THE TRUTH ABOUT KATYN
Report of Special Commission
for Ascertaining and Investigating the Circumstances of the Shooting of Polish Officer Prisoners by the German-Fascist Invaders in the Katyn Forest

THE Special Commission for Ascertaining and Investigating the Circumstances of the Shooting of Polish Officer Prisoners by the German-Fascist Invaders in the Katyn Forest (near Smolensk) was set up on the decision of the Extraordinary State Commission for Ascertaining and Investigating Crimes Committed by the German-Fascist Invaders and Their Accomplices.

The Commission consists of: Member of the Extraordinary State Commission Academician Burdenko (Chairman of the Commission); member of the Extraordinary State Commission Academician Alexei Tolstoy; member of the Extraordinary State Commission the Metropolitan Nikolai; President of the All-Slav Committee, Lt.-Gen. Gundorov; the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Union of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Kolesnikov; People's Commissar of Education of the Russian S.F.S.R. Academic Potemkin; the Chief of the Central Medical Administration of the Red Army, Col.-Gen. Smirnov; the Chairman of the Smolensk Regional Executive Committee, Melnikov.

To accomplish the task assigned to it the Commission invited the following medico-legal experts to take part in its work: Chief Medico-Legal Expert of the People's Commissariat of Health Protection of the U.S.S.R., Director of Scientific Research in the Institute of Forensic Medicine Provorovski; the Head of the Faculty of Forensic Medicine at the Second Moscow Medical Institute, Doctor of Medicine Smolyannikov; Senior Staff Scientists of the State Scientific Research Institute of Forensic Medicine under the People's Commissariat of Health of the U.S.S.R., Semenovskiy and assistant Professor Shvaikova; Chief Pathologist of the Front, Major of Medical Service, Professor Voropayev.

The Special Commission had at its disposal extensive material presented by the member of the Extraordinary State Commission Academician Burdenko, his collaborators, and the medico-legal experts who arrived in Smolensk on September 26, 1943, immediately upon its liberation, and carried out preliminary study and investigation of the circumstances of all the crimes perpetrated by the Germans.

The Special Commission verified and ascertained on the spot that 15 kilometres from Smolensk, along the Vitkev highway, in the section of the Katyn Forest named "Kozy Gory," 500 metres to the S.W. of the highway in the direction of the Dinieper, there are graves in which Polish war prisoners shot by the German occupationists were buried.

On the order of the Special Commission, and in the presence of all its members and of the medico-legal experts, the graves were excavated. A large number of bodies clad in Polish military uniform were found in the graves. The total number of bodies calculated by the medico-legal experts, is 11,000.

The medico-legal experts made detailed examinations of the exhumed bodies and of documents and material evidence discovered on the bodies and in the graves.

Simultaneously with the excavation of the graves and examination of the bodies the Special Commission examined numerous witnesses among local residents, whose testimony establishes with precision the time and circumstances of the crimes committed by the German occupationists.

The testimony of witnesses reveals the following.

THE KATYN FOREST

The Katyn Forest had for long been the favourite resort of Smolensk people, where they used to rest on holidays. The population of the neighbourhood grazed cattle and gathered fuel in the Katyn Forest. Access to the Katyn Forest was not banned or restricted in any way. This situation prevailed in the Katyn Forest up to the outbreak of war. Even in the summer of 1941 there was a Young Pioneers' Camp of the Industrial Insurance Board in this forest, and it was not liquidated until July, 1941.

An entirely different regime was instituted in the Katyn Forest after the capture of Smolensk by the Germans. The forest was heavily patrolled. Notices appeared in many places warning that persons entering without special passes would be shot on the spot.

The part of the Katyn Forest named "Kozy Gory" was guarded particularly strictly, as was the area on the bank of the Dinieper, where 700 metres from the graves of the Polish war prisoners, there was a country house—the rest home of the Smolensk Administration of the Peoples' Commissariat of Internal Affairs. When the Germans arrived this country house was taken over by a German institution named "Headquarters of the 557th Engineer Battalion."

POLISH WAR PRISONERS IN SMOLENSK AREA

The Special Commission established that, before the capture of Smolensk by the Germans, Polish war prisoners, officers and men, worked in the western district of the Region, building and repairing roads. These war prisoners were quartered in three special camps named: Camp No. 1 O.N., Camp No. 2 O.N. and Camp No. 3 O.N. These camps were located 28-45 kilometres west of Smolensk.

The testimony of witnesses and documentary evidence establish that after the outbreak of hostilities, in view of the situation that arose, the camps could not be evacuated in time and all the Polish war prisoners, as well as some members of the guard and staff of the camps, fell prisoner to the Germans.

The former Chief of Camp No. 1 O.N., Major of State Security Vetoshnikov, interrogated by the Special Commission, testified: "I was waiting for the order on the removal of the camp, but communication with Smolensk was cut. Then I myself, with several staff members went to Smolensk to clarify the situation. In Smolensk I found that the traffic to the Smolensk section of the Western Railway, Ivanov, asking him to provide the camp with railway cars for evacuation of the
Polish war prisoners. But Ivanov answered that I could not count on receiving cars. I also tried to get in touch with my family, but it was too late. To set out on foot, but I failed. By this time Smolensk was already cut off from the camp by the Germans, and we were not aware of what happened to the Polish war prisoners and guards who remained in the camp.

Engineer Ivanov, who in June 1941 was acting Chief of Traffic of the Smolensk Section of the Western Railway, testified before the Special Commission: "The Administration of Polish War Prisoners' Camps applied to my office for cars for evacuation of the Polish prisoners, but I had none to spare, besides, we could not send cars to the Gusino line, where the majority of the Polish war prisoners were, since that line was already under fire. Therefore, we could not count on receiving cars. I also tried to get in touch with Moscow to apply to my office for cars for evacuation of the Polish prisoners, but we had none to spare. Besides, we could not count on receiving cars."

Thus the Polish war prisoners remained in the Smolensk Region.

The presence of the Polish war prisoners in the camps in the Smolensk Region is confirmed by the testimony of numerous witnesses who were told that they had been an elementary schoolteacher in the village of Zenkovo, who told the Special Commission that in August 1941 he gave shelter in her house in Zenkovo to a Polish war prisoner who had escaped from camp.

"The Pole wore Polish military uniform, which I recognised at once, as during 1940 and 1941 I had seen a Pole in the village of Zenkovo, a Polish war prisoner who had escaped from camp.

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The witness Danilenkov, a peasant of the "Krasnaya Zarya" collective farm of the Katyn Rural Soviet, stated: "In August and September, 1941, when the Germans arrived, I used to meet Poles who had escaped from the camp near the village of Zenkovo.

"The witness Danilenkov, a peasant of the "Krasnaya Zarya" collective farm of the Katyn Rural Soviet, stated: "In August and September, 1941, when the Germans arrived, I used to meet Poles who had escaped from the camp near the village of Zenkovo.

The witness Ivanov, a carpenter, testified: "I took an interest in the Pole because it turned out that, before being called up, he had been an elementary schoolteacher in Poland. He told me that he had completed normal school in Poland and then studied at some state school and was a Junior Lieutenant of the Reserve. At the outbreak of war between Poland and Germany he was called up and served in Brest-Litovsk, where he was taken prisoner by Red Army troops. He spent over a year in the camp near Smolensk.

"When the Germans arrived they seized the Polish camp and instituted a strict regime in it. The Germans did not regard the Poles as human beings. They oppressed and outraged them in every way. On some occasions Poles were shot without any reason at all. He decided to escape. Speaking of himself, he said that his wife, too, was a teacher and that he had two hundreds and two sisters.

On leaving the next day the Pole gave his name, which Sashneva put down in a book. In this book, "Practical Studies in Natural History," by Yagodovsky, which Sashneva handed to the Special Commission, there is a note on the last page: "Joseph and Sofia Leok. House 26, Ogorodnaya St., town Zamoysk.

In the list published by the Germans, under No. 5705 Lt. Joseph Leok is put down as having been shot at 'Kozy Gory' in the Katyn Forest in the spring of 1940. Thus, from the German report, it would appear that Joseph Leok had been shot one year before the witness Sashneva saw him.

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The witness collector farmer Patkov testified: "Round-ups and searches for Polish war prisoners continued in my district is also confirmed by the testimony of numerous witnesses, including Alexeyeva, who for this purpose summoned them one at a time.

She told me that she had completed normal school in Poland and then studied at some state school and was a Junior Lieutenant of the Reserve. At the outbreak of war between Poland and Germany she was called up and served in Brest-Litovsk, where she was taken prisoner by Red Army troops. She left the camp near Smolensk.

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a number of signs that the Germans were engaged in some shady doings at this country house. . . . At the close of August and during most of September 1941 several trucks used to come practically daily to the ‘Kozy Gory’ country house. At first I paid no attention to that, but later I noticed that each time those trucks arrived at the grounds of the country house they stopped for half an hour, and sometimes for a whole hour, somewhere on the country road connect­ing the country house with the highway. I drew this conclusion because some time after these trucks reached the grounds of the country house the noise they made would cease.

"Simultaneously with the noise stopping, single shots would be heard. The shots followed one another as short but approximately even intervals. Then the shooting would die down and the trucks would drive up right to the country house. German soldiers and N.C.O.s came out of the trucks. Talking noisily they went to wash in the bathhouse, after which they engaged in drunken orgies. On those days fire was always kept burning in the bathhouse stove."

"One day when the trucks arrived more soldiers from some German military units used to arrive at the country house. Special beds were put up for them in the soldiers’ Casino set up in one of the halls of the country house. On those days many meals were cooked in the kitchen and a double ration of drinks was served with the meals. Shortly before the trucks reached the country house armed soldiers went to the forest, evidently to the spot where the trucks stopped, because when N.C.O.'s turned to order the men in these trucks, together with the soldiers who lived permanently in the country house, they would not let us get past them. I even guessed approximately where those trucks were coming.

"Then I noticed strange intervals in the movement of the trucks and their pauses in the forest. Also I noticed that bloodstains appeared on the clothes of the same two men—the Lance Corporals. One of them was tall and red-headed, the other of medium height and fair. From this I inferred that the Germans brought people in the truck to the country house and shot them. I even guessed approximately where those trucks arrived. In the course of time I noticed freshly thrown-up earth in several places near the road. The area of this freshly thrown-up earth increased every day. In the course of time the earth in these spots began to look normal."

In answer to a question put by the Special Commis­sion—what kind of people were shot in the forest near the country house—Alexeyeva replied that they were Polish war prisoners, and in confirmation of her words, stated:

"There were days when no trucks arrived at the country house, but even so soldiers left the house for the forest, whence came frequent single shots. On returning the soldiers always took a bath and then drank."

"Another thing happened. Once I stayed at the country house somewhat later than usual. Mikhailova and Konakhovskaya had already left. Before I finished the work which had kept me there, a soldier suddenly entered and told me I could go. He referred to Rose's order. He also accompanied me to the highway."

"Standing on the highway 160 or 200 metres from where the road branches off to the country house I saw a group of about 30 Polish war prisoners marching along the highway under heavy German escort. I knew them to be Poles because even before the war, and for some time after the Germans came, I used to meet on the highway Polish war prisoners wearing the same uniform with their characteristic four-cornered hats. I halted near the roadside to see where they were being led, and I saw that they turned towards our country house at 'Kozy Gory.'

"Since by that time I had begun to watch closely everything going on at the country house, I was interested. I went back some distance along the highway, hid in bushes near the roadside, and waited. In some 20 or 30 minutes I heard the familiar single shots. Then everything became clear to me and I hurried home."

"I also concluded that evidently the Germans were shooting Poles not only in the daytime when we worked at the country house, but also at night in our absence. I understood this also from recalling the occasions when all the officers and men who lived in the country house, with the exception of the sentries, woke up late, about noon. On several occasions we guessed about the arrival of the Poles. 'Kozy Gory' was the tense atmosphere that descended on the country house. . . . All the officers left the country house and only a few sentries remained in it, while the Sergeant-Major kept checking up on the sentries over the telephone."

Mikhailova testified: "In September, 1941, shooting we heard very often in the 'Kozy Gory' Forest. At first I took no notice of the trucks, which were closed at the sides and on top and painted green. They used to drive up to our country house always escorted by a.N.C.O. and five or six Gendar­mers. I inferred that these trucks never entered our garage, and also that they were never unloaded. They used to come very often, especially in September, 1941."

"Among the N.C.O.'s who always sat with the drivers I recognized them all with their characteristic face and red hair. When these trucks drove up to the country house, all the Germans, as if at a command, went to the bathhouse and bathed for a long time. Sometimes, after a long time, they came out of the country house. Once this tall red-headed German got down from the truck, went to the kitchen and asked for water. When he was drinking the water out of a glass I noticed blood on the cuff of the right sleeve of his uniform."

Mikhailova and Konakhovskaya witnessed the shooting of two Polish war prisoners who had evidently escaped from the Germans and been recaptured. Mikhailova testified: "One day Konakhovskaya and I were at our usual work in the country house. I noticed that Rose asked for water. When he was drinking the water out of a glass I noticed blood on the cuff of the right sleeve of his uniform."

"We were discovered, however, and at a signal from Rose the mechanic Grenewski drove us into the kitchen and the Poles away from the country house. A few minutes later we heard shots. The German soldiers and N.C.O. Rose, who soon returned, were engaged in animated conversation. Wanting to find out what the Germans had done to the detained Poles, Konakhovskaya and I came out again. Arnes' aide, who came out simultaneously with us from the main entrance of the country house, asked us something in German, to which the latter answered, also in German, 'everything is in order.' We understood these words because the German often used them in their conversation. From all that took place I concluded that the Poles were Poles.

Similar testimony was given by Konakhovskaya. Frightened by the happenings at the country house, Alexeyeva, Mikhailova and Konakhovskaya decided to quit work there on some convenient pretext. Taking advantage of the reduction of their work, which lasted from nine to three marks a month at the beginning of January, 1942, on Mikhailova's suggestion they did not report for work. In the evening of the same day a car came to fetch them, they were brought to the
country house and locked up by way of punishment—Mikhailova for eight days and Alexeyeva and Konakhovskaya for three years. That same day, as far as I knew, they had served their terms all of them were sacked.

While working at the country house Alexeyeva, Mikhailova and Konakhovskaya had been afraid to speak to each other about what they had observed of the shooting of Polish prisoners or of the anti-Polish policy pursued by Germany, which became especially marked in connection with the conclusion of the Russo-Polish Treaty.

Bazilevsky also told the Special Commission about his conversation with the Sonderfuehrer of the 7th Department in the German commandant's office, Hirschfeld, a Batic German who spoke good Russian:

"With cynical frankness Hirschfeld told me that the harmfulness and inferiority of the Poles had been proved by the fact that the German population would fertilize the soil and make possible an extension of Germany's living space. In this connection Hirschfeld boasted that absolutely no intellectuals had been left in Poland, as they had all been hanged, shot or confined in camps."

Bazilevsky's testimony is confirmed by the witness Yefimov, Professor of Physics, who has been interrogated by the Special Commission and who tells Bazilevsky at that time, in the autumn of 1941, told about his conversation with Menshagin.

Documentary corroboration of Bazilevsky's and Yefimov's testimony is supplied by notes made by Mazhegin in his own hand in his notebook. This notebook, containing 17 incomplete pages, was found in the files of the Smolensk Municipal Board after the liberation of Smolensk by the Red Army. Menshagin's ownership of the notebook and his handwriting have been confirmed both by Bazilevsky, who knew Menshagin's handwriting, and by expert graphologists.

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The first three pages of the notebook lay down in detail the procedure in organizing the Jewish "Ghetto" and the system of reprisals to be applied against the Jews.

Page 10, dated August 15, 1941, contains the following special note: "The refugee Polish Jews are to be detained and delivered to the commandant's office." Page 15 (undated) contains the entry: "Are there any rumors among the population concerning the shooting of Polish war prisoners in Kocy Gory (for Unmow)?"

It transpires from the first entry, firstly, that on August 15, 1941, Polish war prisoners were still in the Smolensk area and, secondly, that they were being arrested by the German authorities. The second entry indicates that the German Command, worried by the possibility of rumors about the crime it had committed circulating among the civilian population, issued special instructions for the purpose of checking this rumor. Apparently, mentioned in this entry, was the Chief of the Russian Police in Smolensk during the early months of its occupation.
BEGINNING OF GERMAN PROVOCATION

In the winter of 1942-48 the general military situation changed sharply to the disadvantage of the Germans. The military power of the Soviet Union was continually growing stronger. The unity between the U.S.S.R. and her Allies was growing stronger. The Germans resolved to launch a provocation, which would draw the attention of the enemy away from the main front. The Germans intended to set the Russians and Poles at loggerheads and to cover up the traces of their own crimes, using for this purpose the crimes they had committed in the Katyn Forest, and disclosing them to the organs of the Soviet authorities. In this way they intended to set the Russians and Poles at loggerheads, and to cover up the traces of their own crimes.

The interpreter, however, would not listen to me, but took a handwritten document from the desk and read it to me. It said that I, Kisselev, resident of a hamlet in the Koz'y Gory area, personally witnessed the shooting of Polish officers by the Gestapo and that I would be an absolute witness.

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"Having read this document, the interpreter told me to sign it. I refused to do so. The interpreter began to force me to do it by abuse and threats. Finally, he threatened me: 'Either we shall destroy you. Make your choice!'"

"Frightened by these threats, I signed the document and thought that would be the end of the matter."

Later, after the Germans had arranged visits to the Katyn graves by various 'delegations,' Kisselev was made to speak before a 'Polish delegation' which arrived there. Kisselev forgot the contents of the protocol he had signed at the Gestapo, got mixed up, and finally refused to speak. The Gestapo then arrested Kisselev, and, by ruthless beatings, in the course of six weeks again obtained his consent to 'public speeches.'

In this connection Kisselev stated: "In reality things went quite a different way. In spring 1943 the Germans announced that in the Koz'y Gory area they had discovered the graves of Polish officers allegedly shot in 1940 by order of the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs in Koz'y Gory."

Kisselev informed the Commission: "In the autumn of 1942 two policemen came to my house and ordered me to report to the Gestapo at Gnezdovo station. On that same day I went to the Gestapo, which had its premises in a two-storeyed house next to the railway station. In a room there were a German officer and interpreter. The German officer started asking me through the interpreter how long I had lived in that district, what my occupation and my material circumstances were. I told him that I had lived in the hamlet in the area of Koz'y Gory since 1907 and worked on my farm. As to my material circumstances, I said that I had experienced some difficulties since I was old and my sons were at war."

"After a brief conversation on this subject, the officer stated that, according to information at the disposal of the Gestapo, in 1946 in the area of Koz'y Gory in the Katyn Forest, a staff member of the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs, Kisselev, had discovered the graves of Polish officers, and he asked me what testimony I could give on this score. I answered that I had never heard of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs shooting people in Koz'y Gory, and that anyhow it was impossible. I explained to the officer, since Koz'y Gory is an absolutely open and much frequented place, and if shootings had gone on there the entire population of the neighbouring villages would have known."

"The officer told me I must nevertheless give such evidence, because he alleged the shootings did take place. I was promised a big award for this testimony, I told the officer again that I did not know anything about shootings and that no one could have taken place in our localities before the war. I stated that I was badly beaten up."

I told him that I had witnessed the shooting of Polish officers, allegedly affected by the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs in 1940. I again told the Gestapo officer that this was a lie, as before the war I had not heard anything about any shootings, and that I would not give false evidence. The interpreter, however, would not listen to me, but took a handwritten document from the desk and read it to me. It said that I, Kisselev, resident of a hamlet in the Koz'y Gory area, personally witnessed the shooting of Polish officers by the Gestapo and that I would be an absolute witness.

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"After the first conversation about which I have already spoken, I was summoned again to the Gestapo in February 1943. By that time I knew that other residents of neighbouring villages had also been summoned to the Gestapo and that the same testimony they demanded of me had also been demanded of them."

"At the Gestapo the same officer and interpreter who had interrogated me the first time again demanded that I give false testimony. They alleged that I was associating with Polish officers, allegedly affected by the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs in 1940. I again told the Gestapo officer that this was a lie, as before the war I had not heard anything about any shootings, and that I would not give false evidence. The interpreter, however, would not listen to me, but took a handwritten document from the desk and read it to me. It said that I, Kisselev, resident of a hamlet in the Koz'y Gory area, personally witnessed the shooting of Polish officers by the Gestapo and that I would be an absolute witness.

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ing me with rubber clubs. Being unable to stand the beatings and torture, I agreed to appear publicly with a fallacious tale about shooting of Poles by Bolsheviks. After that I was released from prison on condition that on the first demand of the Germans I would speak before the so-called 'delegations' in Katyn Forest.

"On every occasion, before leading me to the graves in the forest, the interpreter used to come to my house, call me out into the yard, take me aside to make sure that no one would hear, and for half an hour make me memorise by heart everything I would have to say about the alleged shooting of Polish officers by the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs in 1940."

"I recall that the interpreter told me something like this: 'I live in a cottage in Kozy Gory area not far from the country house of the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs. In spring 1940 I saw Poles taken on various nights to the forest and shot there.' And then it was imperative that I must state literally that 'this was the doing of the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs.' After I had memorised what the interpreter told me, he would take me to the open rear room in Kisselev's hamlet to repeat all this in the presence of 'delegations' which came there.

"My statements were strictly supervised and directed by the Gestapo interpreter. Once when I spoke, the interpreter interrupted me and asked the question: 'Did you see these Poles personally before they were shot by the Bolsheviks?' I was not prepared for such a question and answered the way it was in fact, i.e., that I only knew that Polish war prisoners before the war, as they worked on the roads. Then the interpreter roughly dragged me aside and drove me home.

"Please believe me when I say that all the time I felt pangs of conscience, as I knew that in reality the Polish officers had been shot by the Germans in 1940. I had no other choice, as I was constantly threatened with the repetition of my arrest and torture.

"Kisselev's testimony regarding his summons to the Gestapo, subsequent arrest and beatings are confirmed by his wife Akimya Kisseleva, born 1870, his son Vassily Kisselev, born 1921, and his daughter-in-law Mariya Kisseleva, born 1918, who live with him, as well as by track foreman Timofey Sergeyev, born 1901, in Kisselev's hamlet. The injuries caused to Kisselev at the Gestapo (injury of shoulder, considerable impairment of hearing) are confirmed by a protocol of medical examination.

In their search for 'witnesses' the Germans subsequently became interested in railway workers at the Gnezdovo station, as well as by track foreman Kisselev, who rents a room in Kisselev's hamlet. The interpreter emphasised that my testimony as 'witness' regarding the shooting of the Polish officers was false and that a sad fate awaited me. However, I again refused to give false testimony to the German official. He started shouting at me, threatened me with beating and so forth, and said I did not want to give my testimony. However, I stood my ground. The interpreter then drew up a short protocol in German on one page, and gave me a free translation of its contents. This protocol recorded, as the interpreter told me, only the fact of the arrival of the Polish war prisoners at Gnezdovo station. When I asked that my testimony be recorded not only in German but also in Russian, the officer finally went beside himself with fury, beat me up with a rubber club and drove me of the premises....."

Savvat’ev, born in 1908, stated: "In the Gestapo I testified that in spring 1940 Polish war prisoners arrived at Gnezdovo station, which is the nearest station to Katyn Forest, and were later taken by trucks and sent to Gnezdovo station where they went. I also added that I repeatedly met these Poles later on the Moscow-Minsk highway, where they were working on repairs in small groups. The officer told me I was mixing things up, that I could not have met the Poles on the highway, as they had been shot by the Bolsheviks, and demanded that I testify to this...

"I refused. After threatening and exorting me for a long time, the officer consulted with the interpreter about something in German, and then the interpreter wrote a short protocol and gave it to me to sign. He explained that it was a record of my testimony and that the Gestapo officers wrote the protocol myself, but he interrupted me with abuse, ordering me to sign it immediately and get out. I hesitated a minute. The interpreter seized a rubber club hanging on the wall and made to strike me. After that I signed the protocol at home. The interpreter told me to get out and go home, and not to talk to anyone or I would be shot.

The search for 'witnesses' was not limited to the above-mentioned persons. The Germans strove persistently to locate former employees of the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs and extract from them the false testimony which the Germans needed.

Having chance to arrest Ignatyuk, formerly a labourer in the garage of the Smolensk Regional Administration of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs, the Germans stubbornly, by threats and beatings, tried to extort from him testimony that he had brought a driver to给力 prisoners who worked in the garage, and had himself driven Polish war prisoners to the shooting site.

Ignatyuk, born in 1906, testified in this connection: "When I was examined for the first time by Chief of Police of Smolensk in spring of 1940 and was brought to the Gestapo, I was asked to make a statement against the German authorities, and asked what work I had done for the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs. I replied that I had worked in the garage of the Smolensk Regional Administration of the People's
Commissariat of Internal Affairs as a labourer. At this examination Alfierchik tried to get me to testify that I had worked as a car driver and not as a labourer. I greatly irritated by his failure to obtain the required testimony from me, and he and his aide, whom he called George, tied up my head and mouth with some rag, removed my trousers, laid me on a table and began to beat me with rubber clubs.

"After that I was summoned again for examination, and Alfierchik demanded that I give him false testimony to the effect that the Polish officers had been shot in Katyn Forest by organs of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs in 1940, of which I allegedly was aware, as a chauffeur who had taken part in driving the Polish officers to Katyn Forest, and who had been present at their shooting, Alfierchik promised to liberate me from prison if I would agree to give such testimony, and get me a job with the police where I would be given good living conditions—otherwise they would shoot me."

"The last time I was interrogated in the police station by examiner Alexandrov, who demanded from me the same false testimony about the shooting of the Polish officers as Alfierchik, but at this examination I was beaten up and sent to the Gestapo. . . . In the Gestapo, just as at the police station, they demanded from me false evidence about the shooting of the Polish officers in Katyn Forest in 1940 by Soviet authorities, of which I as a car driver was allegedly aware."

A book published by the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and containing material about the "Katyn affair"[9] reputedly by the Germans, refers to other "witnesses" aside the above-mentioned Kisselov, Godesov (alias Godunov) born in 1877, Grigori Silversov born in 1891, Ivan Andreyev born in 1917, Mikhail Zhigulev born in 1915, Ivan Krivozertsev born in 1915 and Matvey Zakharov born in 1896. A check-up revealed that the first two of the above persons (Godesov and Silversov) died in 1943 before the liberation of the Smolensk Region by the Red Army; the next three (Andreyev, Zhigulev and Krivozertsev) left with the Germans, or, perhaps, were forcibly abducted by them, while the last—Matvey Zakharov—formerly a chauffeur at Smolensk Station, who worked under the Germans as headman in the village Novye Bateki, was located and examined by the Special Commission.

Zakharov related how the Germans got from him the false testimony they needed about the "Katyn affair": "Early in March 1943 an employee of the Gnezdovo Station by name I do not know came to my house and told me that an officer wanted to see me. When I arrived at the Gestapo a German officer told me through an interpreter: 'We know you worked as chauffeur at Smolensk Central Station and you must testify that in 1940 cars with Polish war prisoners passed through Smolensk on the way to Gnezdovo, after which the Poles were shot in the forest at Kozy Gory.' In reply I stated that in 1940 cars with Poles did pass Smolensk westwards, but I did not know what their destination was.

"The officer told me that if I did not want to testify of my own accord he would force me to do so. After saying this he took a rubber club and began to beat me up. Then I was laid on a bench and the officer, together with the interpreter, beat me. I do not remember how many strokes I had, because I soon fainted.

"When I came to, the officer demanded that I sign a protocol of the examination. I had lost courage as a result of the beating and threats of shooting, so I gave false evidence and signed the protocol. After I had signed the protocol I was released from the Gestapo.

"Several days after I had been summoned to the Gestapo, approximately in mid-March 1943, the interpreter came to my house and said I must go to the German general and confirm my testimony in his presence. The general asked me whether I confirmed my testimony. I said I did confirm it, as on the way I had been warned by the interpreter that if I refused to confirm the testimony I would have a much worse beating of me."

"Fearing a repetition of the torture, I replied that I confirmed my testimony. Then the interpreter ordered me to raise my right hand, and told me I had taken an oath and could go home."

It has been established that in other cases also the Germans used persuasion, threats and torture in trying to obtain the testimony they needed, for example from Kaverznev, former deputy chief of the Smolensk Prison, and Kovalyev, former staff member of the same prison. Since the search for the required number of witnesses failed to yield any success, the Germans posted up in Smolensk city and neighbouring villages the following handbill, an original of which is on the files of the Special Commission:

"Notice to the population. Who can give information concerning the mass murder of prisoners, Polish officers and priests by the Bolsheviks in the forest of Kozy Gory near the Gnezdovo-Katyn highway in 1940? Who saw columns of trucks on their way from Gnez­dovo to Kozy Gory, or who saw or heard the shootings? Who knows residents who can tell about this? Rewards will be given for any information. Information to be sent to Smolensk, German Police Station, No. 5, Muzeinaya Street, and in Gnezdovo to the German Police Station, house No. 105 near the railway station."

A similar notice was printed in the newspaper "Novy Put," published by the Germans in Smolensk—No. 85 (157) for May 6, 1943.

The fact that the Germans promised rewards for the evidence they needed on the "Katyn affair" was confirmed by witnesses called by the Special Commission: Sokolova, Pushchina, Bychkov, Tandarev, Ustinov and many other residents of Smolensk.

PREPARING KATYN GRAVES

Along with the search for "witnesses" the Germans proceeded with the preparation of the graves in Katyn Forest: they removed from the clothing of the Polish prisoners whom they had killed all documents dated later than April 1940—that is, the time when, according to the German propaganda line, the Poles were shot by the Bolsheviks—and removed all material evidence which could disprove this provocation version. In its investigation the Special Commission revealed that for this purpose the Germans used up to 500 Russian war prisoners specially selected from war prisoners' camp No. 126.

The Special Commission has at its disposal numerous statements of witnesses on this matter. The evidence of the above-mentioned cited camp mates special attention. Dr. Chizhov, who worked in camp No. 126 during the German occupation of Smolensk, testified:

"Just about the beginning of March 1943, several groups of the physically stronger war prisoners, totaling about 500, were sent from the Smolensk Camp No. 126 ostensibly for trench work. None of these prisoners ever returned to the camp."

Dr. Klimov, who worked in the same camp under the Germans, testified:

"I know that somewhere about the second half of February or the beginning of March 1943, about 500 Red Army men prisoners were sent from our camp to a destination not known to me. The prisoners were apparently to be used for trench digging, for the more physically fit men were selected. . . ."

Identical evidence was given by medical nurse Lemkovskaia, who worked in the same camps, and witnesses Orlova, Dohnovskaia and Kochubiev.

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The testimony of Moskovskaya made it clear where the 500 war prisoners from Camp 126
were actually sent. On October 5, 1943, the citizen Moskovskaya, Alexandra Mikhailovna, who lived in Katyn Forest, had worked during the occupation in the kitchen of a German military unit, filed an application for the Extraordinary Commission for the Investigation of Atrocities Perpetrated by the German invaders, requesting to present her husband as the important evidence. She told the Special Commission that before leaving for work in March 1943, when she went to fetch firewood from her shed in the yard on the house of a Dulipov, she discovered there an unknown person who proved to be a Russian war prisoner.

Moskovskaya, who was born in 1922, testified:

"..."The morecloser I came to the pit, the more my heart pounded and I felt such fear that my speech became incoherent. I knew that my husband Yegorov had been a war prisoner. At the Gestapo interrogation Moskovskaya staunchly denied that she had any connection with this war prisoner, maintaining she knew nothing about his presence in her shed. Since they got no admission from Moskovskaya, the interrogators brought the war prisoner Yegorov evidently had not incriminated Moskovskayas, she was let out of the Gestapo.

This same Yegorov told Moskovskayas that as well as excavating bodies in Katyn Forest, the war prisoners were used to bring bodies to the Katyn Forest from other places.

The bodies so brought were thrown into pits along with the bodies that had been put into the pit that day. But Yegorov refused to be convinced that a great number of bodies of people shot by the Germans in other places were brought to the Katyn graves is confirmed also by the testimony of engineer mechanic K. S. Sushchev, born in 1912, an engineer mechanic of the "Rosglavkhleb" combine, who worked under the Germans as a mechanic in the Smolensk city mill. On October 8, 1943, he filed a request that he be called to testify. Called before the Special Commission, he stated:

"I was working at the mill in the second half of March, 1943. There I spoke to a German chauffeur who spoke a little Russian, and since he was carrying a bag of flour to the village of Savenki, I searched the car. Returning on the next day to Smolensk, I asked him to take me along so that I could buy some fats in the village. My idea was that making the trip in a German truck would get over the risk of being held up at the customs stations. The German agreed to take me, at a price.

"On the same day at 10 p.m. we drove on to the Smolensk-Vitebsk highway, just myself and the German driver in the machine. The night was light, and only a low mist over the road reduced the visibility. Approximately 22 or 23 kilometres from Smolensk at a demolished bridge on the highway there is a rather steep descent, the by-pass. We began to go down from the highway, when suddenly a truck appeared out of the fog coming towards us. Either because our brakes were out of order, or because the driver was inexperienced, we were unable to bring our truck to a halt, and since the passage was quite narrow we collided with the truck coming towards us. The impact was not very violent, as the driver of the other truck swerved to the side, as a result of which the bodies fell down on the slope.

"The right wheel of the other truck, however, landed in the ditch, and the truck fell over on the slope. Our truck remained upright. The driver and I immediately jumped out of the cabin and ran up to the truck which had fallen down. It was obvious that the truck was used in the transport of bodies and that there was a heavy stench of putrifying flesh coming evidently from the truck."

"On coming nearer, I saw that the truck was carrying a load covered with a tarpaulin and tied up with ropes. The ropes had snapped with the impact, and part of the load had fallen out on the slope. This was a horrible load—human bodies dressed in military uniforms. As far as I can remember there were some six or seven men near the truck: one German driver, two Germans armed with tommy-guns—the rest were Russian war prisoners, as they spoke Russian and were dressed accordingly.

"The Germans immediately began to abuse my driver and then made some attempts to right the truck. In about two minutes time two more trucks drove up to the place of the accident and pulled up. A group of Germans and Russian war prisoners, about ten men in all, came up to us from these trucks. . . . By joint efforts we began to raise the truck. Taking advantage of an opportune moment I asked one of the Russian war prisoners in a low voice: 'What is it?' He answered very distinctly: 'For many nights already we have been carrying bodies to Katyn Forest.'"

"Before the overtaken truck had been raised a German N.C.O. came up to me and my driver and ordered us to proceed immediately. As no serious damage had been done to our truck the driver steered
EXCURSIONS TO THE KATYN GRAVES

In April 1943, having finished all the preparatory work at the graves in Katyn Forest, the German occupationists began a wide campaign in the Press and over the radio in an attempt to ascribe to the Soviet Police the detection and the condemnation of against Polish war prisoners. As one method of pro-vocational agitation, the Germans arranged visits to the Katyn graves by residents of Smolensk and its suburbs as well as "delegations" from countries occupied by the German invaders or their vassals. The Special Commission questioned a number of delegates who took part in the "excursions" to the Katyn graves.

Zhilov, a doctor specializing in pathological anatomy who worked as a Medical Legal Expert in Smolensk, testified before the Special Commission: "The clothing of the bodies, particularly the greatcoats, boots and belts, were in a good state of preservation. The metal parts of the clothing—belt buckles, buttons, hooks and collars on shoe soles, etc.—were not heavily rusted, and in some cases the metal still retained its polish. Sections of the clothing that could be seen—faces, necks, arms—were chiefly a dirty green colour and in some cases dirty brown, but there was no complete disintegration of the tissues, no putrefaction. In some cases bare tendons of whitish colour and parts of muscles could be seen."

It was at the excavations people were at work sorting and extracting the bodies from the bottom of a big pit. For this purpose they used spades and other tools, and also took hold of bodies with their hands and dragged them from place to place by the arms, the legs or the clothing. I did not see a single case of bodies falling apart or of any member being torn off.

"Considering all the above, I arrived at the conclusion that in the Katyn Forest redan and especially without, there were no putrefaction. In some cases bared tendons of whitish colour and parts of muscles could be seen..."

Germans Attempt to Cover up Their Crimes

The "excursions" organised by the Germans failed to achieve their aim. All who visited the graves saw for themselves that they were confronted with the crudest and most obvious German-Pacifist frame-up. The German authorities accordingly took steps to make the doubters keep quiet. The Special Commission heard the testimony of a great number of witnesses who related how the German authorities persecuted those who doubted or disbelieved the provocation. These doubters were discharged from work, arrested, threatened with shooting.

The Commission established that in two cases people were shot for failure to "hold their tongues." Such reprisals were taken against the former German police-magnate A. Gruzinski and against Yegorov, who worked on the excavation of graves in Katyn Forest. Testimony about the persecution of people who expressed doubts after visiting the graves in Katyn Forest was given by Zheleznykh, a woman cleaner employed by Drug Store No. 1 in Smolensk; Koslov, an assistant sanitation doctor of Stalin's District Health Dept. in Smolensk, and others.

Yakovenko-Skolor, former Chief of Police of Katyn area, gave the following instruction areas which caused serious alarm in the German Commandant's Office, and police organs in the periphery were given urgent instructions to nip in the bud all harmful talk at any price, and arrest all persons who expressed disbelia in the 'Katyn affair.' I myself, as Chief of the area police, was given instructions to this effect at the end of May 1943 by the German commandant of the village of Katyn, Oberleutnant Braung, and at the beginning of June by the chief of Smolensk District Police, Kamensky.

"I called an instructional conference of the police in my area, at which I ordered the police to detain and bring to the police station anyone who expressed disbelia or doubted the truth of German reports about the shooting of Polish war prisoners by the Bolsheviks. In fulfilling these instructions of the German authorities I clearly acted against my conscience, as I myself was certain that the 'Katyn affair' was a German frame-up. I became finally convinced of this with myself made an 'excursion' to Katyn Forest."

Seeing that the summer 1943 "excursions" of the local population to the Katyn graves did not achieve their purpose, the German authorities ordered the graves to be filled in. Before their retreat from Smolensk they began hastily to cover up the traces of their crimes. The country house occupied by the "E.O. of the 397th Building Battalion" was burned to the ground.

The Germans searched for the three girls—Alexeyeva, Mikhailova and Konakhovskaya—in the

We have no business to be mixing in German affairs."

That the Germans were carrying beer on trucks to the Katyn Forest is also testified by Frol Matveevich Yakovenko-Skolor (born in 1906), a former agent for restaurant supplies in the Smolensk Restaurant Trust and, under the Germans, Chief of Police of Katyn. He stated that once early in April 1943, he himself saw four tarpaulin-covered trucks passing along the highway to Katyn Forest. Several men armed with tommy-guns and rifles rode in them. An acrid stench of flesh came from these trucks. The testimony is confirmed by Frol Yakovenko-Skolor, chief of the Police Station in the village of Arkhipovka, who advised him to "hold his tongue" and added: "This does not concern us."
of the X. Army; Major of Medical Service Subbotkin, Chief of Pathological Anatomy Laboratory No. 93; Major of Medical Service, Professor Bazilevsky, delegate of the Polish People's Commissariat of Health Service Pushkareva.

During the period between January 16 and January 29, 1944, these medico-legal experts conducted exhumation and medico-legal examination of the bodies of Polish war prisoners buried in graves on the territory of 'Koby Gery' in Katyn Forest 15 kms. from Smolensk. The bodies of Polish war prisoners were buried in a common grave about 60 by 60 by three metres in dimension, and also in another grave about seven by six by three and a half metres. Nineteen hundred and twenty-five bodies were exhumed from the graves and examined. The examination and medico-legal examination of the bodies were effected in order to establish: (a) identity of the dead; (b) causes of death; (c) time of burial; (f) determination of ownership of the materials of the Special Commission. Objective evidence: See the protocols of the medico-legal examination of the bodies.

CONCLUSION OF MEDICO-LEGAL EXPERTS

On the basis of the results of the medico-legal examination of the bodies, the commission of medico-legal experts arrived at the following conclusions:

Upon the opening of the graves and exhumations of bodies from them, it was established that:

(a) Among the mass of bodies of Polish war prisoners there were bodies in civilian clothes, the number of which, in relation to the total number of bodies examined, is insignificant (in all two out of 925 exhumed bodies); shoes of army pattern were on these bodies.

(b) The clothing of the bodies of the war prisoners showed that they were officers, and included some private property.

(c) Slits in the pockets, pockets turned inside out, and tears in them discovered during examination of the clothing show that as a rule all the clothes on each body: (a) trousers, (b) shirts, etc., bear traces of searches effected of the dead bodies.

(d) In some cases whole pockets were found during examination of the clothing, scraps of newspapers, prayer books, postcards and letters, receipts, notes and other documents, as well as articles of value (a gold nugget, dollars), pipes, pipe knives, cigarette papers, handkerchiefs and some other articles, in the pockets, as well as in the turned-out and torn pockets, under the linings, in the belts of the coats, in footwear and socks.

(e) Some of the documents found contain data referring to the period between November 12, 1940 and June 30, 1941.

(f) The fabric of clothes, especially of greatcoats, uniforms, trousers and tunics, is in a good state of preservation and can be torn with the hands only with great difficulty.

(g) A very small proportion of the bodies (20 out of 925) had the hands tied behind the back with, or shoes or socks on the feet, savages and ties tied around the necks, suspenders attached, shirts tucked in, testifies that no external examination of the bodies and extremities of the bodies had been effected previously. The intact state of the skin on the head, and the absence on them, as on the skin of the cheeks and abdomen (save in three cases out of 925) of any incisions, cuts or other signs, show convincingly that judging by the bodies exhumed by the experts' commission, there had been no medico-legal examination of the bodies.

External and internal examination of 925 bodies proves the existence of bullet wounds on the head and neck, combined in four cases with injury of the bones of the cranium caused by a blunt, hard heavy object. Also, in a small number of cases injuries of the fingers and of the palmar surfaces of the hands were discovered simultaneously with the wound in the head.

Entry orifices of the bullet wounds, as a rule, are single, more rarely double, and situated in the occipital part of the head near the occipital protuberance, at the big occipital orifice or at its edge. In a few cases entry orifices of bullets have been found on the back surface of the neck, corresponding to the first, or second or third vertebrae of the neck. The points of exit of the bullets have been found more frequently in the frontal area, more rarely in the parietal and temporal areas as well as in the face and neck.

In 97 cases all bullets were found to be blind (without exit orifices), and at the end of the bullet channels under the soft membranes of the cranium, in its bones, in the membranes and in the brain matter, were found deformed, barely deformed, or altogether undecorated and deformed bullets of the type used with automatic pistols, mostly of the 7.65mm. calibre.

The dimensions of the entry orifices in the occipital bone make it possible to draw the conclusion that firearms of two calibres were employed in the shooting: in the majority of cases, those of less than 8mm., i.e., 7.65mm. or less, and in a lesser number of cases, those of more than 8mm., i.e., 9mm.

The fact that in the skulls of the cranial bones, and the fact that in some cases traces of powder were found at the entry orifice, proves that the shots were fired pointblank or nearly pointblank. Correlation of the points of entry and exit of the bullets shows that the

Smolensk, the German-Fascist occupationists looked for Professors Bazilevsky and Yefimov. Both succeeded in evading deportation or death only because they had escaped in good time. Nevertheless, the German-Fascist invaders did not succeed in covering up the traces of or concealing their crime.

Examination by medico-legal experts of the exhumed bodies proved irrefutably that the Polish war prisoners were shot by the Germans themselves. The protocol of the Medico-Legal Experts' Investigation follows.

PROTOCOL OF THE MEDICO-LEGAL EXPERTS' INVESTIGATION

In accordance with the instructions of the Special Commission for recruiting and investigating the circumstance under the Prosecution of People's Commissariat of Health Protection of the U.S.S.R. and Director of the State Scientific Research Institute of Forensic Medicine at the People's Commissariat of Health Protection of the U.S.S.R. and Director of the Institute; Doctor of Medicine Voropayev, Professor of Forensic Medicine at the Second Moscow State Medical Institute; Doctor of Medicine Smolyanyinov, Professor of Forensic Medicine at the Second Moscow State Medical Institute; Doctor of Medicine Voropayev, Professor of Pathological Anatomy; Doctor Smenovskiy, senior staff scientist of the Pathological Department of the State Scientific Research Institute of Forensic Medicine under the People's Commission of Health Protection of the U.S.S.R.; Assistant Professor Shvaikova, senior staff scientist of the Chemico-Legal Department of the State Scientific Research Institute of Forensic Medicine under the People's Commission of Health Protection of the U.S.S.R.; with the participation of Major of Medical Service Nikishiy, Chief Medico-Legal Expert of the Western Front; Captain of Medical Service Bussovodev, Medico-Legal Expert of the German-Fascist invaders in Katyn Forest (near Smolensk), a Commission of Medico-Legal Experts was set up consisting of Prozorovsky, Chief Medico-Legal Expert of the People's Commissariat of Health Protection of the U.S.S.R. and Director of the State Scientific Research Institute of Forensic Medicine; Doctor of Medicine Smolyanyinov, Professor of Forensic Medicine at the Second Moscow State Medical Institute; Doctor of Medicine Voropayev, Professor of Forensic Medicine at the Second Moscow State Medical Institute; Doctor of Medicine Voropayev, Professor of Pathological Anatomy; Doctor Smenovskiy, senior staff scientist of the Pathological Department of the State Scientific Research Institute of Forensic Medicine under the People's Commission of Health Protection of the U.S.S.R.; Assistant Professor Shvaikova, senior staff scientist of the Chemico-Legal Department of the State Scientific Research Institute of Forensic Medicine under the People's Commission of Health Protection of the U.S.S.R.; with the participation of Major of Medical Service Nikishiy, Chief Medico-Legal Expert of the Western Front; Captain of Medical Service Bussovodev, Medico-Legal Expert of the People's Commissariat of Health Service Pushkareva.
shots were fired from behind with the bullet entering the bullet channel pierced the vital parts of the brain, or near them, and death was caused by destruction of the brain tissues. The injuries inflicted by a blunt, hard, heavy object found on the parietal bone of the cranium were consistent with the bullet wound to the head, and were not in themselves the cause of death.

The medico-legal examination of the bodies carried out between January 16 and January 29, 1944, testifies that there were absolutely no bodies that showed any sign of decay or disintegration, and that all the 925 bodies are in a state of preservation—in the initial phase of desiccation of the body—which most frequently and clearly occurs in the region of the thorax, chest, abdomen, sometimes also in the extremities; and in the initial stage of formation of adipocere (in an advanced phase of formation of adipocere in the bodies extending to the bottom of the graves); in a combination of desiccation of the tissues of the body with the formation of adipocers.

Especially noteworthy is the fact that the muscles of the trunk and extremities absolutely preserved their macroscopic structure and almost normal colour; the internal organs of the thorax and peritoneal cavity preserved their condition. In many cases sections of heart muscle showed a clearly discernible structure and specific colouration, while the brain presented its characteristic structural peculiarities with a distinctly discernible border between the grey and white matter. Besides the macroscopic examination of the tissues and organs of the bodies, the medico-legal experts removed the necessary material for subsequent microscopic and chemical studies in laboratory conditions.

Properly preserved soil in the places of discovery were of a certain significance in the preservation of the tissues and organs of the bodies. After the opening of the graves and exhumation of the bodies and their exposure to the air, the corpses were subject to the action of air and moisture in the cold summers of the year 1943. This could have resulted in a vigorous progress of decay. However, the degree of desiccation of the bodies and formation of adipocere in them, especially the good state of preservation of the muscles and internal organs, as well as of the clothes, give grounds to affirm that the bodies had not remained in the earth for long.

Comparing the condition of bodies in the grave on the territory of "Kozy Gory" with the condition of the bodies in other burial places in Voronezh and its nearest environs—Gedenokov, Maglenzhchina, Redovka, Camp No. 126, Krasny Bor, etc. (see protocol of the Commission of Medico-Legal Experts dated October 7, 1940), it should be admitted that the bodies of the Polish war prisoners were buried in the territory of "Kozy Gory" about two years ago. This finds its complete corroboration in the documents found in the clothes on the bodies, which preclude the possibility of earlier burial (see point "d" of paragraph 56 and list of documents).

The commission of medico-legal experts, on the basis of the data and results of the investigation, consider as proved the fact of the killing by shooting of the Polish Army officer and private war prisoners; it asserts that the shooting dates back to the period about two years ago, i.e. between September and December of 1941; regards the fact of the discovery by the commission of medico-legal experts, in the clothes on the bodies, of a German rubber stamp "Warsaw Sept. 1940" and a rubber stamp "Moscow, Central Post Office, Ninth delivery, Sept. 28, 1940" and an inscription in the Russian language: "Ascertain and forward delivery, November 15, 1940" (signature illegible).

1. On body No. 92: A letter from Warsaw addressed to the Central War Prisoners' Bureau of the Red Cross, Moscow, Krybushev Street, House No. 12. The letter is written in Russian. In this letter Wladyslaw Zigon inquires about the whereabouts of her husband Tomasz Zigon. The letter is dated September 12, 1940. The envelope bears the impress of a German rubber stamp "Warsaw Sept. 1940" and a rubber stamp "Moscow, Central Post Office, Ninth delivery, Sept. 28, 1940" and an inscription in the Russian language: "Ascertain and forward delivery, November 15, 1940" (signature illegible).

2. On body No. 102: A protocol registered under the number 0112 from Tarnopol stamped "Tarnopol Nov. 12 1940." The written text and address are discoloured.

3. On body No. 101: A receipt No. 10293 dated December 19, 1939 issued by the Koszela Camp testifying receipt of a gold watch from Eduard Adamovich Lewandowski. On the back of the receipt is a note dated March 4, 1941 on the sale of this watch to the Jewellery Trading Trust.

4. On body No. 46: A receipt (number illegible) issued December 16, 1939 by the Starobelsk Camp testifying receipt of a gold watch from Vladimir Baldkovich Araszkievich. On the back of the receipt is a note dated March 25, 1941 stating that the watch was sold to the Jewellery Trading Trust.

5. On body No. 71: A small paper icon with the image of the Virgin Mary found between pages 144 and 145 of a Catholic prayer book. The inscription, with illegible signature, on the back of the icon reads: "Jadwiga" and bears the date April 4, 1941.

6. On body No. 46: A receipt dated April 6, 1941 issued by the Camp No. 1-ON, showing receipt of a sum in roubles from Araszkievich.

7. On the same body No. 46: A receipt dated May 5, 1941 issued by Camp No. 1-ON, showing receipt of 103 roubles from Araszkievich.

8. On body No. 46: A receipt dated May 15, 1941 issued by Camp No. 1 showing receipt of 175 roubles from Lewandowski.

CONCLUSIONS OF THE SPECIAL COMMISSION

From all the material at the disposal of the Special Commission, namely evidence given by over 100 witnesses questioned, data supplied by the medico-legal experts, documents and material evidence found in the graves in the Katyn Forest, the following conclusions emerge with ineradicable clarity:

1. The Polish prisoners of war who were in the three camps west of Smolensk, and employed on road building before the outbreak of war, remained there after the German invaders reached Smolensk until September 1941, inclusive.

2. In the Katyn Forest, in the autumn of 1941, the German occupation authorities carried out mass shootings of Polish prisoners of war from the above-named camps.

3. The mass shootings of Polish prisoners of war in the Katyn Forest was carried out by a German military organisation hiding behind the conventional name "H.Q. of the 337th Engineering Battalion," which consisted of Ober-leutnant Ames, his assistant Ober-leutnant Rekst, and Lieutenant Hott.

4. In connection with the deterioration of the general military and political situation for Germany at the beginning of the year 1943, the German occupation authorities, with provocative aims, took a number of steps in order to ascribe their own crimes to the organs of the Soviet Power, calculating on setting Russians and Poles at loggerheads.

5. With this aim, (a) the German Fascist invaders, using persuasion, attempts at bribery, threats and barbarous torture, tried to find witnesses among Soviet citizens, from whom they tried to extort false evidence alleging that the Polish prisoners of war had been shot by the organs of Soviet Power in the spring of 1940; (b) the German occupation authorities in the spring of 1943 brought in from other districts bodies of Polish war prisoners whom they had shot and put them into the open graves in the Katyn Forest, calculating on covering up the traces of their own crimes, and on increasing the number of "victims of Bolshevik atrocities" in the Katyn Forest; (c) preparing for their provocation, the German occupation authorities started opening the graves in the Katyn Forest in order to take cut documents and material evidence which exposed them, using for this work about 500 Russian prisoners of war who were shot by the Germans after the work was completed.

6. It has been established beyond doubt from the evidence of the medico-legal experts, that (a) the time of the shooting was the autumn of 1941; (b) in shooting the Polish war prisoners the German hangmen applied the same method of pistol shots in the back of the head as they applied in the mass execution of Soviet citizens in other towns, e.g., Ore, Vorenzhe, Krasnogvar and Smolensk itself.

7. The conclusions drawn from the evidence given by witnesses, and from the findings of the medico-legal experts on the shooting of Polish war prisoners by the Germans in the autumn of 1941, are completely confirmed by the material evidence and documents excavated from the Katyn graves.

8. In shooting the Polish war prisoners in the Katyn Forest, the German Fascist invaders consistently carried out their policy of physical extermination of the Slav peoples.

Signed:

Chairman of the Special Commission, Member of the Extraordinary State Commission, Academician Bubnovich.

Members:

Member of the Extraordinary State Commission, Academician ALEXEI POLENOV.

Member of the Extraordinary State Commission, NIKOLAI GUNDOROV.

Chairman of the Special Commission, Member of the Extraordinary State Commission, Academician PoTEMKIN.

Chairman of the All-Slav Committee, Lieutenant-General GURKIN.

Chairman of the Extraordinary State Commission, Academician Prelzov.

Chairman of the Smolensk Regional Executive Committee, MELENIKOV.

Chairman of the Smolensk Regional Executive Committee, MELNICOV.

Smolensk, January 24, 1944.