanent residence with Claudie Hoss with whom he had a warm if spasmodic relationship for four years. Stefan telephoned Misha almost every night at St Tropez. Could he have been becoming worried about his relationship with Delon? It's possible, because on the night of September 21, Zorica Milosevic, Milos's sister, received her last telephone call from Stefan. He said he was going to meet two people who would "let him know where he stood", but that it would be dangerous, and he couldn't explain it on the telephone.

Two days beforehand, Misha Slovenac checked out of his hotel in St Tropez. He had warned Stefan to keep away from the Delons. He had indicated to Zorica that it was he who was going to take Stefan's place as Delon's right hand man, and that he had been angling for it for some time.

Misha disappeared into Paris soon after Stefan's death. For one thing the police wanted to question him for a robbery, and still do. And the clear evidence was that Misha was near Stefan during the last hours of his life. Before he left he spoke to Zorica again by telephone and gave her a detailed description of how Stefan died. "It was in a garage, or rather a cellar, with a bullet through his head," he told her. At this point not even the police knew that Stefan had been shot.

But there was one other person who knew the details as well, and a long time before the police. That was



The investigating judge, René Patard

Uros Milosevic. His behaviour after Stefan's disappearance was enigmatic; it looked as if he were trying to avert Stefan's death. On the 24th Claudie, Uros and another Yugoslav opened Stefan's last letter and sent it on to Alexander Markovic. Now it looked as if Stefan was in real trouble.

Uros arrived to stay with Claudie carrying a black suitcase and an LP sleeve which was full of letters and photographs belonging to Stefan.

That night Uros called on Delon's manager, Georges Beaume. "I kicked him out of Nathalie's house," said Beaume. "He told me 'I've got documents' and I don't know what . . . I called him a master blackmailer." Uros, with considerable courage, had in fact gone into Beaume's office and told him that Stefan was dead and that according to Stefan's last letter, it was Marcantoni who had killed him. Beaume rang Marcantoni and told him. "I was incredibly shocked," said Beaume. It's likely that Uros used the 'documents' half-heartedly in an attempt to prevent Stefan's death and to get in touch either with Delon or Marcantoni.

Next day Uros headed for St Tropez at Delon's expense. But first he took the suitcase and record sleeve round to his parents. "Stefan is dead," he announced bluntly. But Uros, they remarked, was behaving as if Stefan were still alive, though in danger.

In the suitcase were some of Stefan's possessions and a large black notebook and some smaller green ones in which Stefan kept his diary. The story is that these are Stefan's memoirs, and that they begin, "I wish to tell the story of the scandalous behaviour of a couple whose rise has been spectacular . . ." They may not have been as scandalous as the rumour suggested,

but it would almost certainly have contained details of Stefan's rupture with the Delons and the last weeks of his life. Stefan was a prodigious writer. It was a way of unburdening himself, said Claudie.

On the 28th, Uros took the black suitcase to an automatic locker in the Gare de l'Est. His father kept it fed daily with franc pieces. There is some confusion as to the contents of the case at this time, but the case the police retrieved did not contain the diaries. The letters were given to Alexander Markovic by Uros. "But," says Dumas, Alexander's lawyer, "the collection does not appear to be complete."

But where was Stefan between September 22 and October 1? The scrap merchant had not visited the tip for three days before he discovered Stefan's body. Since the sack was so visible, it was probably put there the night before. The doctors who performed the autopsy on October 2 fixed the date of death at September 26 or 27. Either way, dead or alive, his killers hung on to Stefan for at least six days.

But the fascinating side to the story is the official effort that has been made to keep the story from exploding and muddying famous people. The director of public prosecutions issued a directive on October 15 to any detective working on the case telling them that indiscreet talk to pressmen would cost them demotion. When Maître Dumas announced that he was going to act as counsel for the civil party, i.e. for Alexander Markovic, some gangster group, maybe from the French special branches, political toughs or friends of interested parties in the case, began terrorising Dumas and his family. His car was stolen and smashed and the flat of one of his partners

broken into. The thieves failed to find the Markovic dossier which they were looking for, and which was indeed in the house. "We're not as stupid as that," says Dumas. In a situation like that, in Paris, it seems hardly worth calling the police.

Then the first policeman to hear the name of Madame Pompidou, when taking down a statement (it recurred 36 times), did not have the courage to include it in the *procès verbal* he sent to the Judge. Instead he sent a memo to his chief who passed it to the Ministry of the Interior, who informed the Palais de Justice, which told Judge Patard to spare nobody.

Then the police had let two important witnesses disappear, and made an appallingly superficial examination of the villas of the Celle St Cloud-Reuil area, west of the Bois de Boulogne, in one of which Stefan used to play poker and where he may have been killed. Our own enquiries showed how little they had done in their fear of uncovering the eminent "industrialist" who lived in one of the villas. The Judge, getting little help from the police, had sent a spotter plane up, filled with Yugoslavs and cops to try to identify the villa. He was planning to take a witness, Milovar Rodic, known as King Kong, around the area in his Peugeot 404 to look for it. Rodic claimed that he went there with Stefan on the night of September 15. Then amnesia hits him and he can remember only the fare (26 francs) and the vague direction and style of the house. But in the stockbroker belt they all look the same anyway - the mansard roofs and pine trees.

All of which is at the expense of the hard working Judge Patard, who seems to have had his life's most important case incapacitated by the absent witnesses and the reticent police. For him it's slow and unending. Dumas himself has tried, in his own way, to encourage the police to be a little more conscientious.

But then, finally, the police couldn't, or didn't want to, prevent the calling of M. Pompidou as a witness. Yet when Pompidou was called it was the signal for a fairly vicious political operation against him.

The first mentioning of his name was almost an accident. Patard was questioning Alexander Markovic about his brother's relationship with the Delons. Was he a servant or a friend? Did he eat with them or in the kitchen? With them, of course, said Alexander. Even if there were guests present? said the Judge. Will you describe an evening where this took place? "For instance," said Alexander, "one evening there was Alain and Nathalie Delon, Mr and Mrs Pompidou . . ." "He's a liar" says Delon ●

Additional research by Mark Ottoway