

**SOVIET EVIDENCE  
AT  
NUREMBERG  
--  
THE KATYN FOREST  
MASSACRE:  
  
NOW YOU SEE IT,  
NOW YOU DON'T..**

**How the Soviets Manufactured  
Fake German War Crimes  
for the Nuremberg Court**

**Translated by  
Carlos Whitlock Porter**

**[TITLE]**

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**Document USSR-54 as presented at Nuremberg  
Translated from German by Carlos Whitlock Porter  
Checked against the original Russian**

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**SOVIET EVIDENCE AT  
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**THE KATYN FOREST MASSACRE:**

**NOW YOU SEE IT,**

**NOW YOU DON'T**

**How the Soviets Manufactured  
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Court**

Translator's note: The following is a typical example of Nuremberg "evidence". The "testimony" consists of "written statements" said to have been signed by "eyewitnesses", but which are simply "quoted" in a "report" written by the Stalinists and read aloud (in excerpt form) by the Soviet prosecutor. The "statements" are not attached to the report, the "witnesses" do not appear in court, and the "original documents" are not attached.

The Soviets were assigned by the Nuremberg Tribunal with the task of introducing all the evidence of German atrocities in Eastern Europe. Nearly all Nuremberg evidence is of similar quality, if not worse.

The "forensic report" quoted in this "report" was the ONLY forensic report ever introduced into evidence at Nuremberg.

The victims at Katyn were buried in greatcoats and boots in perfect condition. If they had been alive doing heavy road construction work for another year and a half, from April 1940 until September 1941 as claimed by the Russians, these articles would have shown severe wear.

And, of course, the victims would have been sending and receiving correspondence for another year and a half. The 15,000 victims must have had hundreds of thousands of relatives, friends, and acquaintances in Poland, yet nothing was heard from them after April 1940; no letter or postcard written by any of these men after April 1940 has ever been produced. All mail sent to them after April 1940 was returned by the Russians, marked “Return to Sender – Gone Away”.

Parts of this document have an air of very great realism, even though it is known to be false from beginning to end: the Soviets admitted their guilt for the Katyn shootings in November 1989. The report describes how perjured statements are obtained using procedures which are identical to those of the witchcraft trials of the Middle Ages. This is why civilised countries have rules against oral and written hearsay and prior consistent statements (i.e., the multiplication of “evidence” by repeating the same thing 10 times), and a requirement that cross examination be permitted in some form.

Personally, I consider this document by far the most important document ever introduced into evidence at Nuremberg, and possibly in any other war crimes trial as well.

Note the constant references to totally irrelevant factual material (such as the title and author of a science book possessed by one of the Russian “witnesses”) just as if they were really proof of something. It reminds one of the joke: “My dog treed a 300-pound possum last week, and if you don’t believe it, I’ll show you the tree he treed him in.”

As far as I know, this report has never before been translated and published in its entirety in English. I defy anyone to read this, and then believe any of the other Soviet “evidence” presented at Nuremberg. A glance at the footnotes and references in practically any work of Holocaust literature (for example, Pressac or Raul Hilberg) will show that probably 95% of the “evidence” consists of pure Communist propaganda.

Carlos W. Porter,  
1989–2005.

**KATYN --**

**NOW YOU SEE IT**  
**The Story Today**

Poles Mark Stalin's Katyn Forest Massacre  
Saturday, March 5, 2005

By Ela Kasprzycka, Associated Press Writer

Warsaw, Poland – Poles on Saturday attended a Mass, sang patriotic songs and lay flowers on a monument to more than 21,000 military officers and intellectuals massacred by Soviet agents in Katyn Forest, marking the day 65 years ago that dictator Josef Stalin ordered the killings.

Along with the homage at Warsaw's St. Ann's Church, the Katyn Committee, an organization of relatives of those killed in Katyn Forest in western Russia and at other sites in 1940, demanded more Russian attention to the massacre.

A recent Russian investigation failed to produce any new names of surviving perpetrators among the secret police force that carried out the killing, largely by shots to the back of the head, over several nights.

"We are calling on the authorities of the Russian Federation to reveal the names of those who were responsible for the genocide in the spring of 1940," said Stefan Melak, the head of the group. "We are calling on Russian authorities to accept this crime as genocide," Melak said.

"Katyn will always remain a symbol of a death sentence passed on Poland," he said.

Krystyna Balcer, a 62-year-old retiree whose uncle was killed in Katyn, remained angry about the massacre and the Soviet invasion of Poland prior to World War II, carried out under a secret agreement between Stalin and Nazi leader Adolf Hitler.

"They betrayed us – they stuck a knife in our backs," she said of the Soviets invading Poland from the east in 1939, 17 days after Germans entered from the west. The massacre "was unimaginable cruelty, it was genocide."

The March 5, 1940, order for the massacre was signed by Stalin

among others. Soviet agents shot 21,768 Polish military officers, intellectuals and priests who had been taken prisoner during the invasion.

Historians in Poland believe Stalin was seeking to liquidate Poland's elite to prevent the rebirth of a sovereign Polish state.

The massacre is still an irritant to relations between Poland and Russia. Polish war crimes prosecutors opened their own investigation into the massacre in December.

Until the fall of communism in 1989, any mention of the massacre was forbidden in Poland. The following year, the Soviet government accepted responsibility for the murders, but refused to refer to them as a genocide attempt, calling it a war crime on which the statute of limitations has passed.

The slaughter became known to the world when 4,100 bodies were discovered by German forces in 1943 after they overran the area near the Russian city of Smolensk, and the event was widely broadcast by the Nazi propaganda machine.

# **NOW YOU DON'T The Story at Nuremberg**

(SOVIET PROPAGANDA REPORT STARTS HERE)

## **DOCUMENT 054 USSR**

Report by a Special Soviet Commission, 24 January 1944, concerning the shooting of Polish officer prisoners of war in the forest of Katyn. The executions had been carried out in autumn 1941 by the German "Staff of the Construction Battalion 537". In spring 1943 the Germans, by blackmailing witnesses into giving false evidence and by other means, had tried to make it appear that the Soviet NKVD was responsible for the shooting of the 11,000 victims.

**Description:** Brochure in the Russian language from the year 1944. 56 pages in octavo format, later bound. Signature of German translation.

### **REPORT**

of the Special Commission for the Examination and Investigation of the Circumstances of the Shooting of Polish Prisoners of War in the Katyn Forest by the German Fascist Invaders.

The Special Commission for the examination and investigation of the circumstances of the shooting of Polish prisoners of war in the forest of Katyn (near Smolensk) by the German fascist invaders was formed by order of the Special State Commission to examine and investigate the atrocities of the fascist German invaders and their accomplices.

The Commission consists of the following persons:

Member of the Special State Commission, Academician N.N. BURDENKO (President of the Commission);

Member of the Special State Commission, Academician ALEXEI TOLSTOI;

Member of the Special State Commission, Metropolitan NIKOLAI; President of the All-Slav Committee, Lieutenant General GUNDOROV A.S.;

President of the Executive Committee of the Association of the Red



Cross and Red Half Moon, KOLESNIKOV S.A.;

People's Commissar for Education of the RSFSR (Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic), Academician POTEKIN V.P.;

Chief of the Forensic Head Office of the Red Army, Colonel-General SMIRNOV E.I.;

President of the Executive Committee for the Region of Smolensk, MELNIKOV R.E.

To deal with the tasks laid before the Commission, the Commission called upon the following forensic experts:

Superior Forensic Expert of the People's Commissariat for Health Matters of the USSR, Director of the Scientific Research Institute for Forensic Medicine PROZOROVSKY V.I.;

Head of the Professorship of Forensic Medicine of the 2nd Moscow Medical Institute, Doctor of Medical Sciences, SMOLYANINOV V.M.;

Senior Scientific Expert of the State Scientific Research Institute for Forensic Medicine of the People's Commissariat for Health Matters of the USSR, SEMENOVSKY P.S.;

Senior Scientific Official of the State Scientific Research Institute for Forensic Medicine of the People's Commissariat for Health Matters of the USSR, Professor SHVAIKOVA M.D.;

Chief Pathologist of the Major Front of the Medical Service, Professor VOROPAYEV D.N..

The extensive material laid before his associates and the forensic medical experts who arrived in the city of Smolensk on 26 September 1943, immediately after the liberation of the city, and who conducted the preliminary study and investigation of the circumstances of all atrocities committed by the Germans, was made available to the Special Commission by Member of the Special State Commission, Professor BURDENKO N.N..

The Special Commission carried out on-the-spot investigations and found that the graves of the Polish prisoners of war shot by the German occupiers are located 15 kilometres from the city of Smolensk, on the Vitebsk highway, in the region of the Katyn forest known as "Kozy Gory", 200 metres southwest of the highway, in the direction of the Dnieper river.

The graves were excavated by order of the Special Commission, and in the presence of all members of the Special Commission and the forensic experts. A great number of corpses in Polish uniforms were discovered in the graves. According to the calculations of the forensic experts, the number of corpses amounts, in total, to 11,000.

The forensic experts thoroughly examined the disinterred corpses

and all objects and exhibits found in the graves and on the corpses.

Simultaneous to the excavation of the graves and the examination of the corpses, the Special Commission carried out interrogations of the numerous witnesses and the local populace, whose testimonies precisely established the time and circumstances of the crime committed by the German occupiers.

The testimonies of witnesses reveal the following:

### **The Katyn Forest**

The Katyn forest was always a favourite holiday spot for the people of the city of Smolensk. Those who lived in the vicinity pastured their livestock in the Katyn forest and cut wood. There were no restrictions or prohibitions against entering the Katyn forest.

This was the case in the Katyn forest until the outbreak of the war. The Young Pioneers' Camp of the Industrial Insurance Board, which was only dissolved in July 1941, was still located in the forest in the summer of 1941. Following the occupation of the city of Smolensk by the German invader, quite a different system prevailed in the Katyn forest. The forest began to be guarded by reinforced patrols, and numerous warning notices appeared, stating that all persons who entered the forest without special permits would be shot.

Especially strictly guarded was that part of the Katyn forest known as "Kozy Gory", as well as the region along the banks of the Dnieper, where a summer house rest centre for the NKVD offices at Smolensk was located 700 metres from where the graves of the Polish prisoners of war were discovered. After the arrival of the Germans, a German office was created at this location, called "the Staff of the Construction Battalion 537".

### **Polish Prisoners of War in the Region of Smolensk**

The Special Commission has established that, prior to the conquest of the city of Smolensk by the German occupiers, Polish prisoners of war, officers and enlisted men, worked on the construction and repair of the highways in the west districts of the region. The Polish prisoners of war were housed in three camps, i.e., camp no. 1-ON, no. 2-ON, and no. 3-ON, which were located approximately 2545 kilometres west of the city of Smolensk.

It has been established, based on the testimony of witnesses and

documentary proof, that the above named camps could not be evacuated in time due to the unfavourable conditions after the commencement of military operations.

All Polish prisoners of war, some of the guard personnel, and the camp employees, fell, for this reason, into German captivity.

The former head of camp no. 1-ON, Major of Security VETOSHNIKOV V.M., interrogated by the Special Commission, stated:

“I awaited the order relating to the dissolution of the camp. But phone connections with the city of Smolensk were interrupted. Therefore I drove together with a few fellow employees to Smolensk to clarify the situation. I found the situation in Smolensk tense. I turned to the head of railway traffic for the Smolensk stretch of the western railway, Comrade IVANOV, with a request to provide the camp with train carriages to evacuate the Polish prisoners of war. Comrade IVANOV answered, however, that I could not count on that. I made attempts to get in connection with Moscow to obtain permission to cover the distance by foot, but I was not successful.”

“At this time, Smolensk was already cut off from the camp by the Germans, and I don’t know what happened to the Polish prisoners of war and the guard personnel who remained behind in the camp.”

Engineer IVANOV S.V., head of traffic for the Smolensk stretch of the western railway in July 1941, stated to the Special Commission:

“The administration of the camp for Polish prisoners of war contacted my office with a request to obtain train carriages for the evacuation of the Poles, but we had no carriages available. We were furthermore unable to direct any carriages to the Gusino stretch, since the stretch was already under fire. For this reason, we could not consider the request of the camp administration. Thus, the Polish prisoners of war remained behind in the region of Smolensk.”

That the Polish prisoners of war remained behind in the camps of the region of Smolensk was confirmed by the testimony of the numerous witnesses, who had seen these Poles in the vicinity of the city of Smolensk in the early months of the occupation until the month of September 1941.

The female witness SASHNEVA Maria Alexandrovna, a teacher at the primary school of the village of Zenkovo, stated to the Special Commission that she had hidden one of the Polish prisoners of war in the attic of her house after he had escaped from the camp.

“The Pole wore a Polish military uniform, which I immediately recognized since I had seen the groups of Polish prisoners of war in 1940–41 on the highways, working under guard. I was very interested

in this Pole since he, as it turned out, had been a primary school teacher in Poland before his call-up. Since I had myself graduated from teacher training college and wanted to be a teacher, I struck up a conversation with him. He told me that he had attended a teacher training college in Poland, then went to a military school and became a lieutenant in the reserve. Upon the outbreak of hostilities between Poland and Germany, he was called up for active military service. He was in Brest-Litovsk and was taken prisoner by units of the Red Army. He stayed in a camp near Smolensk for over a year.”

“When the Germans came and occupied the Polish camp, a hard system prevailed there. The Germans did not consider the Poles to be human beings, and pushed them around and mistreated them in every possible way. There were cases in which Poles were shot without any reason. So he decided to escape. He told me of his own accord that his wife was also a teacher and that he had two brothers and a sister.”

When he went away the following day, he mentioned a name which SASHNEVA noted in a book. The book, presented ‘to the Special Commission’ by SASHNEVA, “Practical Exercises in the Natural Sciences” by Yagodovsky, contains the following note on the last page:

“LOECK, Jusef and Sophia, city of Zamostye, Ogorodnaya Street no. 25.”

The list of Katyn shooting victims published by the Germans contains the name LOECK Jusef under no. 3796 as having been shot in the spring of 1940 at Kozy Gory in the Katyn forest.

From the German reports, it therefore appears that LOECK Jusef was shot one year before his acquaintance with the female witness Sashneva.

The witness DANILENKOV N.V., a farmer from the “Krasnaya Zarya” collective farm and a member of the village council of Katyn, stated:

“In the months of August-September 1941, when the Germans came, I met Poles working on the highway in groups of 1520 men each.”

Similar statements were made by the witnesses: SOLDATENKOV, former village elder of the village of Borok; KOLACHEV A.S., doctor of the city of Smolensk; OGLOBLIN A.P., priest; SERGEYEV T.I. railway master; SMIRYAGIN P.A., engineer, MOSKOVSKAYA A.M., resident of the city of Smolensk; ALEXEYEV A.M., director of the collective farm of the village of Borok; KUTSEV I.V., technician of the water services; GORODETSKY V.P., priest; BAZEKINA A.T., bookkeeper; VETROVA E.V., teacher; SAVVATEYEV I.V., duty officer at the railway station at Gnezdovo; and others.

## **The Raids in Search of Polish Prisoners of War**

The presence of Polish prisoners of war in the region of Smolensk in the autumn of 1941 was also confirmed by the fact of the German raids in search of prisoners who had escaped from the camps.

The witness KARTOSHKIN I.M., carpenter, stated:

“The Germans not only searched for Polish prisoners of war in the forests in the autumn of 1941, but there were also police house searches carried out at night in the villages.”

Zakharov M.D., former headman of the village of Novye Bateki, testified that the Germans, in the autumn of 1941, “combed” the villages and forests feverishly in search of for Polish prisoners of war.

The witness DANILENKOV N.V., farmer on the “Krasnaya Zarya” collective farm, stated:

“In our region, special raids were carried out in search of escaped Polish prisoners of war. Such searches were conducted two or three times in my house. After one house search, I asked the village elder, SERGEYEV Konstantin, whom they were looking for in our house. Sergeyev said that an order had been issued by the German commander to search all houses without exception, since Polish prisoners of war who had escaped from the camps were said to have hidden themselves in our village. Some time later the searches stopped.”

The witness FATKOV T.E., a farmer at the collective farm, stated:

“Raids in search of Polish prisoners of war were carried out several times. This was in the months of August-September 1941. After the month of September 1941, the raids stopped, and no one saw any more Polish prisoners of war.”

## **The Shootings in the Katyn Forest**

The above mentioned “Staff of the Construction Battalion 537”, located in the summer house at Kozy Gory, did no construction work. Its activity was carefully kept secret.

What this “staff” actually did was testified to by many witnesses, including the female witnesses: ALEXEYEVA A.M., MIKHAILOVA O.A., and KONAKHOVSKAYA Z.P., residents of the village of Borok of the Katyn Rural Soviet.

Upon order of the German commandant of the settlement of Katyn, transmitted by the village eldest of Borok, SOLDATENKOV V.I., they

were sent to the summer house of 'Kozy Gory' to serve "staff" personnel.

After arrival at Kozy Gory, a number of regulations relating to their behaviour were communicated to them through an interpreter. It was most severely prohibited to stray away from the summer house and into the forest, to enter rooms in the summer house without being asked and without the accompaniment of a German soldiers, or to approach the region of the summer house during the night. Only one particular path to the workplace and back was permitted, and only then when accompanied by the soldiers.

ALEXEYEVA, MIKHAILOVA AND KONAKHOVSKAYA were instructed in this regard through an interpreter directly by the head of the German office, Lt. Col. ARNES, the women having been called in solely for this purpose.

As to the personnel making up the "staff", ALEXEYEVA A.M. stated:

"In the Kozy Gory summer house, there were always about 30 Germans. The oldest of them was Lt. Col. ARNES; his adjutant was Lt. Col. REKST. There were also a Lt. HOTT; a Sgt. LUEMERT; a non-commissioned officer for economic affairs ROSE; his representative ISICKE; Staff Sergeant GRENEVSKY, who headed a power plant; a photographer; a lance corporal, whose family name I can no longer recall; an interpreter from the Volga German republic, his name seems to me to have been Johann, but we called him Iwan; the cook; a German named Gustav; and many others, whose first and last names are not known to me."

Soon after their entry into service, Alexeyeva, MIKHAILOVA, and Konakhovskaya began to notice "some sort of dark doings" going on the summer house.

Alexeyeva A.M. stated:

"We were warned several times by the interpreter Johann, on behalf of ARNES, that we were to keep quiet and not blabber about anything we saw or heard in the country house. Otherwise, we noticed several things that made us understand that the Germans were carrying on dark doings in this country house."

"At the end of August and during more than half of September 1941, several trucks arrived almost daily at the Kozy Gory summer house. At first, I paid them no attention; later I noted that, when the trucks arrived, they always stopped somewhere on the path leading from the highway to the summer house for half an hour or a full hour. I drew this conclusion because the noise of the motors went silent for some time after the trucks entered the grounds of the country house. At

the same time, individual shots began to be fired. One shot followed another in short but regular intervals. Then the shooting stopped and the trucks drove to the country house. German soldiers and non-commissioned officers got down off the trucks. They talked in loud voices, went in the bathroom, and then drank wine. The bathroom was always heated on these days. On the days when the trucks arrived, soldiers also entered the summer house from some other unit. Beds were laid out for these soldiers in the soldiers' mess hall, which had been opened in one of the rooms. On these days, there was a great deal of cooking in the kitchen, and double portions of spirits were brought to the table.

Shortly before the entry of the trucks, the soldiers went into the forest, probably to where the trucks were stopped.

After half an hour or a full hour, they came back on the trucks, together the soldiers that lived in the country house. I would probably never have observed this or noticed when the noise began and went silent again. But every time the trucks entered, if we (myself, Konakhovskaya, and Mikhailova) were in the courtyard, we were driven back into the kitchen or not allowed to leave the kitchen if we were in there. Through this circumstance, and through the fact that I several times noted fresh bloodstains on the clothing of two corporals, I was compelled to take careful note of everything that went on in the country house. I then noticed the strange intermediate pauses in the movement of the trucks and their behaviour in the forest. I also noticed that the bloodstains were always on the clothing of the same two men, two corporals. One of them was a big one with red hair; the other, of medium build, was blond. For this reason, I drew the conclusion that the Germans were bringing people to the summer house by truck and then shooting them. I even guessed where everything was happening and, when I left the house or came back to it, I noticed earth thrown up at several places not far from the highway. The places where the earth lay got bigger from day to day. In the course of time the earth at these spots nevertheless took on its usual shape again.

To the question by the Special Commission as to which persons were shot in the forest near the country house, Alexeyeva answered that Polish prisoners of war were shot there; and to confirm her testimony she stated:

“There were days on which the trucks did not enter the country house. The soldiers however left the country house and went into the forest. From there, frequent shots could be heard. After their return, the soldiers always went into the bathroom and then they drank.

“And then there was another such case. Once, I stayed longer than

usual in the country house. Mikhailova and Konakhovskaya had already gone away. I was not yet finished with my work, I had stayed for that reason, when suddenly a soldier came up to me and said I could go. In so doing, he made reference to Rose's order. The same soldier accompanied me to the highway.

"After I passed the curve in the highway 150–200 metres from the country house, I saw a group of about 30 Polish prisoners of war marching along the highway under reinforced guard.

"That they were Poles I already knew, because I had already met Polish prisoners of war on the embankment roadway before the outbreak of the war between Germany and the USSR, and for some time after the Germans came; the Poles always wore the same uniform, with a characteristic four-cornered cap.

"I remained by the edge of the road to see where they were being taken, and I saw them turn aside at the curve to our Kozy Gory country house.

"Since I had already carefully observed all events from the country house before this time, I took great interest in this event on that day; I turned back a short distance on the embankment roadway, and hid in the bushes by the side of the road to await further events. 20 or 30 minutes later, I heard the characteristic individual shots which were so well known to me. Then everything came clear to me, and I went home quickly.

"From this fact, I concluded that the Germans not only shot the Poles during the day, when we were working, but also at night, during our absence.

"This became still more clear to me when I remembered that the entire staff of officers and soldiers living at the country house, except for the guards, slept until late in the day, and only woke up around 12 noon.

"Sometimes we could tell when the Poles were arriving at Kozy Gory, from the tense atmosphere which prevailed in the country house on such days... All officers then left the country house; only individual duty officers remained behind in the building, and the duty officer controlled all posts by telephone without interruption..."

MIKHAILOVA O.A. stated:

"In September 1941, very frequent shots could be heard in the Kozy Gory forest. At the beginning, I took no particular notice of the trucks arriving at the country house; they were covered on all four sides, painted green, and accompanied by non-commissioned officers. Later I noticed that these trucks were never parked in our garages, and were not unloaded either. These trucks arrived very often, especially in



September 1941.

“Among the non-commissioned officers who always sat in the cabin next to the driver, I noticed one tall one with a pallid complexion and red hair. When these trucks came into the country house, all the non-commissioned officers, as if they were obeying an order, went into the bathroom, washed themselves for a long time, and then drank in the country house.

“Once this tall red-haired German left the truck and went straight into the kitchen, where he asked for water. As he drank the water from the glass, I noticed a bloodstain on the right cuff of his uniform.”

MIKHAILOVA O.A. and Konakhovskaya Z.P. once saw with their own eyes how two Polish prisoners of war were shot after apparently escaping the Germans and had being recaptured. MIKHAILOVA stated the following in this regard:

“Once Konakhovskaya and I were working in the kitchen as usual, and we heard noise not far from the house. When we came out of the kitchen, we saw two Polish prisoners of war surrounded by German soldiers, explaining something to non-commissioned officer Rose. Then Lt. Col. Arnes came up and spoke a few words to Rose. We got out of the way, since we were afraid Rose would shoot us for our curiosity. But we were noticed anyway, and the mechanic Grenewski chased us away on Rose’s order into the kitchen, and then he led Poles away from the country house. After a few minutes, we heard shots. The German soldiers and non-commissioned officers, who returned shortly afterwards, were talking to each other excitedly. Konakhovskaya and I were driven to leave the kitchen once more by the desire to find out what the Germans had done with the Poles whom they had arrested. Arnes’ adjutant, who went out with us at the same time, asked Rose something in German, whereupon the latter answered in German ‘Alles in Ordnung’ – ‘everything OK’. I understood these words, because they were often used by Germans in conversations with each other. I concluded from all these events that the two Poles had been shot.”

Similar statements were made in this regard by Konakhovskaya S.P.

Intimidated by what was going on in the country house, Alexeyeva, Mikhailova, and Konakhovskaya decided to quit their jobs at the country house on some pretext. They used the salary cut from 9 to 3 marks monthly, implemented at the beginning of January 1942 and, upon Mikhailova’s suggestion, did not go to work. The same evening, a car arrived; a man took them to the country house, and locked them in a cold room for punishment. MIKHAILOVA was locked up for 8 days; Alexeyeva and Konakhovskaya for 3 days.

After they had undergone this punishment, they were all released.

During their work in the country house, Alexeyeva, MIKHAILOVA, and Konakhovskaya were afraid to exchange their observations of what was going on in the country house. Only in confinement, when they were all locked in, did they exchange their thoughts during the night:

MIKHAILOVA stated during the interrogation of 24 December 1943:

“That was the first time we spoke of what was going on in the country house. I told everything I knew, but it turned out that Konakhovskaya and Alexeyeva were already aware of all these things. But they were afraid to speak to me about them. Here I found out that the Germans in Kozy Gory were shooting Polish prisoners of war in particular, since Alexeyeva told how she was going home from work once in the autumn of 1941 and personally saw the Germans herding a big group of Polish prisoners of war into the Kozy Gory forest. Some time later she heard shots at that spot.”

Alexeyeva and Konakhovskaya testified to the same effect.

Alexeyeva, Mikhailova, and Konakhovskaya came to the firm conviction, after comparing their observations, that mass shootings of Polish prisoners of war were being carried on at the Kozy Gory country house in August and September 1941.

The testimonies of Alexeyeva are confirmed by the testimony of her father Alexeyev Mikhail, to whom she reported her observations concerning the crimes being committed by the Germans at the country house in the autumn of 1941 while she was still working there.

“For a long time she didn’t say a single word,” Alexeyev Mikhail testified, “Only when returned from her work, she complained that it was strange to work there and that she didn’t know how she could get away. When I asked her what made it so strange, she answered that shots could very often be heard in the forest. Once, when she came back home, she told me confidentially that the Germans were shooting Poles in the Kozy Gory forest. After listening to my daughter, I warned her most severely not to speak to anyone else about it. otherwise the Germans would find out about it and our whole family would suffer.”

The testimony concerning the transport of Polish prisoners of war to Kozy Gory in small groups of 20–30 men under a guard of 57 German soldiers is made by other witnesses interrogated by the Special Commission: KISELEV P.G., farmer from the Kozy Gory dairy farm; KRIVOZERTSEV M.G., joiner from the station Krasnyi Bor in the Katyn forest; IVANOV S.V., ex-foreman at Gnezdovo station in the region of the Katyn forest; SAVVATEYEV I.V., duty officer at the

same station; ALEXEYEV M.A., director of the collective farm at the village of Borok; OGLOBLIN A.P., priest of the church of Kuprin; and others.

These witnesses also heard shots resounding from the Kozy Gory forest. An especially great breakthrough for the investigation of the events at the Kozy Gory country house in the autumn of 1941 was provided by the professor of astronomy, Director Bazilevsky B.V., of the observatory at Smolensk. Professor Bazilevsky was appointed representative of the head of the city (the mayor) by force during the first days of the German occupation of Smolensk, while the lawyer MENSHAGIN B.G. was appointed head of the city by the Germans, who later took him away with them. MENSHAGIN was a traitor who enjoyed the special trust of the German command, and especially that of the Commandant of Smolensk, VON SCHWETZ .

In early September 1941, Bazilevsky asked MENSHAGIN to ask commandant von Schwetz to release the teacher ZHIGLINSKY from prisoner of war camp no. 126. In fulfilling this request, MENSHAGIN talked to von Schwetz, and then told Bazilevsky that his request could not be granted because, as von Schwetz said, “an order had come from Berlin prescribing the immediate application of the strictest regime relating to prisoners of war and permitting no indulgence in this matter.”

“I couldn’t help objecting”, testified witness Bazilevsky, “‘But what could be stricter than the regime prevailing in the camp now?’ MENSHAGIN looked at me strangely and, coming very close to me, answered softly, ‘It can be a lot tougher. The Russians will at least die off by themselves, but as for the prisoners of war, it was simply proposed to exterminate them.’”

“‘How? How am I to understand that?’ I cried.

“‘You are to understand it literally. There is such an order from Berlin,’ answered MENSHAGIN, requesting me, ‘for God’s sake’, not to say a word about it to anyone.

“Two weeks later, after the above mentioned talk with MENSHAGIN, when I was again received by him, I could not help asking him: ‘What have you heard about the Poles?’

“MENSHAGIN hesitated a little and then answered, ‘It’s all up with them. Von Schwetz told me that they have been shot somewhere in the vicinity of Smolensk.’”

“Since MENSHAGIN noticed my excitement, he warned me again of the need to keep this matter strictly secret, and then he began to explain the German manner of procedure in this matter. He said, ‘the shooting of the Poles was a link in the whole chain of anti-Polish

policies carried out by the Germans, which was to be especially tightened up in view of conclusion of the treaty between the Russians and the Poles.’ ”

Bazilevsky also told the Special Commission about his conversation with the Special Leader of the 7th Division of the German commander Hirschfeld, a Baltic German who spoke good Russian:

“Hirschfeld cynically explained that the perniciousness and inferiority of the Poles had been historically proven, and that the reduction in Polish population figures would serve to fertilize the soil and provide a guarantee for the expansion of German living space.

“In this connection, Hirschfeld bragged that nothing was left of the intelligentsia in Poland, since they had all been hanged, shot, or taken away to concentration camps.”

The testimony of the witness Bazilevsky was confirmed by the witness, physics professor Yefimov I.E., interrogated by the Special Commission, to whom Bazilevsky told of his conversation with MENSHAGIN in the autumn of 1941.

The testimony of Bazilevsky and Yefimov is strengthened by documentary evidence in the form of handwritten notes by MENSHAGIN, in his own handwriting, jotted down in his notebook.

This notebook, containing 17 full pages, was found in the files of the city administration of Smolensk after its liberation. The fact that this notebook belonged to MENSHAGIN, and was also in his handwriting, is confirmed both by the testimony of Bazilevsky, who was well familiar with MENSHAGIN’s handwriting, and by graphological reports.

As may be seen from the dates contained in the notebook, the contents concern the period from the early days of August 1941 until November of the same year.

Among the various notes with regards to economic matters (wood, electrical energy, commerce, etc.) there are a number of notes concerning instructions from the commander of Smolensk, made by MENSHAGIN in order not to forget them.

From these notes, it may be clearly seen that the city administration was concerned with a number of matters as the body carrying out all the instructions of the German command.

The first of the three pages of the note book describe the organization of the Ghetto and the system of reprisals to be carried out relating to the Jews.

Page 10, dated 15 August 1941, states: “All escaped Polish prisoners of war are to be arrested and brought to the command post.”

Page 15 (without date), states: “Are there any rumours circulating

among the populace of shootings of Polish prisoners of war at Kozy Gory (to Umnov)?”

From the initial notes, it may be seen that, on 15 August 1941, the Polish prisoners of war were still in the region of Smolensk, and that they were furthermore being arrested by the German authorities.

The second note proves that the German command, disturbed by the possibility of the existence of rumours among the civilian population about crimes committed by the Germans, gave special instructions to investigate the matter. Umnov, who is mentioned in the note, was chief of the Russian police in Smolensk during the first months of the occupation.

### **Beginning of German Provocation**

In the winter of 1942–43, the general military situation changed fundamentally, and not in favour of the Germans. The military power of the Soviet Union was constantly increasing, and the alliance between the Soviet Union with the Allies was strengthening. The Germans decided to initiate a provocation by taking the atrocities which they themselves had committed in the forest of Katyn and accusing the Soviet authorities of having committed them. They thus intended to divide the Russians and the Poles and wipe away the trace of their crime.

The priest from the village of Kuprino, district Smolensk, A.P. OGLOBLIN, testified:

“The Germans took up this matter after the events at Stalingrad, when they were feeling unsure of themselves. Among the people, it was said that the Germans were attempting to improve their position.”

Concerned with expanding the Katyn provocation, the Germans first began to search for “witnesses” able to offer the testimony desired by the Germans, under the influence of promises, bribes, or threats.

The farmer KISELEV Parfen Gavrilovich, born 1870, who lived closer to the Kozy Gory country house than anyone else, attracted the attention of the Germans. Kiselev was told to report to the Gestapo as early as the end of 1942, and under the threat of reprisals was requested to offer perjured testimony about the matter, stating that he knew that the Bolsheviks had shot the Polish prisoners of war in the Kozy Gory country house of the NKVD in early 1940.

Kiselev testified in this regard:

“In autumn 1942, two policemen came to my house and said I had to report to the Gestapo at Gnezdovo railway station.

“The same day, I went to the Gestapo, which was housed in a two-story house next to the railway station. In the room which I entered, there was a German officer and an interpreter. The German officer began to interrogate me through the interpreter, asking how long I had lived in the district, what I did, and my financial situation. I told him I had lived in the farmstead next to Kozy Gory since 1907 and worked on my property. About my financial situation, I said I was having difficulties, because I was already old and my sons were in the army.

“After this short conversation, the officer explained to me that the Gestapo had reports stating that members of the NKVD office had shot the Polish prisoners of war in the Katyn forest not far from Kozy Gory in 1940. He asked what testimony I could make about it. I answered that I had never heard anything about the NKVD office carrying out any shootings in the Kozy Gory. I furthermore explained to the officer that I considered it impossible to carry out shootings there, since Kozy Gory was very openly exposed, and thickly populated. The whole populace in the neighbouring villages must surely have known of it.

“The officer answered that I was to make such a statement, since the aforementioned fact had allegedly really taken place. A big reward was promised me for this testimony.

“I repeatedly explained to the officer that I had heard nothing of the shootings, and that something like this could simply not happen at all before the war in our region. The officer nevertheless insisted that I was to make the perjured statement.

“After the first conversation, of which I have already spoken, I was called to the Gestapo for a second time in February 1942.

“At this time, it was known to me that other residents of the neighbouring villages had also been ordered to report to the Gestapo, and they had been ordered to make the same testimony.

“In the Gestapo were the same officer and interpreter who had interrogated me the first time.

“Again they demanded that I should testify that I was an eyewitness to the shootings of Polish officers allegedly carried out in 1940 by the NKVD.

“I explained to the Gestapo officer once again that this was a lie, since I had heard nothing of the shootings before the war, and that I would not make the perjured statement. But the interpreter refused to listen to me, took a handwritten document from the table, and read it to me. It said that I, KISELEV, lived in the farmstead not far from Kozy Gory, and had myself seen employees of the NKVD shooting the Polish officers in 1940.

“After the interpreter had read it to me, he suggested that I sign the

document. I refused. The interpreter tried to force me to sign by means of threats and insults. Finally he said, 'Either you sign immediately, or you will be killed. You have to choose!'

"I was now afraid, and signed the document, figuring that the matter was at an end. After the Germans organized the visit to the graves of Katyn by various 'delegations', I was forced to speak before the Polish 'delegation.' "

Kiselev forgot the contents of the statement signed in the Gestapo office, got mixed up, and finally refused to speak. Then the Gestapo had him arrested, and, by beating him for a month and a half without mercy, forced him to agree to appear again in public.

In this regard, Kiselev testifies:

"In reality, it happened differently. In the spring of 1943, the Germans announced that they had discovered the graves of the Polish officers in the Kozy Gory region of the Katyn forest, after having been allegedly shot by the NKVD.

"Soon afterwards, a Gestapo interpreter came to my house and drove me into the Kozy Gory region of the Katyn forest. After leaving my house, the interpreter warned me privately that when I was in the forest, to say everything just exactly as stated in the statement signed in the Gestapo office.

"When we got to the forest, I saw excavated graves and a group of persons unknown to me. The interpreter told me they were 'Polish delegates' who were coming to view the graves.

"When we approached the graves, the 'delegates' began to ask me various questions in the Russian language relating to the shooting of the Poles.

"But since over a month had passed since I was told to report to the Gestapo, I had forgotten everything contained in the document signed by me. So I got mixed up and finally said that I didn't know anything about the shooting of the Polish officers.

"The German officer got very angry, and the interpreter pushed and pulled me brutally away from the 'delegation'. The next day, a car with a Gestapo officer in it came to my house. When the officer found me in the courtyard, he explained that I was under arrest, put me in the car and took me to Smolensk prison.

"After my arrest I was often called for interrogation, but they beat me more than they interrogated me. During my first interrogation they beat me badly and accused me of slandering them. Then they brought me back to my cell.

"In the next interrogation, they told me I had to declare publicly that I was an eyewitness to the shootings of the Polish officers by the

Bolsheviks and that I would not get out of prison until the Gestapo was convinced that I would fulfil my task to the best of my ability. I told the officer that I would rather rot in prison than pull the wool over people's eyes. After that, they beat me very badly.

"These interrogations, in which I was beaten, were repeated. The result was that I completely lost my strength, partially lost my hearing, and could no longer move my right arm.

"Approximately a month after my arrest the German officer called me to him and said, 'Now, you see, Kiselev, what your obstinacy has cost you. We have decided to carry out a death sentence upon you. Tomorrow you will be driven to the Katyn forest and hanged.' I asked the officer not to do that, and tried to convince him that I was unfit for the role of eyewitness to the shootings, because I simply could not lie and would therefore simply get something mixed up again. But the officer stuck to his insistence.

"A few minutes later, soldiers came into the room and began to beat me with rubber truncheons. I could not stand the beatings and mistreatment and agreed to confirm the perjured statement regarding the shooting of the Polish officers by the Bolsheviks. Then I was released from prison. At the same time, they told me that I had to speak in front of the 'delegates' at the first request of the Germans in the Katyn forest. Each time, before we drove to the excavated graves in the Katyn forest, the interpreter came to my home, called me out into the courtyard, took me aside so that nobody could hear us, and made me learn everything by heart for half an hour, completely and in detail, that I had to say about the alleged shootings of the Polish officers by the NKVD in 1940.

"I remember that the interpreter told me to say approximately the following:

" 'I live on the farmstead in the Kozy Gory region not far from the NKVD country house. In early 1940, I saw them bringing the Poles into the forest and shooting them there every night.'

"I also had to repeat word for word that this was the work of the NKVD.

"After I had learnt by heart everything the interpreter told me, he drove me into the forest to the excavated graves and told me to repeat everything in the presence of the visiting 'delegation'. My remarks were strictly noted and orchestrated by the Gestapo interpreter.

"Once, when I appeared before a 'delegation', they asked me whether I had ever seen the Poles before they were shot by the Bolsheviks.

"I was not prepared for this question, and declared that I had seen



the Polish prisoners of war before the beginning of the war engaged in road construction work, which was also true. At this, the interpreter pushed me aside roughly, and chased me home. Please believe me when I say that I was constantly tortured by remorse, because I knew that the Polish officers in reality were shot by the Germans in 1941; there was no other way out for me, since I was afraid of repeated arrest and torture.”

The testimony of Kiselev P.G. regarding his visit to the Gestapo and subsequent arrest and beatings are confirmed by his wife, Kiseleva Aksiniya, born 1870, who resides with him; his son, Kiselev Vassily, born 1911; and his daughter-in-law, Kiseleva Maria, born 1918; as well as railway master Sergejev Timofei Ivanovich, born 1901, who also lives with Kiselev at the farmstead.

The injuries inflicted upon Kiselev by the Gestapo (injured shoulder, significant hearing loss) were confirmed by forensic examination report.

In the search for ‘witnesses’, the Germans then took an interest in the workers at Gnezdovo railway station, located two and half kilometres away from Kozy Gory.

The Polish prisoners of war first arrived at this station in the spring of 1940, and the Germans obviously wished to obtain corresponding testimony from railway workers. To this purpose, the Germans, in the spring of 1943, ordered the former station master of Gnezdovo, IVANOV S.V., and the duty officer SAVVATEYEV I.V., among others, to report to the Gestapo.

Regarding the circumstances of his visit to the Gestapo, IVANOV S.V., born 1882, stated:

“...It was in March 1943. A German officer interrogated me in the presence of an interpreter. He asked me through the interpreter what I did, and what my job was at Gnezdovo before the occupation of the area by the Germans; the officer asked me whether I knew that the Polish prisoners of war arrived by railway in early 1940 in Gnezdovo in large groups.

“I said, that I knew nothing about it.

“The officer then asked me whether I knew that the Polish officers were shot by the Bolsheviks in the year in question, the spring of 1940, soon after their arrival.

“I answered that I knew nothing about it, and that this could not be true, since I had seen the Polish officers who arrived at Gnezdovo in the spring of 1940 doing road construction work in 1940–41, until the city of Smolensk was taken by the Germans.

“The officer then told me: ‘If a German officer says that the Poles

were shot by the Bolsheviks, then that corresponds to the facts. Therefore', the officer continued, 'you need have no fear; you may sign the statement with a clear conscience, stating that the Polish prisoners of war were shot by the Bolsheviks, and that you were an eyewitness to it.'

"I answered that I was an old man, 61 years old, and didn't want to burden my soul with sins. I could only testify that the Polish officers actually arrived in the spring of 1940 in Gnezdovo.

"The German officer then attempted to convince me to make the desired statement by promising to transfer me from my present job as intermediate station master to another post, and to make me station master at Gnezdovo, which is what I was under the Soviets, as well as taking care of me from a financial point of view.

"The interpreter emphasized that the German command placed great value on my testimony as a former railway employee at Gnezdovo, the station nearest the Katyn forest, and that I would not be sorry if I made the desired statement.

"I saw that I was in an extremely difficult position and that a sad fate awaited me, but I still refused to make the perjured statement to the German officer. The officer then started shouting at me. He threatened me to have me beaten or shot, declaring that I did not understand my best interests. But I stood resolutely by my refusal.

"The interpreter then wrote a short statement in the German language, one page long, and told me what it said. The interpreter told me it only contained the fact that the Poles arrived in Gnezdovo. But when I asked to sign my statement not only in German, but in Russian as well, the officer lost his temper, beat me with a rubber truncheon, and threw me out."

SAVVATEYEV I.V., born 1880, testified:

"...In the Gestapo, I said that the Polish prisoners actually arrived in the spring of 1940 at Gnezdovo with their own railway transport, and that they continued by motor transport, where, I don't know. I also added that I later saw the Poles several times on the Moscow Minsk highway doing highway repair work in small groups.

"The officer told me that I was mistaken, and that I could not have seen the Poles on the highway, since they had been shot by the Bolsheviks. He asked me to make a statement about this. I refused. After many threats and attempts at persuasion, the officer consulted with the interpreter about something, speaking in the German language. The interpreter then wrote a short statement and presented it to me for signature, saying that it contained 'only' the statements I had made. I asked the interpreter if I could read it through for myself, but he

interrupted me with insults and ordered me to sign the document immediately and to get out. I hesitated a minute; the interpreter grabbed a rubber truncheon hanging on the wall and raised it to hit me. I then signed the statement which had been placed before me. The interpreter told me to get out, and not to blab anything to anybody or they would have me shot...”

In their search for “witnesses”, the Germans did not stop at the above mentioned persons. They tried to find former NKVD employees and force them to make the perjured statements desired by the Germans. The Germans then arrested the former NKVD garage worker for the region of Smolensk, IGNATIUK E.L., and tried very hard, through threats and beatings, to force a statement out of him saying that he was not a garage worker, but a driver, and had personally driven the Polish prisoners of war to the location of the shootings.

IGNATIUK E.L., born 1903, stated:

“During my first interrogation by police chief ALFERCHIK, he accused me of anti-German slander activity, and asked me what my job was with the NKVD. I answered that I was employed in the NKVD office, region of Smolensk, as a worker. During the same interrogation, Alferchik asked me to make a statement saying that I was employed in the NKVD office not as a worker, but as a driver. When Alferchik failed to obtain the desired statement, he became enraged and tied me up, him and his adjutant, whom he addressed by the name of George, tying a rag around my head and mouth; they took down my pants, laid me on a table and beat me with rubber truncheons. They then called me to interrogation once again, and Alferchik asked me to make the perjured statement that the Polish prisoners of war were shot in the Katyn forest in 1940 by the Bolsheviks, and that I knew all about it since I had driven the Polish officers to the Katyn forest and was present during the shootings. If I agreed to make such a statement, Alferchik promised to release me from prison and give me a job in the police, where living conditions were very good; otherwise, he would have me shot. The last time, I was interrogated in the police station by the examining magistrate ALEXANDROV, who, like Alferchik, demanded the desired perjured statement from me. But I refused.

“After this interrogation, they beat me repeatedly and brought me to the Gestapo. In the Gestapo, they demanded that I make the perjured statement about the shooting of the Polish officers in the Katyn forest in 1940, that it was done by the Soviets, and that as a driver I allegedly had to know all about it.”

In the book published by the German Foreign Office, containing material falsified by the Germans on the “Katyn affair”, the above

mentioned KISELEV P.G., among others, is presented as a “witness”. The following persons are also cited as “witnesses”: GODEZOV (alias GODUNOV), born 1877; SILVERSTOV GRIGORY, born 1891; ANDREYEV IVAN, born 1917; ZHIGULEV MIKHAIL, born 1915; KRIVOZERTSEV IVAN, born 1915; and ZAKHAROV MATVEY, born 1893.

It has been proven by investigation that the first two of the above mentioned persons (GODEZOV and SILVERSTOV) died in 1943 before the liberation of the region of Smolensk by the Red Army; the following three persons (ANDREYEV, ZHIGULEV and KRIVOZERTSEV) either fled with the Germans or were taken away with the Germans by force. The last named ZAKHAROV MATVEY, former railway carriage coupler at Smolensk railway station, who worked as village elder in Novye Bateki, was found and interrogated by the Special Commission. Zakharov explained the manner in which the Germans obtained the perjured statement on the “Katyn affair”.

“In early March 1943,” Zakharov stated, “a Gestapo worker from Gnezdovo, whose name I can no longer remember, came to my house and said that a German officer wanted to see me. When I got to the Gestapo, the officer told me through an interpreter: ‘We know that you worked as a railway carriage coupler at Smolensk railway station, and therefore you must testify that the railway carriages with the Polish prisoners of war came through the city of Smolensk to Gnezdovo station in 1940, and that the Poles were then shot in the forest in the region of Kozy Gory’. To this, I answered that the carriages with the Poles in them actually came through the city of Smolensk in 1940 headed west, but which station they got off at, was not known to me. The officer told me that if I didn’t make the statement of my own free will, he would force me to. With these words, he took a rubber truncheon from the wall and began to beat me. Then they laid me on a bench, and the officer and interpreter both beat me. I no longer know how many times they hit me, because I lost consciousness. When I came to, the officer asked me to sign the statement. I allowed myself to be intimidated by their blows and threats to shoot me, made perjured testimony, and signed the statement. I was then released by the Gestapo. A few days after my order to report to the Gestapo, it was about mid-March 1943, the interpreter came to my house and said I had to go to a German general and confirm my statement. When we got to the general, the general asked me whether I confirmed my statement. I said yes, because the interpreter had told me on the way that if I didn’t confirm my statement, I would get even worse than the first time I went to the Gestapo. Out of fear of torture, I answered that I did confirm my

statement. The interpreter ordered me to raise by right arm and told me that I had just sworn an oath, and could go home.”

It has been proven that the Germans attempted to obtain the desired statements from other persons as well, including the former assistant director of Smolensk prison, KAVERZNEV N.S.; a worker in the same prison, KOVALEV V.G.; and others, by persuading, threatening and mistreating the above mentioned persons. Since the search for “witnesses” failed to bear fruit, the Germans distributed the following leaflet in the neighbouring villages, an original of which is contained in the files of the Special Commission:

#### NOTICE TO THE CIVIL POPULATION

Who can testify to the mass shootings of Polish prisoners of war and priests [!?!?] committed by the Bolsheviks in 1940 in the Kozy Gory forest on the Gnezdovo-Katyn highway?

Who saw motor transports from Gnezdovo to Kozy Gory?

Who heard about the shootings or was personally an eyewitness?

Who knows residents capable of testifying in this regard?

All information in this connection will be rewarded. All communications should be sent to the German police, Muzeinaya Street 6, or, in Gnezdovo, to the German police, House no. 105 (at the railway station).

3 May 1943

FOSS

Lieutenant, Field Police.

The same notice was published in the newspaper “Novy Put”, No. 35 (157) of 6 May 1943, published by the Germans, in the city of Smolensk.

That the Germans promised a reward for the desired testimony about the “Katyn affair” was proven by the Special Commission through the interrogation of witnesses and residents of the city of Smolensk: SOKOLOVA O.E., PUSHCHINA E.A., BYCHKOV I.I., BONDAREV G.T., USTINOV E.P., and many others.

### **The Falsification of the Graves at Katyn**

Simultaneously to the search for “witnesses”, the Germans began a corresponding falsification of the graves in the Katyn forest. They began to remove all documents dated later than April 1940, i.e., originating from the time at which, according to the German

provocative slanders, the Poles had been shot by the Bolsheviks from the clothing of the Poles shot by the Germans, that is, all exhibits able to disprove these provocative slanders.

The investigations of the Special Commission have proven that the Germans used approximately 500 Russian prisoners of war recruited from camp no. 126 for this purpose. The Special Commission has numerous witness testimonies at its disposal relating to this matter.

The testimonies of the doctors from the above named camp merit special attention; the doctor of medicine CHIZHOV A.T., who worked in camp no. 126 during the occupation of Smolensk, stated:

“In early March 1943, a group totalling 500 men of the strongest prisoners of war were selected in the prisoner of war camp no. 126 in Smolensk in order, it was stated, to send them to construction work. Not one of these prisoners of war ever returned to the camp.”

The doctor of medicine KHMUROV V.A., who also worked in the camp during the German occupation, stated:

“It is known to me that, approximately in the second half of February or the beginning of March 1943, approximately 500 Red Army prisoners of war from our camp were transported in an undisclosed direction. These prisoners of war were said to be going to do construction work, and therefore the Germans selected the most powerfully built men.”

Similar statements were made by the nurses LENKOVSKAYA O.G., TIMOFEYEVA A.I., the female witnesses ORLOVA P.M., DOBROSERDOVA E.G., and the male witness KOCHETKOV V.S..

Where these 500 Soviet prisoners of war were actually sent from camp no. 126 is clear from the testimony of the female witness MOSKOVSKAYA A.M..

MOSKOVSKAYA ALEXANDRA MIKHAILOVNA, who lives on the outskirts of the city of Smolensk and worked in the kitchen of one of the German troop divisions during the occupation, made a statement on 5 October 1943 to the Special Commission for the Examination of the Atrocities of the German Invaders, with the request to be called upon to give important eyewitness testimony.

She told the Special Commission that once, in March 1943, upon entering her shed, located in the farm on the banks of the Dnieper, she found an unknown person, who, as it turned out, was a Russian prisoner of war.

MOSKOVSKAYA A.M. (born 1922) stated:

“From conversation with him, I learned the following:

“His name was YEGOROV, first name Nikolai, from Leningrad.

“Since the end of 1941, he had lived in German concentration

camps for prisoners of war in the city of Smolensk.

“In early March 1943, he was sent to the Katyn forest with a column of 100 prisoners of war from the camp. There they were all ordered, including Yegorov, to excavate graves containing corpses in Polish officers’ uniforms, to drag these corpses out of the graves, and to remove all documents, photographs, and other objects from their pockets. It was strictly prohibited to leave anything in their pockets. Two prisoners of war were shot because the German officer found some papers on the corpses after the prisoners had already examined them. All objects, documents, and letters removed from the clothing were examined by the German officers. Then the prisoners of war were ordered to put some of these papers back in the pockets of the corpses; the rest were thrown onto a pile of objects and documents removed from the corpses, and burnt soon afterwards. Furthermore, other papers were produced from a chest or box that the Germans had brought with them; these papers were placed in the pockets of the corpses of the Polish officers. All the prisoners of war lived in the Katyn forest under fearful conditions and under strict guard.

“In early April 1943, all the work planned by the Germans was finished; the prisoners of war were not forced to go to work for three days.

“In the night, the Germans woke them all up and took them somewhere. The guard was reinforced. Yegorov was suspicious, and took particular note of everything that happened. They walked 3 to 4 hours in an unknown direction. They stopped in a meadow in the forest in front of a ditch. Yegorov watched as the Germans separated a group of prisoners of war from the rest of the human mass, forced them to the ditch, and then shot them.

“The prisoners of war were excited, and started shouting and moving about. Not far from Yegorov, a few prisoners jumped a guard, and the other guards ran to this spot.

“Yegorov took advantage of the momentary confusion to run into the darkness of the woods; at the same time, he heard shouts and shots behind him.

“After this fearful tale, which will remain seared into my memory for an entire lifetime, I felt sorry for Yegorov and invited him into my apartment so he could warm up and hide until he regained his strength. But Yegorov refused. He said he absolutely had to leave that night in order to cross the front line. But he didn’t leave that night. The next morning, I found him still in the shed. As it turned out, he had made repeated attempts to go away during the night, but after he had gone fifty steps he felt weak and was forced to return. It was probably the

result of the continual malnutrition in the camp and the starvation during the last few days. We agreed that he would stay one or two days with me, in order to recover his strength. I gave him food and went to work.

“When I came back that evening, my neighbours, BARANOVA MARIA IVANOVNA and KABANOVSKAYA YEKATERINA VIKTOROVNA, told me that the German police had discovered a Red Army prisoner of war in my shed during their patrol, whom they took away with them.”

Since a prisoner of war had been found in Moskovskaya’s shed, she was told to report to the Gestapo, where she was accused of hiding a prisoner of war. During her interrogation by the Gestapo, Moskovskaya denied her relations with this prisoner of war and claimed that she knew nothing of his presence in her shed. Since Moskovskaya did not admit her guilt and the prisoner of war Yegorov did not betray her, she was released by the Gestapo.

Yegorov also told Moskovskaya that a group of prisoners of war working in the Katyn forest, in addition to digging up the bodies, were further occupied with bringing corpses from other locations. The corpses transported to the Katyn forest were piled up in the graves, together with the corpses which had previously been dug up.

The fact that a great number of corpses of persons shot by the Germans at other locations were transported to the graves at Katyn is also confirmed by the testimony of the mechanic SUKHACHEV.

SUKHACHEV P.F., born 1912, a mechanical engineer from the “Rosglavkhleb” combine, who worked for the Germans as a machinist in the city mills of Smolensk, filed a request on 8 October 1943 to be permitted to testify.

When he appeared, he stated:

“In the mill, during the second half of March 1943, I once talked to a German driver who spoke a little Russian. After it came out that he was carrying meal for a division in the village of Savenky and would be coming back to Smolensk the next day, I asked him to take him with me in order that I might have the opportunity to buy fats. In so doing, I was calculating that riding in a German truck would eliminate the risk of my being stopped at a checkpoint.

“The German driver agreed for a sum of money. We left the same day at about 10:00 P.M., taking the Smolensk-Vitebsk highway.

“There were two of us in the truck: me and the German driver. It was a bright night; the moon was shining, but the fog hindered visibility. About 22–23 kilometres from Smolensk, there was a curve at a destroyed bridge with a rather steep embankment. We left the



highway and travelled down the embankment; then a truck suddenly appeared out of the fog. Either our brakes were not very good or the driver was not very experienced; we could not brake the truck, and, since the road was rather narrow, we had a collision with the truck coming in the opposite direction. The collision was not a bad one, since the driver of the oncoming truck succeeded in swerving out of the way, as a result only scraping the sides of both trucks. The oncoming truck turned over however, and fell down the embankment. Our truck stayed where it was. The driver and I got out of the driver's seat and went to the overturned truck.

"I immediately smelt a very strong stench of corpses, which probably came from the truck. I came closer, and saw that the truck was loaded with a cargo covered with tarpaulins and tied down with ropes. The ropes broke due to the fall, and part of the cargo fell out. It was a cruel cargo.

"They were human corpses in military uniforms. As I remember, 67 men, including a German driver and 2 Germans armed with machine guns, stood around the truck. The others were Russian prisoners of war, since they spoke Russian and were clothed correspondingly.

"The Germans began to curse my driver, then they tried to get the truck back up onto its wheels again. After two minutes, another two trucks arrived at the scene of the accident and stopped there. From these trucks came a group of Germans and Russian prisoners of war, a total of 10 men, and came up to us. Using our combined strength, we began to lift the truck. I took the opportunity and quietly asked one of the Russian prisoners of war: 'What's that?' Just as quietly, he answered: 'I don't know how many nights we've already spent transporting corpses into the Katyn forest.'

"The overturned truck was still not upright when a German non-commissioned officer approached me and my driver, and ordered us to drive on immediately.

"Since we had not suffered any real damage during the collision, my driver turned the truck back onto the highway and then drove on.

"As we drove past the two trucks that had arrived later and were covered with tarpaulins, I smelt a fearful stench of corpses."

SUKHACHEV's testimony is confirmed by the testimony of Yegorov Vladimir Afanasievich, who served in the police during the occupation.

Yegorov testified that, at the end of March and the early days of April 1943, as he guarded the bridges in the line of duty at the intersection of the Moscow-Minsk and Smolensk-Vitebsk highways, he repeatedly observed large trucks covered with tarpaulins, exuding the

stench of corpses, passing in the direction of Smolensk. Several persons, some of who carried weapons and doubtlessly were German, always sat in the truck cabins and on top of the tarpaulins.

Yegorov mentioned his observations to the chief of police at the police station in the village of Arkhipovka, Golovnev Kuzma Demyanovich, who advised him to keep quiet about it and added: "That has nothing to do with us, we don't need to get mixed up in German affairs."

That the Germans transported corpses by truck to the Katyn forest was also stated by YAKOVLEV-SOKOLOV FROL MAXIMOVICH, born 1896, former supply agent for the canteen of the Smolensk Trusts for dining rooms, and chief of the police district of Katyn during the German occupation.

He reported that, in early April 1943, he personally observed four trucks covered with tarpaulins on which sat several men armed with machine guns and weapons, turning off the highway into the Katyn forest. A strong stench of corpses was perceptible from the trucks.

All the above mentioned eyewitness testimony permits the conclusion that the Germans also shot Poles at other locations. In bringing the corpses to the Katyn forest, the Germans pursued a triple objective: first, to wipe out all traces of their own crimes; second, to blame all their crimes on the Soviets; and third, to multiple the number of "victims of Bolshevism" in the graves in the Katyn forest.

### **"Visits" to the Graves at Katyn**

In April 1943, after the German invaders had finished all preparatory measures at the graves in the Katyn forest, they began a widespread agitation in the press and radio, attempting to blame the Soviets for the atrocities which they had themselves committed against the Polish prisoners of war. One of their methods of provocative agitation consisted of organizing "visits" to the graves at Katyn by the residents of Smolensk and neighbouring areas, as well as by "delegations" from the countries occupied by the German invaders and in a position of subservience to them.

The Special Commission interrogated a number of witnesses who participated in the "visit" to the graves at Katyn.

The witness, ZUBKOV K.P., an anatomical pathologist working in Smolensk in his capacity as forensic expert, testified to the Special Commission:

"...The clothing on the corpses, especially the officers' greatcoats,

boots, and belts, held together rather well. The metallic parts of their clothing, such as belt buckles, buttons, hooks, boot nails, etc. were not completely rusted and still retained their metallic lustre at places. The tissue of the corpses made available for examination, the tissue of the face, neck, and hands, was chiefly grey in colour, in individual cases greenish brown; but there was no complete decomposition of the tissues, there was no putrefaction. In individual cases, tendons lay exposed, whitish in colour; a number of muscles were visible. During my stay at the excavations, people were working on the floor of a deep ditch, separating the bodies and carrying them up out of the grave. They used spades and other tools to do so, grabbing the corpses with their hands, and dragging them by the arms, feet, and clothing from one place to another. In no individual case could one observe that the bodies fell apart, or that individual parts of them came away.

“With respect to the above, I came to the conclusion that the period of time during which the corpses had remained in the earth absolutely could not amount to three years, as the Germans claimed, but must be much less. Since I know that the decomposition of bodies in mass graves, especially without coffins, occurs much more rapidly than in individual graves, I came to the conclusion that the mass shootings of the Poles must have been carried out about one and a half years ago, and must date from the autumn of 1941 or early 1942.

“As a result of visiting the excavations, I became firmly convinced that this gigantic atrocity was the act of the Germans.”

Testimonies that the clothing on the corpses, the metal parts, the shoes and the corpses themselves, were well preserved, were offered by all the witnesses who had participated in “visits” to the graves at Katyn and were then heard by the Special Commission, i.e.: the foreman of the Smolensk water pipeline network, KUTSEV I.S.; the female head of the school at Katyn, VETROVA E.N.; the female telephonist of the Smolensk transport office, SHCHEDROVA N.G.; the resident of the village of Borok, ALEXEYEV M.A.; the resident of the village of Novye Bateki, KRIVUZERTSEV M.G.; the duty officer at Gnezdovo station, SAVVATEYEV I.V.; the female resident of Smolensk, PUSHCHINA E.A.; the doctor of medicine from the 2nd hospital at Smolensk, SIDORUK T.A.; the doctor of medicine from the same hospital, KESAREV P.M.; and others.

## **German Attempts to Wipe Away the Traces of Their Crimes**

The “visits” organized by the Germans failed to achieve their aim. All

persons who visited the graves became convinced that they were witnessing the gross and obvious provocation of the German fascists.

Therefore measures were taken by the Germans to silence all doubters.

The Special Commission interrogated a number of witnesses who have reported how the Germans persecuted persons who doubted the truth of the provocation or did not believe it. They were fired from their jobs, arrested, and threatened with shooting. The Commission has established two cases of shooting of persons who “couldn’t keep their mouths shut”. This tactic of violence was carried out against the former German policeman ZAGAINOV and against YEGOREV A.M., who participated in the excavations in the Katyn forest.

Testimonies relating to the persecution by the Germans of those persons who expressed doubt after visiting the graves in the Katyn forest were offered by:

The female attendant at pharmacy no. 1 of Smolensk, ZUBAREVA M.S.; the assistant to the doctor of hygiene for the Health Division of the Stalinist District of Smolensk, KOZLOVA V.F.; and others.

The former head of the Katyn police district, YAKOVLEV-SOKOLOV F.M., testified:

“A situation arose which caused the most serious disquiet among the German command, and urgent instructions were issued to all local police offices to prohibit all harmful talk and to arrest all those persons who expressed mistrust regarding the ‘Katyn affair’.

“Such instructions were personally issued to me, as head of the police district, by the following persons: at the end of May 1943, by the German commander of the Katyn village, Lt. Col. BRAUN, and, at the beginning of June, by the head of the police district of Smolensk, KAMENSKY.

“I issued instructions to the police in my district stating that all persons expressing mistrust, and all doubters of the truthfulness of the German communications on the shooting of the Polish prisoners of war by the Bolsheviks, were to be arrested and brought to police headquarters.

“In forwarding these instructions from the German authorities, I hypocritically concealed the fact that I was myself convinced that the ‘Katyn affair’ was a German provocation. I became completely convinced of it after participating in the ‘excursion’ in the Katyn forest.”

When the German occupation troops noticed that the “excursions” by the local populace to the graves at Katyn were not successful, they issued an order in the summer of 1943 to fill in the graves. Before their

withdrawal from Smolensk, the Germans hastily began to wipe away the traces of their atrocities. The country house occupied by the “Staff of the Construction Battalion 537” was burnt to the ground. The Germans searched for the three girls, Alexeyeva, MIKHAILOVA, and Konakhovskaya, in the village of Borok, in order to take them with them or to annihilate them. They also sought their “chief witness” KISELEV P.G., who was, however, successful in concealing himself and his family. The Germans burnt his house.

They also attempted to arrest other “witnesses”: the former foreman of Gnezdovo station, IVANOV S.V.; the former duty officer of the same station, SAVVATEYEV I.V.; and the former railway carriage coupler at the station at Smolensk, ZAKHAROV M.D.

During the very last days before the withdrawal from Smolensk the German fascist occupiers also searched for the professors Bazilevsky and Yefimov. These only succeeded in escaping kidnapping or death by hiding themselves in the nick of time.

But the German fascist invaders were still not successful in covering their traces and concealing their crime. Forensic examination of the exhumed corpses proves with irrefutable clarity that the shooting of the Polish prisoners of war was committed by the Germans themselves.

We proceed now to the report of the forensic expert commission.

### **Report of the Forensic Expert Commission**

By order of the Special Commission for the examination and investigation of the circumstances of the shooting of the Polish officer prisoners of war by the German fascist invaders in the Katyn forest (in the vicinity of the city of Smolensk), the forensic investigative commission, consisting of: the superior forensic expert of the People’s Commissariat for Health Matters of the USSR, Director of the State Scientific Research Institute for Forensic Medicine of the People’s Commissariat for Health Matters of the USSR, V.I. PROZOROVSKY; Professor for Forensic Medicine of the 2nd Moscow State Medical Institute, Dr. V.M. SMOLYANINOV; Professor of anatomical pathology, Dr. D.N. VOROPAYEV; the senior Scientific Official of the anatomical medical division of the State Scientific Research Institute for Forensic Medicine of the People’s Commissariat for Health Matters of the USSR, Dr. P.S. SEMENOVSKY; the senior Scientific Official of the anatomical medical division of the State Scientific Research Institute for Forensic Medicine of the People’s Commissariat

for Health Matters of the USSR, Professor Ph.D. SHVAIKOVA; with the participation of: the head forensic medical expert of the West front, Major of the medical services, NIKOLSKY; the forensic medical expert for Army N., Captain of the medical services, BUSSOYEDOV; the chief of the anatomical pathology laboratory 92, Major of the medical services, SUBBOTIN; the Major of the medical services, OGLOBLIN; Doctor of medicine and Lt. Col. of Medicine, SADYKOV; Lt. of Medicine PUSHKAREVA.

The exhumation and forensic examination of the corpses of the Polish prisoners of war from the grounds of Kozy Gory in the Katyn forest, 15 kilometres from the city of Smolensk, was carried out in the period from 16 to 23 January 1944. The bodies of the Polish prisoners of war were buried in a common grave measuring 60 x 60 x 3 m, in addition to another grave measuring 7 x 6 x 3.5 m. From the graves, 925 bodies were exhumed and examined. The exhumation and forensic examination of the bodies were carried out to determine the following:

- a) the identity of the dead;
- b) the cause of death;
- c) the length of time they had been in the ground.

The circumstances of the matter (see document of the Special Commission);

Objective data: see the reports of the forensic medical examination of the bodies.

### **Conclusion of the Forensic Expert Commission**

The forensic medical expert commission, based on the findings of the forensic medical examination of the bodies, came to the following conclusion:

Following the excavation of the graves and exposure of the corpses, it was established that:

a) among the great number of bodies of the Polish prisoners of war were corpses in civilian clothing, the number of which, compared to the total number of the examined bodies (2 out of 925 exhumed bodies) is slight; the bodies wore military footwear;

b) the clothing of the dead prisoners of war testifies to their belonging to the officers and non-commissioned officers of the Polish army;

c) incisions in the pockets, which were turned inside out, as well as in the boots, were discovered during the examination, revealing, as a rule, traces of previous examination of the articles of clothing (military

greatcoats, trousers, etc.) on the bodies;

d) in some cases, the pockets of the articles of clothing bore no incisions. In these cases, just in the pockets which had been cut or torn open, inside the jacket linings, trouser-bands, foot rags and socks, newspaper clippings, brochures, prayer books, postage stamps, opened and unopened letters, receipts, medals, and other documents such as valuables (1 gold piece, golden dollars, tobacco pipes, pocket knives, cigarette paper, handkerchiefs and other articles, were discovered;

e) some of the documents (which were not subjected to any particular examination) exhibited dates from the period between 12 November 1940 and June 20 1941;

f) the material of the clothing, especially the military greatcoats, jackets, trousers, and underwear, are well preserved and could only be torn by hand with difficulty;

g) a small number of bodies (20 out of 925) had their hands tied behind their backs with white braided cord.

The condition of the clothing on the bodies, particularly the fact that the jackets, shirts, military belts, trousers, and underwear were buttoned up, boots or shoes tied, neckerchiefs and neckties bound around the necks, suspenders buttoned up and the shirts tucked into the trousers, shows that no exterior examination of the torso and limbs had been undertaken;

The well-preserved condition of the skin tissues of the head, and the non-existence of any incisions therein or in the skin tissues of the chest or abdomen (except for 3 out of 925 cases), or other signs of expert activity, shows that the bodies had not been subjected to forensic examination, a conclusion confirmed by an examination of the bodies exhumed by the forensic expert commission.

The exterior and interior examination of the 925 bodies justifies the statement that the bodies exhibit gunshot wounds on the head and neck. In four cases, these are accompanied by damage to the skull caused by a hard, heavy object. In addition, some cases of injury to the abdomen, together with injuries to the head, were established. As a rule, there was one entry hole, more rarely two, in the back of the head near the nape of the neck, in the cavity in the nape of the neck, or the edge of the same cavity. In some cases, the entry wounds are on the back of the neck, at the height of the 1st, 2nd, or 3rd cervical vertebra. Most frequently, the exit holes are in the forehead, but, more rarely, in the temple or crown of the head, or in the face or neck. In 27 cases, the bullets remained in the body (without exit holes). At the terminus of the entry wound channel, under the soft tissues of the skull or bones thereof, in the cerebral membranes, or in the cerebral matter, deformed,

slightly deformed, or severely deformed jacketed bullets were discovered, such as are used as ammunition for submachine guns, mostly of 7.65 m. The number of entry holes in the bones of the neck justifies the conclusion that, during the shooting, firearms of two different calibres were used, most frequently, of less than 8 mm, i.e., 7.65 mm or less; in a few cases, calibres of more than 8 mm, i.e., 9 mm, were used.

The state of the fractures of the bones of the skull, and, in many cases, residues of gunpowder discovered on the exit holes or immediately close by, show that the shots were fired at point blank range, or very close range. The superimposition of the entry and exit holes shows that the holes must have been fired from behind when the head was bent down. The entry channel traversed vital parts of the brain, or immediately adjacent to these, so that the destruction of the tissues of the brain must have caused death.

The injuries observed in the bones of the top of the skull, caused by a blunt, hard, and heavy object inflicted simultaneously with the gunshot wounds to the head, could not, by themselves, come into question as the cause of death. The forensic examinations, carried out during the period from 16 to 23 January 1944, revealed that the 925 bodies were neither in a state of decomposition nor putrefaction, i.e., they were in the initial stages of the loss of moisture (most frequently and particularly visible in the chest or abdominal regions; fat and wax separation was most particularly visible in bodies which had lain in direct contact with the ground); i.e, the tissues of the bodies exhibited a loss of moisture and a separation of fat and wax. Particularly worthy of note is the fact that the muscles of the torso and limbs retained their macroscopic condition perfectly, while their former colour was almost perfectly retained; the interior organs of the chest and abdomen were also well preserved in relation to their configuration; the heart muscle, upon incision, clearly retained its usual structure and colour. The brain exhibited characteristic structural conditions, with a clearly recognizable border between white and grey matter.

In addition to their macroscopic investigation of the tissues and bodily organs, the Forensic Expert Commission took material for the subsequent microscopic and chemical laboratory examination. The condition of the earth at the burial site must have played a certain role in the preservation of the tissues and bodily organs.

After the excavation of the graves and exposure of the corpses, the condition of the bodies, following exposure to the air for a period, began to be influenced by the warmth and moisture of the spring and summer of 1943, a factor which could strongly encourage the process



of decomposition. But the degree of moisture loss, and the fat and wax separation in the bodies, the especially good preservation of the muscles and interior organs, as well as the articles of clothing, justify us in stating that the bodies had only been buried a short time. If we compare the condition of the bodies in the graves at Kozy Gory with the bodies found at other burial sites in the city of Smolensk and the near vicinity – GEDEONOVKA, MAGALENSHCHINA, READOVKA, camp 126, KRASNY BOR, etc. (see the Report of the Forensic Medical Expert Commission of 22 October 1943), we must conclude that the bodies of the Polish prisoners of war in the Kozy Gory region were interred about 2 years ago. This is also confirmed by the findings of the documents in the articles of clothing, indicating that an earlier point in time for burial cannot be considered (see point d, paragraph 36, and documentary table of contents).

Based on the findings of the examination, the Forensic Medical Expert Commission has established that:

1) the killings of the officer and non-commissioned officer prisoners of war took place by shooting;

2) that the shootings took place during a period approximately 2 years ago, that is, in the months of September-December 1941;

3) that the valuables and documents dating from 1941 and discovered by the Forensic Expert Commission in the articles of clothing on the bodies, are proof that the German fascist authorities failed to carry out a thorough examination of the bodies in the spring and summer of 1943; the documents discovered prove that the shootings took place after the month of June 1941;

4) that the Germans dissected only a very small number of the bodies of Polish prisoners of war in 1943;

5) that the manner and type of shooting of the Polish prisoners of war is identical with the shooting of peaceful Soviet citizens and Soviet prisoners of war. This type of shooting was practised by the German fascist authorities on a broad scale in the temporarily occupied regions of the USSR, including the cities of Smolensk, Orel, Kharkov, Krasnodar, and Voronezh.

The Superior Forensic Official of the People's Commissariat for Health Matters of the USSR, Director of the State Scientific Research Institute for Health Medicine of the People's Commissariat for Health Matters of the USSR, V.I. PROZOROVSKY;

Professor of Forensic Medicine at the 2nd Moscow State Medical Institute, Dr. V.M. SMOLYANINOV;

Professor of anatomical pathology, Dr. D.N. VOROPAYEV;

The Senior Research Official of the Thanatological Division of the State Scientific Research Institute for Forensic Medicine of the People's Commissariat for Health Matters of the USSR, Dr. P.S. SEMENOVSKY;

The Senior Research Official of the Forensic Medical Division of the State Scientific Research Institute for Forensic Medicine of the People's Commissariat for Health Matters of the USSR, Prof. M.D. SHVAIKOVA.

Smolensk, 24 January 1944.

### **Documents Found on the Corpses**

In addition to the information proven in the documents of the forensic medical report, the time of the shootings of the Polish prisoners of war by the Germans (autumn 1941, not the spring of 1940, as claimed by the Germans), was also established by documents discovered during the excavation of the graves, dating not only from the second half of 1940, but also from the spring and summer (March-June) of 1941.

Among the documents discovered by the forensic experts, the following merit particular attention:

1) on body 92: A letter from Warsaw in the Russian language addressed to the Central Office for Prisoners of War, Moscow, Kuibyshev Street no. 12. In the letter, "Sofia Zigon" inquires the whereabouts of her husband, Tomasz Zigon. The letter is dated 12.9.1940. The envelope bears German postage cancellation "Warsaw September 1940", and cancellation "Moscow Post Office, ninth delivery, 28 September 1940", as well a notice written in red ink, in the Russian language, reading "Find camp and deliver, 15 November 1940" (signature illegible).

2) on body 4: A registered postcard no. 0112 from Tarnopol with cancellation "Tarnopol 12 November 1940". The manuscript text and address are obliterated.

3) on body 101: Receipt no. 10293 dated 19 December 1939, issued in camp Koselsk, for pawn of a gold watch accepted by LEVANDOVSKY EDUARD ADAMOVICH. The reverse of this receipt bears a note dated 14 March 1941, stating that the watch had been sold to the Jewellery Trading Trust.

4) on body 46: A receipt issued in Starobelsk camp on 16 December 1939 for the pawn of a gold watch accepted by ARASZKEVICZ VLADIMIR RUDOLFOVICH. The reverse of the

receipt bears a note dated 25 March 1941, stating that the watch had been sold to the Jewellery Trading Trust.

5) on body 71: A devotional image of paper with a picture of Jesus, discovered between pages 144 and 145 of a Catholic prayer book. The reverse of the devotional image bears a legible note with signature "Jadwiga" and date "4 April 1941".

6) on body 46: A receipt issued in camp no. 1-ON on 5 May 1941 for the deposit of a sum of money in the amount of 225 roubles accepted by ARASZKEVICZ.

7) on the same body (46): A receipt issued in camp no. 1-ON on 6 April 1941 for the deposit of a sum of money in the amount of 102 roubles accepted by ARASZKEVICZ.

8) on body 101: A receipt issued in camp no. 1-ON on 18 May 1941 for the deposit of a sum of money in the amount of 175 roubles accepted by LEWANDOWSKI.

9) on body 53: An unforwarded postcard in the Polish language with the address:

Warsaw, Bagatelia 15, house 47,  
Irene Kuczinska, date: 20 June 1941.  
Sender: Stanislaw Kuczinski.

## **Conclusions of the Special Commission**

From the totality of material available to the Special Commission, particularly from the testimonies of the 100 witnesses interrogated by the Commission, the facts of the case as examined by the forensic experts, and the documents and valuables taken from the graves in the Katyn forest, the following conclusions may be drawn with irrefutable clarity:

1. The Polish prisoners of war in the three camps west of Smolensk were housed there until the beginning of the war, were engaged in road construction work, and remained there even after the invasion of Smolensk by the German conquerors, until September 1943.

2. In the autumn of 1941, mass shootings of Polish prisoners of war taken from the above mentioned camps were carried out by the German occupying power in the Katyn forest.

3. The mass shootings of the Polish prisoners of war in the Katyn forest was carried out by the German armed forces under the cover name "Staff 537 of the Construction Battalion", led by Lt. Col. Arnes and his associates Lt. Reckst and Lt. Hott.

4. As a result of the deterioration of the general military situation

for Germany in early 1943, the German occupier took measures, provocative in nature and intended to attribute their own crime to the Soviets, with a view to causing hostility between the Russians and the Poles;

5. To this purpose,

a) the German fascist invaders attempted, through the use of persuasion, threats, and barbaric tortures, to find “witnesses” among the Soviet citizens from whom perjured statements were extorted to the effect that the Polish prisoners of war had been shot by the Soviets in the spring of 1940;

b) the German occupation authorities, in the spring of 1943, transported the corpses of Polish prisoners of war from other locations and shot by them at other sites, and laid them in the excavated graves of the Katyn forest in an attempt to wipe away the traces of their own bestiality and to increase the number of the “victims of Bolshevism” in the Katyn forest;

c) while the German occupation authorities spread their provocation, they used approximately 500 Russian prisoners of war for the job of excavating the graves at Katyn in order to remove all documents and exhibits which might prove German authorship of the crime. The Russian prisoners of war were shot immediately after termination of this work.

6. The findings of the Forensic Expert Commission have established beyond doubt:

a) the time of the shootings: the autumn of 1941;

b) the German executioners, in shooting the Polish prisoners of war, used the same methods (pistol shots in the back of the neck), as in the mass shootings of Soviet citizens in other cities, particularly, Orel, Voronezh, Krasnodar, and Smolensk.

7. The conclusions drawn from the statements of eyewitnesses and the forensic report on the shootings of the Polish prisoners of war by the Germans in the autumn of 1941 are fully confirmed by the exhibits and documents discovered in the graves at Katyn.

8. In shooting the Polish prisoners of war in the Katyn forest, the German fascist invaders were pursuing a consistent policy of the physical extermination of the Slavic peoples.

President of the Special Commission, Member of the Special State Commission, Academician BURDENKO;

Member of the Special State Commission, Academician ALEXEI TOLSTOI;

Member of the Special State Commission, Metropolitan NIKOLAI;

President of the All-Slav Committee, Lieutenant General GUNDOROV A.S.;

President of the Executive Committee of the Association of the Red Cross and Red Half Moon, S.A. KOLESNIKOV;

People's Commissar for Education of the RSFSR, Academician V.P. POTEMKIN;

Chief of the Forensic Head Office of the Red Army, Colonel-General E.I. SMIRNOV;

President of the Executive Committee for the Region of Smolensk, R.E. MELNIKOV.

Smolensk, 24 January 1944.