

Khrushchov's  
Crimes  
in  
Ukraine





# **KHRUSHCHOV'S CRIMES IN UKRAINE**

**Mass-Murders of Ukrainian Political  
Prisoners**

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## FOREWORD

The 45 years since the first Russian Bolshevik invasion and occupation of Ukraine have been a period of unparalleled sufferings of the Ukrainian people caused by inhumanity of the alien rulers.

Masquerading as "liberators of international proletariat" the Russian Communist imperialists trampled on the right of the Ukrainian people to self-determination, to national freedom and independence. By ruthless methods of military occupation, armed terror, mass executions, imprisonment, deportations, isolation of the country from the outside world, false propaganda and widespread employment of agent-provocateurs and traitors, Moscow has managed to keep Ukraine in the worst possible colonial subjugation.

Among the most cruel executors of the policy of the Kremlin in Ukraine has been the notorious helpmate of Stalin, the one-time First Secretary of the Communist Party of Ukraine, a die-hard Russian imperialist, Nikita Khrushchov. Some of the foulest mass-murders of Ukrainian political prisoners took place in Ukraine during his period in office as the virtual Governor-General and viceroy of Stalin in Ukraine.

The present book is but a fragmentary attempt to describe some of the crimes against humanity committed under Khrushchov's auspices in Ukraine. The beginning of Khrushchov's reign in Ukraine coincided with the great purge of 1937-1938 in which untold thousands of people, even devoted Ukrainian Communists, perished in a bloodbath. An article describes briefly Khrushchov's personal role in these events.

The mass-murder of about 10,000 prisoners in a single Ukrainian town of Vinnytsia in the same period is illuminated in another article based on documentary evidence and statements by eye-witnesses.

The book contains a representative selection of testimonies by eye-witnesses describing the horrible mass-murders of Ukrainian political prisoners committed by the Russian security police on Khrushchov's orders in many towns in Ukraine after the outbreak of the German-Russian war in June 1941.

Finally, the former Prime Minister of the Ukrainian Provisional Government in 1941, Jaroslaw Stetzko, contributes an article accusing Khrushchov of mass-murder of the Ukrainian people and refuting Moscow's attempts to shift the blame for the atrocities on someone else's shoulders.



# KHRUSHCHOV'S PURGE OF UKRAINE IN 1937-1938

by W. Hamaliya

## THE YEARS OF DEATH AND TERROR

The 1930's were a grim era for the semi-starved and shabbily clad millions of Stalin's subjects. The agricultural revolution unequalled in history swooped on the unwary peasants, robbed them overnight of their smallholdings and their proud though modest independence and herded them together in unwilling collectives. Like a pack of vultures the emissaries of the ruthless regime sapped the blood out of the peaceful population. Terrorised, famished and tortured mentally and physically it revolted in blind, unorganised outbursts of desperate violence or offered stubborn passive resistance. At last, after the convulsions of a horrible and hideous famine in which several million Ukrainians perished in their huts or at the roadside, the country was pacified and the merciless sun shone now on the serfs of the modern tyrant who from the heights of his Kremlin throne proclaimed that "Life has become merrier, life has become better, comrades!" The comparative peace did not however last long. Soon the fearful tremours of terror shook to the foundations the whole building of the Soviet monster empire. The sudden assassination of the close friend of Stalin — Kirov in December 1934 cast a shadow of suspicion across the entire Soviet prison of peoples, cut off as it was from the civilised world. The prisons and forced labour camps filled to overflowing, the long string of show trials gave the sanction for the murderous butchery in the dark recesses of the OGPU cellars. In Ukraine alone between 1930 and 1937 not less than 14 alleged underground organisations were "discovered," arrested, tried and "liquidated" in a bloodbath.



## REAPPEARANCE OF KHRUSHCHOV

After several years of life in Moscow, where he rose from total obscurity to important position in the Party, the burly figure of Khrushchov, the right hand man of Stalin reappeared in Ukraine in the summer of 1937. He left Ukraine in 1929 as a rank and file Communist and a minor Trade Union organiser. Now he came as a member of a special commission sent by Stalin to Ukraine to investigate the secret reports of disloyalty on the part of Communist administration of Ukraine. The other two members of the Commission were: the well known hammer-headed Molotov and Yezhov, the frenzied chief of the Secret Police whose terror-ridden period of office was even worse than that of Beria or Yagoda, and was dreaded by the people as "Yezhovshchina." Their arrival in Ukraine was Stalin's reaction to the carefully worded protest by the Communist government of Ukraine who demanded that the scores of Stalin's open and secret agents in Ukraine who flooded Kremlin's Party headquarters with reports of treachery and corruption in Ukraine, send the copies of their reports to Kyiv. Molotov, Yezhov, and the then still little known Khrushchov arrived in Kyiv in the middle of August 1937 accompanied by NKVD (Secret Police) troops from Moscow who "occupied" the city. The plenary session of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine was quickly convened and Molotov took over the rôle of Stalin's representative at the session. After a few crisp opening words spoken unenthusiastically by S. Kosior, the then Secretary of the C.P. of Ukraine, who sensed danger, Molotov spoke at length stating finally that "the party leadership in Ukraine did not justify the political trust put in them by the Central Committee" in Moscow. He moved then the vote of non-confidence to: Kosior, Khatayevich — the chief of NKVD in Ukraine, Popov — member of Ukrainian Politbureau, Petrovsky — President of Soviet Ukraine, Lyubchenko — Chairman of People's Commissars of Ukraine and proposed that they should be removed from the Central Committee and Politbureau. Then he suggested that KHRUSHCHOV should be elected the Secretary of the Communist Party of Ukraine, i.e. that he should become in other words the real dictator of Ukraine under Stalin. This dictate cynically disguised as a proposal by Molotov struck Kyiv Communists like lightning. They could not believe that they, faithful old Bolsheviks, who themselves hunted out all those Ukrainians who were in any way prominent or potential opponents of the regime, that they were about to lose their positions, fruit of long years of arduous and unpleasant toil, to a nonentity like Nikita Khrushchov. They categorically refused, believing that Stalin would not go so far as to eliminate all the old Bolshevik guard in Ukraine.



## THE SUICIDE OF LYUBCHENKO

The categorical refusal of Ukrainian Communist leadership to submit to Molotov's reshuffle was a slap in the face of Khrushchov, and, indirectly, of Stalin. Talks and persuasions did not help, the Kyiv Communists were stubborn. Molotov rang up Moscow and asked Stalin's instructions. The session was adjourned till the following day. When members of the Ukrainian Politbureau gathered next day on Molotov's ground in the headquarters of the "mobile NKVD," beleaguered by NKVD troops who were in the state of full alertness, they must have wondered what fate was awaiting them. The exact nature of the talks which took place remained unknown. One thing is certain, however, that no agreement was reached. At the end of the prolonged session Molotov suggested what appeared to be a compromise solution, namely for all of them to go to Moscow for a combined session with the Politbureau under Stalin's chairmanship. This suggestion was reluctantly accepted by all members of Ukrainian Politbureau with the exception of Panas Lyubchenko, the head of the puppet government of Ukraine, who did not hide his suspicion of the intentions of the Kremlin, and openly accused Moscow of highhandedness. The stories of further events are conflicting in details, but the main outline is well-known. After the session adjourned to enable everybody to prepare for departure to Moscow on the following day, Lyubchenko saw clearly that a humiliating end was approaching and that Stalin's vengeance would be terrible. He knew the methods of the NKVD torture chambers, and he was too proud to seek alleviation of his fate by self-abasing confessions at a show trial. He decided to end his own life. After consulting his wife, he sent his two children out into the country on a pretext, and then shot dead his wife and himself. The next morning members of the Ukrainian Politbureau were horrified by the discovery of the suicide of the head of the Government of Ukraine. "Pravda" broke the news on 2. 9. 1937 on its last page in a few laconical lines between other unimportant events:

"Entangled in his anti-Soviet connections and, apparently, dreading responsibility before the Ukrainian people for his betrayal of the interests of Ukraine, the former Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of Ukraine, Lyubchenko, ended his life by suicide on 30th August."

## THE PURGE RAGES

The talks in Moscow have remained a secret to this day. Only a few of top-ranking members of the Kremlin clique know something certain about them. Their consequences however are evident to everybody. Immediately followed the arrests of Ukrainian Polit-



bureau members: I. S. Shelekhes, S. O. Kudriavtsev, N. N. Popov, V. I. Chernyavsky and others. Even those members of the government of Ukraine who were temporarily allowed to return to Ukraine were very soon arrested one after another. Among them were: Deputy Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of Ukraine — V. I. Porayko, Head of the Administration in Arts Affairs — A. A. Khvyliya, the Commissars for Agriculture — O. H. Shlikhter, Commissar for Finance — Rekis, Commissar for Health — Kantorovich, and the notorious old Bolshevik — V. P. Zatonsky, People's Commissar for Education and member of Politbureau.

A wave of terror seized Ukraine. Not only members of the government were arrested. Widespread arrests among rank and file of the Communist Party of Ukraine and among population as a whole followed. Especially directors of enterprises, scholars, scientists, writers, and people in any way eminent in intellectual life. Even ordinary peasants and workers were arrested on slightest denunciation which gathered an abundant harvest at that time. From heavily-guarded Kremlin citadel boot-licking Khrushchov co-operated with Yezhov in clean-up operations in Ukraine. His prize was to be a satrapy of 30 million people, a country flowing with milk and honey, the richest jewel in Moscow's imperial crown. The results of the purge were staggering. This was a devastation, the like of which no region of the immense despotic Soviet Empire has so far experienced. To give a few examples: from 11 members and 5 candidates of Politbureau of the C.P. of Ukraine not even one remained free, from 8 members and 2 candidates of the Organisational Bureau — no one again, from 9 members of the Control Commission — no one, from 3 members of the Secretaryship of the Central Committee — Kosior, Khatayevych and Popov — no one remained alive, from 62 members and 40 candidates of the Central Committee — only 2 were not arrested, from 17 members of the Bolshevik government of Ukraine — no one remained in freedom. All regional secretaries of the C.P. were liquidated, Chairmen of municipal councils, directors of all state enterprises, factories and establishments were deposed, arrested, and many of them liquidated. Once again the Association of Writers of Ukraine suffered something which amounted to a pogrom. Its President, a subservient Communist — I. Kulyk together with many faithful Communist writers like — I. K. Mykytenko, I. Korylenko, V. D. Koriak, B. Kovalenko, and others were arrested and all trace of them was lost. All scientific, educational and cultural organisations suffered in like extent. The former Secretary of the Communist Party of Ukraine, S. Kosior, was transferred to Moscow where he disappeared from the horizon for ever.

Ukraine was deprived completely of its local Communist government as well as of the local leadership of the Communist Party "elected" according to all Soviet formalities at the 13th Congress of the C.P. of Ukraine (27. 5. 1937 - 4. 6. 1937). No one bothered to ask who was in charge of affairs in Ukraine at that time. Somebody appointed Heads of Government and Commissars from among obscure



people and after a few weeks of precarious drifting they were suddenly arrested and disappeared as mysteriously as they appeared on the Ukrainian horizon. Instead of Ukrainian Communists who at least partially were in charge of affairs in Ukraine arrived finally newcomers from Russia. The entire operation was conducted under the smoke screen of hue and cry raised around the alleged discovery of the "Ukrainian nationalist-fascist organisation." Lyubchenko, now dead, was accused of having been the head of this mythical organisation, and many of the arrested members of the Government and Ukrainian Politbureau — its members. Their cases were linked up with those of Rykov, Hrynko, Hamarnyk, Yakir and others whose show trial was staged in Moscow.

### KHRUSHCHOV — NEW BOSS IN UKRAINE

Finally when the stage was cleared well enough, Khrushchov reappeared in Ukraine again in January 1938 as an appointee of Stalin to the post, which was refused to him by the Ukrainian Communists four months earlier, and which action cost them their lives or their freedom. "Pravda" published on 29th January 1938 on the first page a large portrait of Khrushchov dressed in an embroidered Ukrainian shirt, and under it a communique about a plenary session of the Central Committee of C.P. of Ukraine (which, by the way, could not have taken place as all the formally elected members were either dead or under arrest with the exception of two minor members). This farcical session apparently "elected" Khrushchov to the post of the Secretary of the Communist Party of Ukraine and made him thus the boss of the country, directly responsible to Stalin. Khrushchov started to organise his own government and party apparatus in Ukraine from among minor and dull bureaucrats of Ukrainian origin, and particularly from among the newcomers from Moscow and other regions of Russia.

Among a host of new Russian appointees a personal friend of Khrushchov from the days of their common party work in Moscow — Demian Korotchenko was appointed Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of Ukraine, and a young and sadistic security police official from Russia A. I. Uspensky — chief of the NKVD in Ukraine. Khrushchov's task in Ukraine was to nip in the bud the growing resistance of Ukraine to Russian overlordship, to bring Ukrainians to their knees and assure a subservient position of Ukraine towards Moscow by checking the attempts at an independent development of Ukrainian political, cultural and economic life by a severe policy of Russification. Many Russians were brought into key positions in the C.P. organisation, in educational and cultural life, economic establishments etc.

The Soviet "History of Ukraine" published in 1943 wrote thus about the role of Khrushchov:



"With the arrival in Ukraine (in January 1938) of the close collaborator of Stalin — N. S. Khrushchov... the eradication of all remnants of the enemy and the liquidation of the results of wrecking activities proceeded particularly successfully."

"Pravda" wrote on 13 June, 1938:

"The Bolsheviks of Ukraine, while realising the decisions of the February and March (1937) plenary session and the directives of Comrade Stalin have carried out great work in rooting out hostile nests of Trotskyist-Bukharinist, bourgeois-nationalist and every other kind of agents... and bandits.

...The base enemies of the people, who wormed their way into a number of responsible positions in the party, governmental, economic and cultural organisations of Ukraine have caused a great harm...

The gang of spies, of mischievous traitors of the Fatherland — people like Yakir, Lyubchenko, Zatonsky, Balytsky and others — were selling out the country by wholesale and retail."

In his report to the XIVth Congress of the C.P. of Ukraine called in the first half of June 1938 to approve and consolidate the results of his purge of Ukraine, Stalin's slave Nikita Khrushchov promised: "We will smash their heads in once and for all!"

And he fulfilled his promise as eagerly as he could. Thousands of new graves enriched the landscape of Ukraine. The best known of them are mass graves in the provincial Ukrainian town Vynnytsia, where nearly 12,000 massacred bodies of Ukrainians, mostly peasants, were discovered in a "Park of Culture and of Rest" and two other places after the Soviet troops left the territory before the advancing Germans in 1941.

## RUSSIFICATION

The Russification of Ukraine was intensified in all sections of state-controlled life. Many newspapers which were formerly published in Ukrainian had to switch over to Russian language. A new daily paper which began to be published in Kiev was in Russian. By the decision of the authorities from April 1938 compulsory teaching of Russian in all Ukrainian schools, beginning from the 2nd year of schooling was introduced. Manipulations with the Ukrainian language were intensified so as to bring it nearer to the Russian. Khrushchov himself said at the 14th Congress of the C.P. of Ukraine:

"The enemies of the people, the bourgeois nationalists, knew the strength and the influence of the Russian language and Russian culture. They knew that this meant the influence of the teaching of Lenin and Stalin on the minds of the Ukrainian people, of the Ukrainian workers and peasants. Therefore they chased out from the schools the Russian language.



In many Ukrainian schools German, French, Polish and other languages were taught, but not Russian."

In his Russification policy Khrushchov followed the general trend of the rise of a most brutal Russian chauvinism which has since come into the open as the driving force behind Moscow's aggression. This expansionism and maniacal ambition of the Russian Communists to dominate the world is symbolised by the following exclamation of the writer of the leading article in "Pravda" of 7th July, 1938:

"Comrades, all nations now will learn the Russian language!"

This brief survey of the circumstances in which Khrushchov secured his grip on the throats of the Ukrainian people are only a part of the full story which will be told once when secret archives of the Kremlin will become available to the free world and when the victims of the deportations and arrests who may still survive will tell the gruesome tale of tortures undergone by them to satisfy Khrushchov's lust of power. In spite of the murderous blows which the mailed fist of Khrushchov and his associates inflicted on the Ukrainian people, Ukraine still lives, Ukraine still struggles, Ukraine still hopes for the glorious day of freedom.

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# MOSCOW'S CRIME IN VINNYTSIA

MASS-MURDER OF 10,000 PRISONERS  
BY THE RUSSIAN NKVD  
IN A UKRAINIAN TOWN  
IN 1937-1939



### CHEKA, GPU AND NKVD IN VINNYTSIA

Vinnytsia (Vinnitsa in Russian) is an old Ukrainian town situated in the Western part of Central Ukraine in the Podolia province on the upper course of the River Boh (known also as the Southern Bug) in the fertile wooded steppe land. Founded in the 14th century it played a considerable part in Ukrainian history. During the Ukrainian national uprising against the oppressive Polish rule in the 17th century, the leader of the Ukrainian Cossack Army, Hetman Bohdan Khmelnytsky, deployed his troops in this area, and one of his distinguished lieutenants, Colonel Ivan Bohun, engaged the Poles in many a glorious battle in the region of Vinnytsia. During the Liberation War of 1917-1921, the Ukrainian National Government, forced to leave Kyiv (Kiev), the capital of Ukraine, in view of the overwhelming force of the Russian invaders, set up its headquarters in Vinnytsia for a brief period. Today Vinnytsia is the centre of a large administrative region, the Vinnytsia oblast, with the total population of about 2.5 million. The city itself numbers about 130,000 inhabitants.

The Russian Bolshevik invasion and occupation of Ukraine which began in 1918 and was finally completed in 1921-22 brought untold misery to the Ukrainian population. Harsh military occupation coupled with the suppression of every political, economic and cultural right of the individuals and the nation as a whole, despotic rule by the all-powerful representatives of the dictatorial Russian Communist Party with the exclusion of all other groups by means of ruthless physical annihilation of all declared opponents of the inhuman regime and the application of terrorism to everyone else — these are briefly the "blessings" which the "Soviet" Russian regime has brought its victims, in particular the Ukrainians. The people of Vinnytsia were not spared the solicitous attention of the appropriate organs of the brutal occupation regime either. In the years 1921-1922,



when the Vinnytsia region was still the scene of frequent and fierce combats between the scattered detachments of Ukrainian national partisans and the Russian occupation troops, the Vinnytsia region headquarters of the Russian security police, the Cheka\*), was notorious for its wholesale shootings of arrested victims suspected of active opposition to the regime. Within a short time most former officials and clergy, as well as leading Ukrainian patriots, were shot in the cellars of the Cheka HQ in Vinnytsia. A new wave of mass-terror took place in 1929 when the GPU uncovered the Union for the Liberation of Ukraine and the Ukrainian Youth Association (underground Ukrainian nationalist organisations which aimed to prepare a general uprising against the alien Russian Communist occupation regime). Again the prison of Vinnytsia was filled with those arrested. Hundreds of Ukrainians were shot without trial.

The forced collectivisation campaign which raged in Ukraine in the years 1929-31 was accompanied by another wave of Russian Bolshevik brutality. As the Ukrainian peasants resisted the attempts of the Soviet Russian regime to take away land and cattle from them and to herd them together in Moscow-controlled collective farms, terrorist methods were used to "persuade" them to join the collective farms. About 20,000 peasants of Vinnytsia region paid with their lives for continuing their resistance. Many more were deprived of all their possessions, thrown out of their homes and deported thousands of miles away from their native country to the snow wastes of Siberia to die of exhaustion in forced labour camps. The famine which was intentionally inflicted on Ukraine by the Bolshevik Russian authorities in 1933, as a result of their policies of taking away the last crumb of bread from the Ukrainian peasants in reprisal for the latter's recalcitrant opposition to collectivisation methods, caused the deaths of at least 5,000,000 people in Ukraine, including about 150,000 people in Vinnytsia region. In December 1934, when Kirov, one of Stalin's henchmen, was assassinated in Leningrad, a wave of mass terror swept the entire Soviet Union, particularly Ukraine. In Vinnytsia region alone over 2,000 people were murdered by the Russian security police. During the last pre-war wave of mass terror in 1937-38 carried out by the infamous "People's Commissar" Yezhov, the head of the NKVD, the Russian security police, about 15,000 Ukrainians were murdered in Vinnytsia and the surrounding area. At that time about 30,000 prisoners filled to overflowing the Vinnytsia prisons. The cells were so full that prisoners had to stand all the time, for there was no room to sit or lie down. Even the corridors were full of prisoners as well as the courtyard where prisoners were standing for months on end without a roof over their heads to shelter them.

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\*) Cheka — Chrezvychaynaya Komissiya po bor'be s kontrrevolyutsiyey, sabotazhem i spekulyatsiyey, Extraordinary Commission for the Struggle Against Counterrevolution, Sabotage and Speculation, which in later evolution was transformed consecutively into the GPU, NKVD, MVD, MGB, and most recently into the KGB, Komitet Gosudarstvennoy Bezopasnosti, the Committee for State Security, the main organ of terrorising the population into obedience.



It should be remembered that it was precisely in January 1938 that the present dictator of the Russian multi-national empire, "comrade" Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchov, was sent by Stalin from Moscow to take over the governorship of Ukraine as the all-powerful First Secretary of the Communist Party of Ukraine, in other words the highest-ranking servant and lieutenant of Stalin in Ukraine. It was under his general tutelage that many of the murders which we are going to describe took place in Vinnytsia. Khrushchov tries at present to blame Stalin alone for all the terrible excesses of the Soviet Russian regime. He admitted even at the 20th Party Congress in Moscow in February 1956 that Stalin intended to destroy the Ukrainian nation by deporting the Ukrainians to all parts of the USSR and that he failed in this macabre intention only because there were too many Ukrainians to deal with, about 40,000,000 to be precise. For all his artful manipulations, Khrushchov will not be able to escape responsibility for the horrible murders perpetrated by the terrorist organs of the ruling Russian Communist Party in Ukraine, particularly since January 1938, when Khrushchov was made directly responsible by Stalin for the carrying out of Moscow's policy in Ukraine by being appointed the governor of Ukraine.

The evidence of the Russian Bolshevik crimes which will be described in the following chapters has come to light accidentally as a result of the outbreak of the German-Russian War in June 1941, when the Soviet Russian Army and regime fled from Ukraine and the jealously guarded places where the Soviet security police tortured and murdered their victims were thrown open to public inspection.

## THE GERMAN — RUSSIAN WAR

On 22nd June 1941, the Russian-Bolshevik iron curtain fell. After the flight of the Moscow invaders from Ukraine, the Ukrainians were able to realise the terrible devastation in their national community. Many Ukrainians further realised the devilish plans of Moscow to destroy the Ukrainian nation completely, a scheme made possible when we remember how Moscow, through the NKVD, controlled all Ukrainian life. None dared ask about those who were arrested by the NKVD and why they were arrested. None dared write about it to their friends. None dared try to establish the number of the arrested.

But all attempts to hide these crimes were unavailing; the crimes could not remain undiscovered. And Vinnytsia was the place where the iniquitous activity of the NKVD was discovered, although it is only a drop in the ocean of the bloody oppression perpetrated by the Communist Russians in Ukraine — complete exposure may take years.



## HOW WERE THE CRIMES IN VINNYTSIA DISCOVERED?

In May 1943, the Ukrainian town authorities received information about mass graves of victims murdered by the NKVD in 1937-1939 in the western part of Vinnytsia in a fruit orchard at Pidlisna Street No. 1, off Litynska Street. With permission from the local German occupation authorities a group of Ukrainians began digging up the mass graves in the pear orchard in Pidlisna Street on May 24, 1943.

The following witnesses, among others, gave information about the graves:

An assistant at the hydro-biological station of Vinnytsia, H. Hulevych, stated as follows: "In the spring of 1938 I went to Kyiv and stayed there for three months. During that period my brother was arrested in Vinnytsia. After my return in the summer to Vinnytsia I noticed, opposite my work place in Litynska Street, a new wooden fence about three metres (1 metre=1.0936 yd.) high. It was a solid double fence. My question as to why the fence was there and what was the meaning of it were answered in different ways. Usually it was said that the fence was built by the NKVD. A few days passed, and I heard that there was a large grave for those shot by the NKVD. One day I sensed the smell of decomposed corpses. Then having observed the fence very carefully I found a small knot-hole in it, and looked through. I saw a large heap of loam and as large a heap of corpses, which there had not been time to bury. Every time a large motor lorry was passing, my eyes followed it till it disappeared through the gateway. I kept thinking that in one of those lorries might also be my brother. Nearly every day when it was getting dark I saw a passing lorry and then saw it disappearing through the gateway and coming back on the following day full of loam."

A watchman of the market in Vinnytsia, Opanas Skrepka, made the following statement: "From 1935 to 1941 I was a watchman of the town fruit plantations in Litynska Street. In March 1938, one of the orchards beside the plantation I was looking after was fenced with a high wooden fence. Talking with the workmen who were building it, I was told there was a Children's Home being built. About a month later I got on a tree beside the fence. It was a very bright night. Near the fence I saw six ditches, about three square metres each. Every ditch was filled with corpses. It looked as if there was room for more, because the ditches were still open. For some time I had noticed that loaded lorries were coming to the garden, and had heard dull thumps on the ground, but I could not see what was going on inside the garden. A few times in the early mornings, after the lorries had passed, I noticed bloodstains on the road along Litynska Street, and disappearing behind the garden fence. In the morning an NKVD guardsman, who always stayed in the guardhouse in the garden, was covering the stains with sand. During the night I never heard any



shooting or noise, but sometimes during the day I saw Russian commissars coming in their cars, and then I heard shooting. Sometimes the wind blew the smell of decomposed corpses from the garden. There was nobody allowed to be near the garden; the guard was marching back and forward along the inner and outer side of the fence. In 1938 the officials of the NKVD demanded some young trees from me, and when I refused to satisfy their demand I was called to the town office of the NKVD. There I was told that I had no right to refuse. After that, about 200 young trees were taken away from my plantation and transplanted on the graves behind the fence. But only a few of them grew successfully afterwards."

Maria Ponomarchuk (44 Litynska Street) said: "From 1927 I have occupied this house, and the distance from the fenced garden to my house is only 300 metres. Very often I saw NKVD men in uniform standing by beside the garden day and night. What they were building behind the fence nobody knew, but already people were muttering that, when the NKVD is doing something you cannot expect anything good. None of the people believed the suggestions that there was going to be a Children's Play-Garden built. Several times in 1938 I saw a heavy truck covered with a waterproof sheet entering the garden. Already people guessed that shot victims were buried there."

The foregoing was confirmed by many other witnesses, by information by a building technician, Fedor Stranets; by workmen Vasyl Kozlovsky and Petro Zivak; by a driver, Evhen Binecky; by a watchman, Oleksa Kozlovsky; by the manager of the brick-kiln, Trokhym Amosov, and his wife Olena. Everyone of these testified that, after the fence was built, very often the smell of the decomposed corpses coming from the former orchard was noticeable, that, by night, heavy trucks were entering the garden, and that till 1941, when German occupation began, NKVD men were watching the garden without a break. Such statements certify that the NKVD had used this particular part of the land for burying their victims. And for their own security, not wanting to be discovered, they turned the place into a forbidden zone, as is shown in the Minutes of the local authorities of Vinnytsia, then under Communist control.

Extract of Minute No. 1 of the presidium of the Town Council in Vinnytsia dated 1. 4. 1939, reads as follows:

"Were attending to: an information of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs (NKVD) about the prohibition of public use of the ground by Slovianska dairy-farm in Vinnytsia.

Agreed: to close to the public the above-mentioned land which is the property of the Town Council; in extent 27 hectares and 9151 square metres, and to reserve it for use of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs.

It is forbidden to build any kind of buildings on this ground without special permission of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs. The boundaries of the forbidden zone are as follows: (a) on the north — local wood and all the land of the village of Piatnychany; (b) on the east — a building, No. 646; (c) on the south — Litynska Street.

The cost of all the living-rooms will be covered by the People's Commissariat. (Sgd.) The Chairman of the Town Council: *Fursa*; The Secretary: *Slobodianuk*."



Such was the way taken to stop building in this large area, with the purpose of keeping secret the mass graves. The young trees planted were meant to prevent all possible clues to discovery.

But there was not enough room for all the victims shot by the NKVD during the years 1937-39. They had to use the local cemetery in Litynska Street as well. The first witness, Hulevych, who informed about the mass graves, said: "I was resident in a part of the town from which I could reach the centre by a short way through the local cemetery. Going to my work I saw very often people digging graves. I could not imagine for whom such a mass of graves was prepared. But having noticed a rubber boot and a few stains of blood beside it in the main alley in the autumn of 1937, I started careful observation. Shortly after that, walking along the alley, I noticed a heavy truck covered with a waterproof sheet. It was going towards the dug graves. I heard very distinctly the noise of the throwing down of the corpses, along with brutal swearing. In the hurry, having covered the graves with some earth, and still swearing, a few men jumped into the truck and left the cemetery."

Yuriy Klymenko, a resident of Vobliv, on 20. 4. 1943, made the following statement: "Since 1941 I was employed as a watchman in Pirogov Hospital in Vinnytsia. There was only a fence between the hospital and the local cemetery of Vinnytsia. I could always see the cemetery very clearly. In the autumn of 1937 I noticed prisoners digging graves in the cemetery, in size about 2 square metres each. During their work they were watched by NKVD guardsmen. All this looked very strange to me and I began to watch the cemetery during the night. About two o'clock in the morning a heavy truck drove into the cemetery. By the reflector light I saw very clearly two men who were putting something from the truck into the graves. I never asked anybody about the strange incident, fearing that I would be arrested by the NKVD."

A book-keeper, Petro Bokchan, testified: "In 1937 I was very often visiting my parents-in-law, who were resident near the cemetery. On my way, which led through the cemetery, I saw very often that graves were dug in the part of the cemetery which was near Pirogov Hospital. Coming back about 8 o'clock in the evening I still saw the men at work digging. But when I went through the cemetery next morning all the graves were covered."

A medical sister from Vinnytsia, Evheniya Prolinska, stated: "In the autumn of 1937 I was employed as a medical sister in Pirogov Hospital. Quite often I had to be on night duty. One night I noticed the doctor of the NKVD prison; I had seen him before several times when he came to the hospital. As a rule he was wearing NKVD uniform, but on this particular night he was in civilian clothing. He was looking for a mortuary man who stayed in hospital, and whom he ordered to take 3 or 4 spades and to follow him to the cemetery. Because my husband was arrested by the NKVD on 20th December, I was very interested in this night affair. Having changed my white coat to a black one, I went outside and noiselessly started to creep



into the cemetery. It was about 2-3 o'clock in the morning. Having stopped for a moment, I heard about ten people talking. I was sorry that I could not hear well enough to understand them. They were standing near two trucks covered with a waterproof sheet. I think there were the dead bodies of victims shot by NKVD ready to be buried. If the prisoners had died naturally they would not have been buried during the night. When the men started the work, being afraid that they might notice me, I left the cemetery. Later in the morning I went for a walk through the cemetery and noticed the militia man watching that particular spot of the cemetery. I clearly remember this part of the cemetery, about three square metres in extent, level with the ground. When I asked a watchman the next day about the night incident, he just answered: 'it does not concern you, it is not your business.' Such night incidents happened quite often, and the services of the mortuary man were demanded, not only by the NKVD doctor, but by commissars themselves. Nobody had been buried in this particular part of the cemetery before."

The cemetery was chosen for a simple reason — it was less obvious to the public.

Moscow cynicism was completed by choosing the largest of public parks in Vinnytsia for the same purpose — hiding their crime. Bolsheviks ordered a fence to be put round this beautiful old park of the town, and forbade anyone to enter it without a ticket, the price of which was one rouble. In one of the farthest parts of it, amongst the beautiful big trees, NKVD ordered graves to be dug for the usual purpose. Nobody would ever have known about them but for a few people of Vinnytsia who witnessed the digging. The first of these was Hulevych, who said: "It was in March 1938. I was going home at about 8 o'clock in the evening. On the corner of the park an NKVD guard was standing. I stopped and looked around, when I heard the guard's voice: "Why are you standing there? Move on!" I went on and stopped behind a tree. On a little hill beside the school No. 2 I noticed a car giving light signals. Then three trucks appeared from somewhere along the street, drove on to the park entrance, and disappeared in the darkness. The signal car stopped by the entrance, too. Three men came out of the car and went into the park. Next I heard voices swearing, and: 'Nearer, nearer.' Swearing again, and the dull, heavy thuds on the ground. After a while the signal car left the park, and, later, the trucks followed it in the same direction."

During the excavations on the site No. 1, in the orchard, a watchman, Josyf Veys, a Ukrainian, appeared and said: "At the beginning of 1929 I got a job as a watchman of the international cemetery near the stadium in the grounds of the municipal park. I was employed there till 1933, when I was arrested and sentenced to 8 years' deportation. In 1939 I was set free and took up my residence in Bryansk. On 13th September 1941, as a soldier of the Red Army, I was taken prisoner by the Germans. On 18th September 1941 I was released and went to Vinnytsia, where again I got a job as a watchman. During my absence the international cemetery was rejoined to the municipal park,



and that is why I am in charge of the park at present. I was much surprised to see a summer theatre, swings, a dance hall, and many other facilities for recreation in one part of the park. My wife, who, during my deportation, was doing the duties of a watchman in my place, told me that one day, in 1937, she saw a deep ditch not far from the recreation ground, and on the next day the ditch was filled in and levelled with the ground. She noticed a few more of these ditches amongst the trees, but never heard any shooting, and never thought at the time that NKVD prisoners could be buried there."

Medical Sister Prolinska stated: "I have seen the same graves in the municipal park by the recreation ground. As far I remember it was in the spring of 1939."

The witness Bokchan stated: "Sometime in April 1939 I was walking along Litynska Street when all of a sudden I saw three men in long rubber boots climbing over the fence of the park. It looked suspicious, and I started to watch them — the three men were levelling the graves with the ground. It was close by the recreation ground."

### THE OPENING OF THE MASS GRAVES

All the witnesses came voluntarily to the offices. They gave not only information as to their observations, but pointed out the exact situation of the graves of 1937-39. The witness Skrepko pointed out all three rows of the graves in the orchard, though they were difficult to find amongst the bushes. The witness Veys remembered the situation of the graves in the park so well that, after his indication, one could start opening them with no difficulty in finding the place.

The regular opening began on May 24, 1943. It was started from the pear orchard in Pidlisna Street No. 1. In a short time there were found 39 graves. Along 75 metres of the western side of the former fence 16 graves were found, along the northern side 10, and along the eastern side of the fence 7. Another 4 were found separately in the north-western corner of the garden. Two more graves were found later. All the graves were about 2×3 metres in size and about 3-4 metres deep. At the depth of about 2 metres the spade came upon a pile of clothing and other personal belongings. Under such a pile there were corpses. In some graves they were lying in rows, in others they had been thrown in haphazardly. In all the graves there was the same picture: first a layer of soil, then the clothing and the corpses on the bottom. There was a different number of corpses in each grave. In each of the majority of the graves there were about a 100 corpses.

A group of prominent citizens of Vinnytsia conducted the exhumation after obtaining the necessary permission from the local German occupation authorities.



This group consisted of Dr. S. Doroshenko, Dr. O. Klunk, both medical men, Professor Savostianov and Professor Dr. I. Malinin, as well as the editor A. Trembovetsky. In the presence of the Ukrainian Orthodox Bishop of Vinnytsia, Evlohiy, they conducted an autopsy on 102 bodies dug up from the first grave and issued the following findings:

1. Death occurred from a bullet injury in the lower brain.
2. Entrance of the bullet was at the nape of the neck.
3. From the presence of soot, it was evident that the shooting took place at very close range.
4. The direction taken by the bullet indicated that the shooting took place when the victim was on his knees with his head bent low.
5. The absence, in many cases of bullet outlets and the external appearance of the lead bullets lodged in the skulls showed that small firearms were used in these instances, presumably pistols.

Taking into account the decomposition undergone by the corpses, the length of time that these had lain in the graves was fixed at from three to five years.

Ukrainian Orthodox Archbishop Hryhoriy also witnessed the opening of the first grave of the NKVD victims. He testified: "...I said that I was asked by representatives of Vinnytsia citizens to take part in the first search of these graves. I told of the morning of May 24, 1943. I, Bishop Evlohiy, the mayor of Vinnytsia, the editor of the local newspaper, doctors and others went into the large pear orchard surrounded by a high board fence. The local residents had suspected that graves were hidden there, but the orchard had belonged to the NKVD and entry had been prohibited to everyone else. We noticed several depressions in the ground, overgrown with tall grass. We started digging one of these depressions and about three feet down came upon some clothing and shoes. Throwing all this on the surface we beheld a horrible sight: a mass of half-decayed human corpses with their hands tied behind their backs. An examination of the bodies and articles, particularly papers found in the clothing, revealed that these people were arrested by the NKVD in Vinnytsia between 1937 and 1940..."\*)

On June 29, 1943, the reopening of the mass graves in the Orthodox Cemetery began. On June 30th, digging started on the graves in the "Gorky Park of Culture and Rest." The whole process of uncovering these graves in the three places off Litynska Street, lasted from May 24 to October 3, 1943. The 19th and last funeral took place on that day.\*\*)

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\*) "The Black Deeds of the Kremlin. A White Book." Page 424.

\*\*) Testimony by P. Pavlovich, the chief witness of the discovery of the mass graves of NKVD victims in Vinnytsia, published in "The Black Deeds of the Kremlin. A White Book." Pages 430-431.



The picture in the cemetery was the same as in the orchard: the size of the graves was 2×3 metres and their depth was the same. Under two metres from the surface clothing and then corpses were discovered. During the first operation 14 graves were found, but according to the indications of the witnesses, there were another 20. The graves were situated here close by the central alley, and not in a row as in the orchard. In the town park they were situated differently in comparison with those in the orchard and cemetery. By the orders of the NKVD, the graves had been dug just where it suited them, under the trees or between them. Had it not been for the witnesses, nobody would have discovered them. Under one group of trees 14 graves were discovered and 10 under another, thanks to the witnesses of the crimes.

### MEDICO-LEGAL EXAMINATION

As soon as the opening of the graves began, the Ukrainian doctors of Vinnytsia served in the medical investigations. From 15th June 1943 the head of the Medical Commission was a specialist in Medical Jurisprudence, Professor Schrader of the University of Halle. He was helped by his assistant Doctor Kameroner, and other doctors of Vinnytsia who attended the investigation in their free time. Professor Schrader issued a statement of their work, as follows:

#### *MEDICO-LEGAL REPORT OF THE MASS-MURDERS IN VINNYTSIA*

1. The number of graves found in the orchard which was NKVD property is 37. But only 12 of them have been opened yet. In one of the graves, beside the clothing, only 18 corpses were found; in the second, 74; in others from 100 to 130; in two of them 250-280 corpses were found. In the cemetery close to Pirogov Hospital, 14 graves were found, but the complete figure of these should be a minimum of 30. Considering the near situation of the hospital, all these graves were not opened completely, but out of each grave were taken several corpses for examination. In the municipal park, amongst the trees, 14 mass-graves were found, and in the other part of the park, 10; 40 corpses were taken for examination out of the 14 graves.

2. Minute examination of 1,670 corpses gave most detailed reasons for death. All corpses had marks of a shot in the back of the neck which paralysed the vertebrae of the neck or the action of the brain. Almost in all cases two, three or even four wounds were noted. This can be explained only by the use of a small-calibre pistol and lead bullets. The weapon was so small and light that it had to be fired several times to kill a human being.

It is very characteristic that in all cases wounds of a bullet after it was fired into the victim were noted, but there were no marks of it coming out. Instances when the bullets went through the head were very few. Some bullets never went through, this being proved by the missing flesh and skin on the head. In about 60 cases, besides the wounds of the bullets, there were smashed scalps. In other words, while still alive after shooting, the victims were killed with a heavy weapon, gun butts or clubs.

3. All killed had their hands tied together behind their backs. In one case there was a victim with only one arm, but it was tied behind his back just the same. Three young women, about 30-40 years of age, were not tied up, but they, too, had the marks of the bullets on the back of their necks. They were found in the nude. One woman, about 30 years of age, who, too, was naked, had her arms tied behind her back. The middle-aged women, about 15 of them, were found with some clothes on like the men.



4. The ages of the murdered people were between 40 and 60 years; there were not many younger ones.

5. The mass graves in the municipal park and the cemetery, opened and examined partly, gave the same evidence as those in the orchard. The corpses had their hands tied behind their backs and two or three wounds in their heads caused by the same weapon with lead bullets.

6. After counting the corpses from the opened graves, the minimum figures are: in the orchard about 4000, in the cemetery 3000, and in the municipal park 4000.

In general the figure of the murdered victims buried in those three places of Vinnytsia is 11,000 to 12,000.

7. *The time of the murders.* The corpses were found in different stages of decomposition. As a result of the two metres depth of clay, which kept the water from coming through, and of some clothing above the dead bodies, most of the corpses had begun to mummify. Calcination of the brain was noted in most of the brainpans examined. Such conditions, on the examination by medico-legal experts, certify that death was brought about 5 to 6 years previously, in other words, the crimes were committed during 1937-39.

Similarly examined 40 corpses from the cemetery and 40 from the municipal park gave the same indications. All the people must have been shot at the same time, unless it was done in groups at a time during the period of 1937-39.

Such is the Report of the medico-legal examination.

## INQUEST BY THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION

During two days of July 13-14, 1943, Vinnytsia was visited by the International Commission of medical experts who were requested by the Germans to examine a number of corpses. This Commission carefully examined the dead bodies from the mass graves and gave the following Report on their work:

"The members of the Commission have inspected all the places where the graves were found. The majority of the graves were similar in shape, size and depth. Ten of them were wider and deeper than the rest. The corpses were found lying anyhow in all inspected graves. The members of the Commission themselves have done post-mortems of 24 court-medical examinations. All corpses found in the Place No. 1 had post-mortems and one from the Place No. 3 (municipal park).

All male corpses were dressed and had their hands tied behind their backs. Three female corpses were nude, their hands were not tied (graves 24-26). All corpses had wounds, mostly in the back of the neck, caused by the use of a small-calibre pistol, 5.6 mm. All the bullets were lead. It has been proved that in most cases the firing was done from a short distance. Usually the bullets stuck fast in the heads. In many of the killed there were two or even three separate bullet wounds. Beside wounds on the head, caused by heavy blunt weapons, some of the victims had broken lower jaws, some smashed skulls and so on. In one of the cases the skull was smashed by many bullets fired into the back of the neck. In the majority, the death of the victims resulted from the shot. But many who were still alive after the bullet had entered into the lower part of the back of the neck were killed by additional wounding by blunt



weapons. In some instances of the shooting in the back of the neck, when the bullet entered the lower part of the neck and there were no wounds caused by use of blunt weapons, it must be supposed that the victims died from indefinite causes. When in one such case some clay was found in gullet and stomach it must be assumed that, being still alive, the victim swallowed soil being heaped on him.

Having inspected all clothes which were on the corpses, one could come to the conclusion that nearly every one of the murdered people was of the working class, peasant, and middle aged.

The large bushes on some graves, the hardness of the ground where the graves were, and, most of all, the look of the corpses and the state of their decomposition, indicate that the people were buried five years previously, and this was confirmed by the local population, and especially by the relatives of the dead and the officials of the local offices.

General remarks: The undersigned members of the Commission inspected 66 graves on the ground of the town of Vinnytsia. All the inspected corpses had wounds from the firing weapon in the back of the neck, except one who was shot in the temple. There were discovered many victims who had been killed instantly by the use of heavy weapons, such as iron bars. From the evidence of relatives and witnesses, and from documents found in the clothes, and the condition of the corpses it is concluded that the murders were committed in 1938."

The signatures of the members of the Commission are as follows:

|                 |                       |
|-----------------|-----------------------|
| Dr. Soenen,     | Ghent, Belgium.       |
| *Dr. Mikhaylov, | Sofia, Bulgaria.      |
| Dr. Pesonen,    | Helsinki, Finland.    |
| Dr. Duvoir,     | Paris, France.        |
| Dr. Cazzaniga,  | Milan, Italy.         |
| Dr. Jurak,      | Zagreb, Croatia.      |
| Dr. Poorten,    | Amsterdam, Holland.   |
| Dr. Birkle,     | Bucharest, Roumania.  |
| Dr. Häggqvist,  | Stockholm, Sweden.    |
| Dr. Kresek,     | Bratislava, Slovakia. |
| Dr. Orsoz,      | Budapest, Hungary.    |

The conclusions of the medical experts are all the same. It must be said that the examination was done by some of the most famous specialists in Europe, known to the whole world. Their conclusions as to the time of murder, 1937 to 1939, were unanimous.

According to the testimony by P. Pavlovich\*\*) the chief witness of the opening of the mass-graves at Vinnytsia, the number of the victims of mass-murder discovered in Vinnytsia was 9,439. They were buried in 95 graves in three places, as follows:

Pear orchard in Pidlisna Street — 39 graves — 5,644 bodies,  
Orthodox Cemetery — 42 graves — 2,405 bodies,  
Gorky Municipal Park of Culture and Rest — 14 graves — 1,390 bodies.

\*) Dr. Mikhaylov is dead; after the Russian occupation of Bulgaria he was liquidated by the Russian NKVD there.

\*\*) "The Black Deeds of the Kremlin — A White Book," Toronto, 1953, Vol. I pp. 430-433.



Altogether 682 bodies of victims were identified. It was established that 338 of them were peasants, 112 workers, 98 government officials of various grades, 36 specialists and professional men, 4 priests and 16 military men.

Of the total number there were 169 women's corpses uncovered, their hands tied behind their backs, and bullets in the napes of their necks. Some of them were completely nude. Twenty were identified, five of them were executed together with their husbands.

### IDENTIFICATION OF THE VICTIMS

At last came the day when, soaked in blood, Ukrainian soil gave up the secrets of horrible crimes. During one year and in one town alone, 9,439 defenceless victims were killed, their hands tied behind their backs. For months they suffered in packed prisons, from cross-examinations and tortures. In vain might they expect temporary deportation, even if for many years, to the slave-labour camps in Siberia, which had at least the possibility of coming back, and ultimately seeing their relatives again. In vain! A bullet in the back of the neck was waiting for them. Who were all these victims? Were they really criminals, deserving such punishment as the NKVD had chosen? Not at all! The truth was soon exposed. The population of Vinnytsia was horror-stricken when, amongst the first 103 corpses from the graves, they recognised their relatives. Naturally, being buried for years, the features of victims had very much changed, but they were recognized by the clothes, by the Ukrainian shirts embroidered with love by the mothers and wives of the victims, and by the documents found in their pockets. There were horrible scenes at the spot where the corpses were found. The news of the fearful discovery spread like lightning through town and countryside. The newspaper "Vinnyts'ki Visti" ("The News of Vinnytsia") periodically had columns of the names of the murdered people who had been recognized by their documents or clothing. The relatives of those arrested by the NKVD in 1937-38 came to Vinnytsia from far away places. Not a day passed but some of the dead bodies were recognized by their relatives. The names of 682 murdered victims were ascertained by the help of relatives or documents. There was a special Legal Commission formed, and relatives gave most detailed information about those arrested and killed. And so, following 682 cases of such evidence, there was exposed the picture of the NKVD terror which had reigned in the district of Vinnytsia in the years 1937-38. Without embellishment, the evidence showed the inhuman sufferings of the Ukrainian Nation under the Russian-Bolshevik occupation.



Here is the evidence of a Ukrainian woman, Alexandra Prusak, from the village of Verkhivtsi, Bar district:

"My husband, Ivan Prusak, born in 1898, was, till 1937, employed as a worker in a collective farm of our village. Before that, till 1929, we had about 6 hectares of land and three cows. In 1929 we had to give our property to the collective farm. Till 1937, my husband was never arrested or suspected of a crime. But on 6th April 1937, during work in the field, he was taken away by the NKVD policemen. I tried to find out why he was arrested, but in vain. I wrote to Kyiv and Moscow, but the answer was: 'Apply to NKVD of Vinnytsia.' In 1938 my application was answered, informing me that my husband was sent away for 10 years to Siberia with no right of correspondence or any other way of communication. For how long my husband was kept in Vinnytsia I cannot say. To-day, in the former place of NKVD (in orchard) I recognized a coat of my husband's. There can be no mistake about it, I recognized it by the patches which were sewn on by myself. This assured me that my husband must be buried in the same place. At the same time there were arrested 11 more men from our village, but their fate is not known."

Vinnytsia, 29th June 1943.

*Signature.*

Maria Madiy, from the village Verkhivtsi, Bar district, stated:

"My husband used to be a farmer with only 2 hectares of land. During the time of liquidation of kulaks' property we got from the Government some more land. Later we had to give everything away to the collective farm. One night in April 1937 my husband was arrested at home and taken to the NKVD prison. I was not told the reason of his arrest. And when my daughter and I went to Vinnytsia to inquire about him we were told that he was sent to a labour camp for 10 years. To-day, in the former place of NKVD, I recognized my husband's jacket."

Vinnytsia, 29th June 1943.

*Signature.*

The testimony of a widow, Ahafiya Usova, from the village of Tefylivka, Dzhulyinka district:

"On first January 1938, my husband, Mykola Usov, was arrested at night, on his way home, by four NKVD men, and sent away to Dzhulyinka. At the same time seven more men from our village were sent away to Dzhulyinka. After the arrest of my husband, NKVD men came to search the house. I think that my husband's correspondence was the centre of their attention, but they were searching for weapons as well. When I asked the reason of his arrest, the answer was that he was guilty of sabotage. But they never gave me any confirmation and just ignored the rest of my questions. They even had the rudeness to tell me that I knew myself how guilty he was, and that he could not be released. About six months afterwards I had a similar visit from NKVD men who came with the intention of taking our clothing away. But, having heard of it before from others, I hid all my clothes and other things in neighbours' houses, and the NKVD men were not able to take anything. In Dzhulyinka my husband was kept only one day, and then he was sent to Haysyn. By chance I learned that in February 1938 he was transferred to Bratslav, and later to Vinnytsia. In March 1938 I went to see the NKVD of Vinnytsia. But I was put out in the most brutal way, and was told that they did not know anything at all about my husband. I was quite certain that my husband had been sent to Siberia. But to-day in the former place of NKVD I found some of his clothing, a corduroy jacket, a bread bag and four shirts, which told me that my husband was amongst the murdered victims."

Vinnytsia, 1st July 1943.

*Signature.*



Information by a widow, Maria Antoniuk, from the village of Polyovi-Berlyntsi, Murovano-Kurylivsky district:

"My husband, Stephan Antoniuk, 46 years of age, employed as a farm worker in the local collective farm, was arrested by NKVD on 20th June 1938. He was taken during the night from his bed and driven away to Kopay-Horod, where he was kept for six days. Where he was transferred afterwards I cannot say. At the same time another farm worker, by the name of Stadnyk was arrested. Stadnyk's wife and I were told by the NKVD that our husbands were spies. For six months we did not hear of our husbands. And then we wrote to Moscow to Kalinin. In a month's time we were called to the NKVD of Kopay-Horod, and were informed that our husbands, as spies, were sentenced to 10 years deportation to Siberia. This was all we were told. I am certain that neither my husband nor Stadnyk was guilty of any crime, as neither of them had ever anything to do with politics. In one of the mass-graves in the orchard which belonged to NKVD in Vinnytsia I found to-day my husband's shirt. I recognised it as it was I who made it. Now I know that my husband was not sent to Siberia but was shot in Vinnytsia."

Vinnytsia, 2nd July 1943.

*Signature.*

Halyna Hrushkivska, from the village of Horodnytsia, Nemyriv district, stated:

"In October 1937, my father, Petro Hrushkivsky, 65 years of age, employed as a farm worker in a local collective farm, was arrested by the NKVD in Bratslav. My mother was told that he was an enemy of our country. But I am certain that my father, who never had any schooling, never had anything to do with politics. For two weeks he was kept in Bratslav, and then was transferred to Vinnytsia. Every day my mother was visiting the NKVD in Bratslav till she learned that he was transferred to Vinnytsia. But we did not like to apply to Vinnytsia. Therefore we never heard anything about my father from the day of his arrest. The same occurred with other ten men from our village who were arrested at the same time as my father. I read in a paper about the opening of the mass-graves in Vinnytsia, and later I heard that a neighbour had found some clothing of her husband in the place where the graves had been opened. Therefore I also came here. To-day I found my father's cap. I know that it is his cap, because it used to be too big for him and I had to alter it myself. Now I know that my father was also shot by the NKVD."

Vinnytsia, 3rd July 1943.

*Signature.*

A widow, Nadiya Honchar, from the village of Stupievka, Murovano-Kurylivsky district, said:

"In December 1937 two NKVD men made a search in my house, seeking for weapons and documents in connection with sabotage. They did not find either, but they arrested my husband, Pavlo Honchar, 30 years of age, and drove him in a lorry to the NKVD. Neither of us was told the reason of the arrest. At that time I was not well and therefore could not find out what had happened to him after arrest. But I asked my father to go to the prison and inquire about him. The answer was that he had been sent to one of the northern islands named Novaya Zemlya. But when this had happened, and where the Novaya Zemlya was, my father was not told. Since then I never heard a word about my husband. And when after a couple of months I applied to the NKVD in Vinnytsia, they gave me the same information as they did to my father. I must say that up till now I thought my husband had been sent for ten years to Siberia. But to-day in the place that used to be occupied by the NKVD I found some of my husband's belongings, and a jacket which I recognised by the patches that I had sewn on some time before. Now I know that my husband was also amongst the murdered."

Vinnytsia, 5th June 1943.

*Signature.*



Hanna Hodovanets, from the village of Mykhaylivka, Murovano-Kurylivsky district, came to the office and stated as follows:

"On 3rd January 1938 my husband, Kasyan Hodovanets, born in 1886, was arrested during his work at the station in Kopay-Horod, by a member of our village council and a policeman who was present at the station. They took away my husband's passport and sent him first to Mykhaylivka and then to Mohyliv, and at last, on 3rd March 1938, to Vinnytsia. All this information I had from acquaintances who happened to witness the arrest of my husband. Later on, my son Vasyl, talking to a farm worker from Mykhaylivka, learned that he was called for an interview in connection with my husband's case to the district NKVD in Murovani-Kurylivtsi. He was asked if my husband said his prayers and why there were so many holy pictures in our house. It was evident that all this, and that my husband missed a day of his work because of a religious day, were the reasons for the arrest. At the end of April 1938 I was told that my husband was sent to one of the far away camps with no right of correspondence. Later I applied to the district NKVD authorities for more definite information about my husband, but it was in vain. Then I applied to Stalin himself, pleading with him to release my husband. On 3rd May 1938 I got a reply from Vyshinsky, General Prosecutor of USSR informing me that my husband was going to be released. But he never came back. On 24th June 1943, amongst the clothes found in the ground of the NKVD, I recognized a shirt, which was made by myself, a coat with the blue inner pocket which I put in, and a leather boot with a special heel, made by a blacksmith in Kopay-Horod, to my special requirement. All these articles I sent to my husband while he was in prison. Now I am sure that my husband was not going to be sent north or released, but that he was murdered in Vinnytsia."

Vinnytsia, 8th July 1943.

*Signature.*

Statement by a widow, Yavdokha Yavnych, from the village of Voznivtsi, Stanislavchik district:

"On 6th January 1937, after an unsuccessful search of our house, an NKVD man in presence of two witnesses, arrested my husband, Vasyl Yavnych. My husband, 40 years of age, was employed as a farm worker in the local collective farm. Later I learned the reason of his arrest — correspondence with his relatives in Galicia, Western Ukraine, then occupied by Poland. My husband was born in Western Ukraine in the village Lisok, Zhydachiv district. In Stanislavchik he was kept only for a few days, then he was transferred to Vinnytsia. After a month I went to the prison of Vinnytsia to enquire about him. I was told he was sentenced to 10 years' deportation with no right of correspondence, and that he was away already. I wrote to Moscow to Stalin, Kaganovich and other Soviet dignitaries, and had the same answer from each of them, that my husband had been sentenced to 10 years' deportation. To-day, 20th July 1943, in the former orchard of the NKVD, I recognized my husband's coat by its buttons. I feel that my husband was not sent away, but is lying here amongst the dead."

Vinnytsia, 20th July 1943.

*Signature.*

Olena Olkhivska, from Vinnytsia, stated:

"In November 1937, NKVD arrested my husband, Petro Olkhivsky, in our home; he was a Ukrainian, and had been employed in a baking-factory. At the same time they searched all through the house and took all my husband's documents. Later, I went to the prison of the NKVD, but was not allowed to enter the building. After a week's time I went to the local prison to which my husband had been transferred, but again in vain. After a month I managed to send him a winter coat and a pair of winter boots, but I never got the chance to see him. And then I was informed that he had been sent to the Far North for 10 years, and had no right of correspondence. The reason of his arrest was



the accusation that he was an enemy of the country. My husband had never in his life anything to do with politics... When the opening of the mass graves started, every day I tried to be there. And one day, on one of the corpses, I recognized a black jacket, a pair of leather boots, a pair of trousers and a shirt. I was present at the time when this corpse was taken out of the grave. And later I definitely knew that he was my husband as he had a twisted finger on his right hand. Hence there can be no mistake about this."

Vinnitsia, 1st July 1943.

*Signature.*

Kateryna Horlevska, from Zhmerynka, said:

"Amongst the clothes found in the orchard of the NKVD I recognized some which belonged to my husband — an embroidered shirt and a winter jacket with a fur collar. My husband, Dmytro Horlevsky, a Ukrainian, born in 1888, was a railway engine-driver. He was arrested in Zhmerynka on 13th May 1938. He was called to NKVD for an interview and never returned. The next day our house was searched by NKVD men but nothing was taken away. The reason given for my husband's arrest was that he was accused of being an enemy of the people. But my husband had never anything to do with politics. And, as a matter of fact, three months before the arrest, he was awarded a prize for being a good engine-driver. In two weeks he was transferred from Zhmerynka to Vinnitsia. Every two weeks I went to Vinnitsia, taking something for my husband, and trying to see him, but I never had a chance. On one occasion I was told that he had been transferred to Kyiv. I went to Kyiv. And when I asked about my husband, the answer was that he had never been in Kyiv, but had been sent to Siberia, and had no right of correspondence. But now I am certain that my husband is amongst those killed by the NKVD. Just before the first of May 1937, 60 men were arrested in Zhmerynka, all railway workers, from 35 to 50 years of age. Nobody ever heard of them again."

Vinnitsia, 1st July 1943.

*Signature.*

Information given by Mrs. Solovyova, from Zyatkiivtsi:

"My husband, a Ukrainian, who through illness had to leave his post as a teacher, was employed in a branch of the State bank in Zyatkiivtsi. He was 47 years of age, when, on 17th April 1938, he was arrested at work. It happened at 12.30 p.m., and at 2 p.m. he was taken by railway to Vinnitsia, and was put into a prison of the NKVD. When, on the third day, I went to the prison, I was told that my husband had been transferred to the town prison. But I could not get any information about him from this other prison, nor could I manage to see him or send him something. Later, I heard that on 5th May 1938, he was sent for ten years to the Far North, and had no right of correspondence. Since then I never heard of him again. Almost at once, after the arrest of my husband, our house was searched. His sporting gun, some silver which I kept for filling teeth, and a little cross were taken away. Two years after the arrest I was ordered by the NKVD to give all his clothes, because, as they stated, he was an enemy of the people. The arrest took everyone in our village by surprise, because he never had anything to do with politics... In a newspaper "Vinnitski Visti" there was mentioned a handkerchief with the initials "A.S." I have recognized it as my husband's handkerchief, and that is the proof that he was not deported, but is here — amongst the dead."

Vinnitsia, 1st July 1943.

*Signature.*



Evidence by Odarka Beletska, from the village of Zhyrovske:

"My husband, a priest, Leonid Beletsky, 35 years of age, was arrested on 24th September 1937. During the night, our house was searched when his vestment, books and documents were confiscated. My husband had studied at the theological seminary in Volhynia, and till 1935 was preaching as a priest in the village of Peleva. In 1935 the church in Peleva was closed and my husband had to leave the village. We went to the village of Hreblya, the village where I was born, and there he started to work as a forestry man. When he was arrested, the motive for the arrest was not mentioned, just one of the NKVD men said to my husband: 'Hei, you dog, you have lived too long.' First, my husband was put in a prison in the village of Zhyrovske, and later, in about two weeks' time, was transferred to Vinnytsia, to the prison of the NKVD. When I tried to send him some clothes, only two handkerchiefs and a towel were permitted to be received by him. I never managed to see him again. In a month's time, I went to Vinnytsia again and learned that he had been sent away. No further information was given. I applied to Moscow, and in about six months I got a reply (through NKVD) that my husband was sent to the Far North for ten years, and had no right of correspondence. From the newspaper I learned about the Ukrainian mass graves here in Vinnytsia, and decided to come and see them for myself. I found a suit of my husband's. I know it was his suit, as I made it myself, and still have some of the material which was left over. I am certain that my husband was not sent away, but was murdered here."

Vinnytsia, 1st July 1943.

*Signature.*

Information by Antonia, from Zhyrovska-Hreblya:

"My husband, a Ukrainian, a driver at machine-tractor station of our village, was arrested on 26th March 1938, while he was working in the field, and was put in a cell of the village police station. Our house was searched at once, but only his personal documents were taken away. My questions about the motives for the arrest was answered by the statement that my brothers, Savytski, who were resident in the same village, were corresponding with someone abroad. But my brothers never had any correspondence with any foreign countries. They were arrested in November 1937, and sent to Asia. We heard from them from Mongolia. My husband was kept for a month and a half in the village cell, and then he was transferred to the prison of Vinnytsia. While he was in the village cell, very often I had seen him from behind the fence, but never managed to have a talk with him, or to pass him anything that he might require. After he was transferred to Vinnytsia, I went to the prison for some information about him, and was informed that he had been sent away. I applied to the higher authorities, and after two years I got a reply that my husband had been sent to the Far North for 10 years, and had no right of correspondence. I never discovered the true motives of his arrest, but I do know that he never had anything to do with politics. From the paper I learned about these opened mass-graves and came here. I found a shirt which I embroidered some time ago, and had to patch later. I know that it is the shirt of my husband. I think he was murdered by the NKVD."

Vinnytsia, 1st July 1943.

*Signature.*

Comparing all the facts in these statements and in hundreds of others, one could see that this terror of the NKVD in all Vinnytsia district had been started during the summer of 1937, and had lasted throughout the following year. At the same time, a wave of arrests was spreading to the surrounding towns and villages. There were usually no real motives given for the arrests, and if sometimes motives were given, they were obviously merely excuses of the NKVD to the relatives of the victims, and not real motives for the arrest. As a rule, in every village, NKVD agents had selected their victims beforehand.



No evidence was necessary to cause the arrest of a person. Very often the arrests were based upon the personal interests of the agents. It could be said that, in general, NKVD agents knew what they were doing with those unfortunate people — just to prove their loyal service to the NKVD. The agents of the NKVD knew that nobody would ever bother about the true motives for the arrest of the victims, and that there was no escape for them anyway. Every victim had a pinned-on label, "an enemy of the people" as formality, but the truth was otherwise.

What was the truth then? Often the agents themselves derived personal advantage from the arrest of their victims; frequently it was a matter of personal vengeance. Sometimes, when a young girl did not like to have love made to her by an NKVD man, her whole family were made to suffer.

But certain groups of the population were systematically watched by the NKVD. Among them were those who did not hide their religious beliefs. The fact that one was religious was considered a crime against the State. Among those arrested there were many former clergymen, who for years had been doing hard work, even in the wilds of the forest, but were still under the suspicion of attachment to the religion. But the majority of the arrested were not even told any fictitious reasons. All these arrests could be explained in a simple way: a certain percentage of the men were arrested in every village, so as to terrorise the whole Ukrainian village. This was generally the main reason for the terroristic methods used by the NKVD.

As a rule, a search was made during the arrest or after it. At that time, something was usually confiscated — old photographs, letters, pictures, religious books, crosses, medals, and, especially, foreign literature. Very often personal documents of the arrested were confiscated. From former clergy especially, robes, books connected with the Church, rosaries, crosses, etc. were taken. Most of these articles were burned, but many were buried along with the corpses. During the searching, immediately before and after the arrest, some clothes were taken away. This made the relatives think that the arrested were going to be sent to the forced labour camps. Therefore, most of the relatives brought underwear and some clothes to the prisons; the people of the Soviet Union knew too well the terrible conditions in those camps in the Far North or in Siberia.

All arrested were kept for some time in the local prisons, where sometimes women were fortunate enough to see their husbands and sons, and even to talk to them, but this happened very rarely. And, as time passed, they were informed that the prisoners were transferred to Vinnytsia. Vinnytsia was a town of tears. Thousands of women regularly gathered by the gate of the prison or the NKVD department, where there was a prison as well. What fears and torment those unfortunate women suffered; many false declarations, much wild laughter of NKVD-ists at their distress, they had to listen to. The women rushed from one place to another, from the town prison to the NKVD office, from the NKVD office to the head of the local



NKVD department, then to the procurator, but nowhere could they receive any definite information about the prisoners. Often they travelled as far as Kyiv but were sent back, tired and exhausted. Even if sometimes one of them was fortunate enough to find out where the prisoner was, this was not of much help. It was permitted to pass clothing and even money and food, but not to see the prisoner. And nobody could get the most painful question answered — what was going to happen to the prisoner? Some time after many visits to Vinnytsia some of the relatives were informed that the prisoner had been sent for ten years to a concentration camp in the Far East or the Far North. Correspondence was strictly forbidden. After receiving such information, grief-stricken women returned home. And then there was the one and only hope — to meet in ten years' time. But this was a vain hope. Every one of the NKVD agents, when giving any information, advised the woman not to wait for her husband's return, but to get married again. Of course, this advice was rarely followed. Just as one that is drowning tries to catch at anything to save himself, so all those people lived clinging to "10 years" in the hope of the return of their dearest. Millions of Ukrainians went through Russian concentration camps, and some managed to return, but many more never returned home. How many millions are still suffering in those camps, which like mushrooms after the rain, are springing up in the most unhealthy parts of Soviet Russia?

Such was the hope, the hope that millions of women cling to.

One ought to have been present at the opening of the Ukrainian mass graves to be able to realize the grief of the women. Innocent victims lay there dead. All of them had their hands tied behind their backs. Sometimes the legs were tied as well; some of them had their mouths stuffed with dirty clothing, and very often marks of cruel torture could be recognised, although the bodies had been lying for 5 to 6 years. For instance, sometimes they had burnt patches on the neck, as if done by a lit cigarette. There were found corpses with parts of the body mutilated — sexual organs in most cases. The methods of the murders were enough to make one lose his senses. To kill a human being by the use of a small-calibre pistol and a soft lead bullet is the most horrible way of taking life that one can imagine. About two-thirds of the corpses had two, three and four wounds on the back of the neck. Medical experiments proved that very often the first and second bullet were crushed when they met a bone, leaving a large wound but not killing the victim outright. Even if such a bullet reached the brain, a human being might not die immediately, because it might only cause considerable bleeding, leading to a slow death. In some cases even three or four bullets were not sufficient to kill a miserable victim. Then a gun butt was used. The result of the latter action was a broken skull which ended the sufferings.

What tortures must those have suffered who were discovered in the mass graves!



## WHO IS THE MURDERER?

Thousands of innocent Ukrainian peasants, workmen and intelligentsia were buried in the mass graves in Vinnytsia. Who was it that committed these crimes? The correct answer was given by the investigation.

Moscow hates the Ukrainian nation, and the crimes committed were the result of this hatred. Stalin, one of the most cruel Russian imperialist executioners of all time, has chosen terror as a way of maintaining his rule in Ukraine. NKVD was ordered to kill a certain number of people in every district, accusing them of being enemies of the people. It was sufficient for an agent to hear a baseless rumour to accuse an innocent man of crime. As the agents strove to prove their loyalty to NKVD, the figures of such "enemies" increased with lightning speed. Every agent tried to get more and more men who were "under suspicion" and more and more "enemies of the country" and every NKVD department strove to destroy as many "parasites" as they could. There is not a single house in Ukraine that did not lose someone during this unforgettable period. Nobody was laying bare the bloodstained Bolshevik system. An engine-driver who was praised and was awarded a prize for his good work was shot as an "enemy of the people" only three months later. Many people were arrested at their work, like a choir-singer, for instance, who was arrested in the radio-station during a broadcast. A dreadful feeling was created in the family when the father or some other member failed to come home from work, and it was later discovered that he had been arrested by the NKVD.

The fate that was meted out to a human being after arrest was unenviable. He or she had been condemned to death beforehand; the NKVD specialists used a diabolical technique of tortures to make the victim plead guilty. In most cases there was no investigation at all. There were no formalities, the victim had no opportunity to defend himself, the death sentence had already been passed.

According to reliable testimony, most of the prisoners died in the prison of Vinnytsia, where practically all the time the prison held about 18,000 prisoners. It should be remarked here that the population of Vinnytsia was not higher than 100,000 people. And the figure of the arrested was 30,000. Twelve thousand of them were sent to work at the stone quarry and other places in the neighbourhood. In a prison designed for only 2,000 prisoners, 18,000 were confined. One can imagine the conditions which prevailed. In a cell meant for 18 people there were 370 inmates. The prisoners were not able to move, and had to sleep standing. The same situation obtained in the prison



corridors and courtyard, packed with prisoners as well. It is quite evident that prisoners died every day and these were buried just outside the prison.

In the autumn of 1938, when the weather was particularly bad, a few times every week towards the night, a certain number of prisoners were called out of the cells. They were issued their own clothes which had been kept separate. Sometimes one hundred, sometimes two hundred, were put into big trucks; it was thought they were going to be sent to Siberia or the Far North. But the trucks stopped at the prison of the NKVD, and the prisoners were pushed into the cells situated almost underground. They were not kept there very long. During the night they were brought to the courtyard. The clothing was taken away and thrown on the truck, and the prisoners were ordered to stand in a line. Then, their hands folded behind their backs were tied with a piece of wire. After that, one at a time, they were led to a garage. A square of the court in front of the garage was paved, being meant for washing cars. As soon as the prisoner reached the end of the square, the end leading to a ditch, or drainage, a shot was heard. The unfortunate fell beside the drain, into which the blood ran. Often there were heard two, three and even four shots, all fired to kill the victim. Corpses were thrown on to the lorries that were waiting just beside the drain. To drown the sound of the shots, the engines of the lorries were kept running all the time. This continued almost every night for months. Then on some nights the corpses were buried in common graves that had been prepared by other prisoners the day before. The bodies were simply thrown into the grave. Very often some were still moving, even after the fourth shot. In such a case, a victim was finished off by a gun butt. But quite a number were thrown in still alive. Then the blood-soaked clothes were thrown after them as they were dying.

This ghastly picture is not a figment of imagination. It is proved by witnesses that thousands of Ukrainians were destroyed by NKVD men, whose faces merely bore a cynical smile at the time of the murders. What can be more horrible than the mass murders in Vinnytsia? Does there really exist a more ghastly and cruel way of disposing of innocent victims than that chosen and practised by Moscow savages? Can there be found an example of greater and more cynical brutality than organizing a "Public Park of Culture and Rest" over the common graves? They did not merely want to hide their crime; **they actually wanted to enjoy seeing Ukrainian children playing on the graves of their fathers.** Language has no words to express one's revulsion at the satanic methods of the Russian-Bolshevik sadists.

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# THE MASSACRE OF PRISONERS

IN 1941

TESTIMONY BY FORMER PRISONERS AND EYE-WITNESSES

Mass-murders of Ukrainian Political Internees  
by the Russian NKVD in Lviv  
and other Ukrainian Towns  
in the Summer of 1941



## KHRUSHCHOV'S MASS-MURDERS IN THE PRISONS IN 1941

*Below we publish a number of testimonies made under oath by eye-witnesses and victims of the vile crimes which were carried out at the orders of Nikita Khrushchov in the prisons in Ukraine by NKVD men.*

*A number of these witnesses testified personally under oath before the "International Investigatory Commission Lemberg 1941" in The Hague in 1960.*

*The said Commission consisted of four authorized representatives of the former resistance fighters of their respective countries, all of whom were interned for several years in German concentration camps: the Norwegian lawyer, Dr. Hans Cappelen, the former Danish Foreign Minister and present President of the Danish Parliament, Ole Björn Kraft, the Dutch socialist Karel von Staal, the Belgian professor Floor Peters, and, as a fifth member, the Swiss lawyer and parliamentary deputy Dr. Karl Schoch. The results of the Investigatory Commission were published in The Hague in March 1960, and it is from this publication that we quote the various testimonies. The following facts were ascertained:*

*"Immediately after the German campaign against the Soviet Union had begun on June 22, 1941, the security organs of the Soviet secret police (NKVD) started arresting persons whom they considered politically untrustworthy in the western territories of the Soviet Union. Thousands of persons of various nationalities in the Soviet Union were either deported or imprisoned. When it became obvious, owing to the collapse of the transport network, that the persons who had been arrested could not be taken to the interior of Russia and to Siberia, orders were issued by radio to the district commandants of the NKVD in the West to release the criminal elements and liquidate the political prisoners. In Ukraine and thus in Lviv, too, the NKVD troops were under the authority of the Secretary-General of the Communist Party of Ukraine, Nikita Sergeyeovich Khrushchov, at that time resident in Kyiv. The commandants of the NKVD in Ukraine on June 24, 1941, received orders by radio from Khrushchov personally that the political prisoners were to be liquidated. Thereupon a mass-murder, which claimed thousands of victims, began in the prisons in Lviv, which were filled to overcrowding, and in all the other towns in West Ukraine.*

*According to reliable information obtained by the American Kersten Committee, at least 80,000 to 100,000 persons were murdered by the special commandos of the NKVD during the period immediately prior to the entry of the German troops. The person responsible for these orders was the*



Secretary-General Nikita Khrushchov. After the entry of the German troops in the town of Lviv it was ascertained undisputably that 3,500 persons had been killed by the NKVD, most of them by a shot in the back of their head. The actual number of dead was much higher, for months later mass-graves containing the bodies of prisoners were discovered again and again."

For security reasons the Commission could not publish the full names of the 232 witnesses whose testimony it heard.

In conclusion, we wish to stress that the Russian Bolsheviks committed similar crimes in Byelorussia, the Caucasus, in Turkestan, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, etc. The incidents in Ukraine are only one dreadful example of Russian colonial rule.

## FIRST REPORTS ABOUT THE MASS MURDERS IN LVIV

### Report by Mr. Alvin J. Steinkopf, Associated Press Correspondent

Mr. Alvin J. Steinkopf, correspondent of the Associated Press, saw Khrushchov's handiwork with his own eyes and reported in 1941 to his agency as follows:

"Lwow (Lviv), German-Occupied Ukraine, 7 July (AP). — Lwow was a city of funerals yesterday in the wake of mass killings accompanying the Russian withdrawal from the region occupied by the Red army for a year and a half.

The train of funerals was a parade of death such as few great cities have seen in modern times.

The spirit of the population of 225,000 appeared utterly crushed as the sombre processions moved towards the cemeteries.

Most of the mass funerals took place on Saturday. Simple coffins of scores of unidentified civilians were buried closely, side by side in long trenches.

There were services for individuals who were identified and for whom there was someone left to mourn.

Artillery, tanks and German supply trucks moving endlessly eastward paused at many street intersections for a moment to permit the funeral to pass.

The funerals were made more tragic by the utmost confusion in all sections of the city's life as consequence of Russian occupation.

Many simple folk and many prominent citizens are missing. Their fate is a mystery.

Thus, many were buried without a tear or a thought from the nearest of kin. Families were hopelessly scattered.

The whole ghastly scene is a situation which any experienced correspondent would view with the greatest suspicion. It is a grisly episode which could be exploited by organized propaganda from this side or the other.



But here are the cruel facts, which are beyond dispute.

Hundreds, possibly several thousands, of persons were killed in this and neighbouring communities before the region was occupied by the German army.

I saw scores of bodies.

Military pathologists turned them over and indicated the usual manner of execution — a shot in back of the neck.

In this city bodies were jammed for the most part into the basements of three prisons.

German authorities say similar blood baths occurred in other communities in this district.

Who were the dead?

The usual answer is that they were Ukrainians who either were, or were suspected of having been, agents of the Ukrainian independence movement.

That movement was vigorously suppressed by the Russian Government and was opposed with increasing bitterness as Russian and German differences reached a critical point."

*From the 'Stockholms-Tidningen'*

*An extract from the article entitled "Skörden oskadal i det erövrade Ukraina" ("Harvest in Conquered Ukraine not Affected") by the paper's special correspondent in Lviv, Bertil Svahnström, and published in its edition of Monday, July 7, 1941, p. 4.*

### **The Cheka liquidates its victims by shooting them in the back of the head.**

Before beating a retreat, the Russians gave a last demonstration of their terrorist rule by committing inhuman atrocities among the prisoners in many of the prisons. In Lviv, for instance, several hundred political prisoners — Ukrainians and Poles — were murdered a few days before the entry of the German troops on June 29th. The information to the effect that the number of victims amounts to several thousands must be exaggerated, because the figures that I have received came from the German officers of the town commandant's headquarters who had been entrusted with the task of investigating the matter. According to this credible German information, about 150 corpses were found in the cellars of the military prison. According to one account 250 bodies were found in the cellar of Brygidky prison, according to another, 413 bodies, whilst several hundred more corpses are said to be still in the cellars. Two mass-graves containing 63 bodies were discovered in the GPU prison, and, in addition, five male corpses were found in a room in the prison-building.

We saw some of the victims of these terrible atrocities. The corpses had been placed in rows in the yard of the military prison so that the relatives of the prisoners should have an opportunity to try to identify them. Weeping women and grim-faced men moved past the rows of bodies, but the latter were so disfigured that it was extremely difficult to identify them.



**Practically all of them had been killed by a shot in the back of the head, — a method of execution favoured by the Reds, which causes the face of the victim to turn black and blue and become unrecognizable. There were several women among the victims.**

Cases of mutilation and bestial ill-treatment are also said to have occurred, though I myself saw no examples of this, and the military surgeon who showed us these scenes of horror also said that he had not come across any such cases. He merely stated that he had heard that such cases had occurred, but that he himself had no proof.

### **The Russians left no prisoners behind alive.**

Shortly before they retreat, the Russians set fire to Brygidky prison and the building was still smouldering when we were there. Apart from the prison chapel, which was in ruins, only the upper floors, however, had been destroyed by fire, and access to the cellars was still possible. Here, the Communists had stacked up the bodies in layers. A layer of sand had been scattered over each layer so that one could walk over it, and then came the next layer. The executions had taken place in a special cellar, from which the dead had been removed on stretchers to the cellar containing the corpses. Prior to execution, the prisoners had been confined in cells intended for six persons, which had now, however, contained over 30 prisoners.

**Last Sunday at 1 p.m. the Germans entered Lviv. They had immediately been entreated by the inhabitants to search the prisons without delay, — so the German officers report. At 2 p.m. the Germans had already forced their way into the burning building of Brygidky prison, where the cellar-windows that faced the street had been bricked up by the Communists.**

But no prisoners were found alive. Most of the corpses were three days old. It was the same everywhere. The Russians had left no prisoners behind alive when they retreated. They had shot some of the prisoners and taken the rest with them. I did not hear anything about any revolts that were supposed to have taken place in Lviv a few days before the Russians withdrew and were crushed. In fact, there is nothing to indicate that this was the case. There is an abandoned tank standing in a street in the centre of the town, but otherwise there are no signs that there was any street-fighting. Some of the houses have been burnt down, but these are the only signs of destruction to be seen.

### **A German airman who was taken prisoner had his eyes put out**

Together with the Poles and Ukrainians, five Germans were also murdered by the Communists. All of them were airmen. Three of them were shot in their beds in a hospital in the town, whilst the other two were murdered in the military prison. These two — we saw their bodies in the prison-yard — had had their eyes put out and one of them had had his throat cut.



## THE HELL OF LVIV

Berlin, July 7th.

This evening a number of neutral journalists returned from a visit to Lviv. Without exception, they all related with considerable emotion what they had witnessed there.

In the police headquarters, the prison in Kazymyryvska (Kazimierzowska) Street and the GPU barracks, 7,000 men and women, who had been arrested after the outbreak of the German-Russian war, had been herded together like cattle. Most of them were Ukrainians, who were suspected of being a danger to the Soviet regime because of their national Ukrainian attitude. When the military position of the Soviets in Lviv became more and more untenable, a week ago on Saturday, the GPU, shortly before its retreat, carried out a massacre amongst these unfortunate victims, which was more dreadful than any other massacre ever ascertained by neutral reporters anywhere else in the world. In the police headquarters, twenty persons were herded together in each of the small cells and were then mown down by machine-gun and sub-machine-gun fire through the closed doors. Most of these persons were only wounded, but they were then massacred later on. In the prison in Kazymyryvska Street, the dead and the living were thrown into the cellars, which were then bricked up before the building was set on fire. All the press correspondents stated that they would not have been able to inspect these scenes of horror, had they not held handkerchiefs soaked in eau-de-cologne over their noses. The total number of Ukrainians who have been murdered in the town is estimated at 2,000 to 2,500. So far, 700 corpses, including the bodies of scores of children, have been removed from these three prisons alone, not counting the bodies in the cellars of the prison in Kazymyryvska Street which are still bricked up.

In Lviv the notorious Brygidky prison, which is located in the main street leading into the town from the west, was still smouldering. There were German sentries on guard in front of the building and they affirmed that salvage work was in progress. They said that the Bolsheviks had carried out a dreadful massacre there. A day or two later, we then had an opportunity to have another look at the prison. Before their retreat, the Soviets murdered prominent political prisoners confined here, above all Ukrainians, but also Poles, in the overcrowded cells, by hurling hand-grenades into them and then bolting and barring the cell-doors. They also set fire to parts of the building by igniting petrol.

Various inhabitants of Lviv who lived nearby and whom, as was understandable, we questioned very exhaustively for publicistic reasons, told us that terrible scenes had been enacted here during the two nights prior to the Soviets' retreat from Lviv.



Some of the political prisoners, so they said, had been martyred and tortured before they were murdered. Red-hot nails had been pushed under their fingernails and red-hot iron had been held under the soles of their feet; in some cases their hands and arms had been held in boiling water and the scalded skin then torn off.

I also recall the inhabitants of Lviv were extremely intimidated, but they quite candidly told the Germans about all that had happened in the town. They mentioned the GPU prisons, of which Brygidky prison and the one on Castle Hill\*) in Lviv were referred to again and again, as the centres of the Soviet massacre campaigns. I myself did not visit the latter prison, but I did, however, spend several hours in one of the smaller GPU prisons in the town gathering informations with regard to similar scenes which had also been enacted there. I cannot remember the name of the street in which this prison was located; I only know that it was a comparatively small and inconspicuous building that had a large yard, which was surrounded by a high wall. I recall that there was a huge crowd of people — about 2,000 persons — in front of the building, that is in the street, and they were clamouring to be allowed inside. They were all people whose relatives had disappeared shortly before the retreat of the Bolsheviks and they were now trying to find out something about the fate of those who had vanished. Word had got round that mass-graves had been opened in the yard of this prison, and many of these persons were now hoping to find some trace of their missing relatives.

In many cases this was possible, for immediately after these mass-graves had been discovered the German military authorities had had the corpses exhumed and examined and, as far as possible, identified. The large yard of the prison was covered with rows of corpses. Some of the dead had been bound and fettered, and three German airmen had their eyes put out.

Together with my colleague Bergemann and several other gentlemen, I spent a number of hours in various private houses close to the prison in order to ask the people who lived there all about the incidents connected with these mass-graves. Naturally, I can no longer remember the names of the persons whom I questioned, but I know that their accounts all tallied with regard to the fact that during the last two nights prior to the retreat of the Red Army from Lviv they had heard the ceaseless noise of cars driving to and fro, bringing prisoners to the prison. They also said that they had heard the sound of shots again and again, and that immediately after the entry of the German troops in Lviv these mass-graves had been found and opened.

Throughout our entire trip we heard of similar atrocities everywhere. In Zalizhchyky, a small health resort on the Dnister, we were for instance told that the big bridge over the valley — a steel structure — had been blown up by the Soviets after they had shunted a goods train full of political prisoners from East Galicia on to it and had set fire to the train by igniting petrol.

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\*) A mistake; obviously the prison in Lontsky Street is meant. — *Editor's note.*



In conclusion, I should like to mention a personal experience which I had. In Stryy, where we had stopped for a short break on the marked square, a Pole, whom I did not at first recognize, rushed up to me and fell round my neck. It then turned out that he was a former student-colleague of mine, who had been at Vilna University with me from 1931 to 1933. He burst into tears and told me that the NKVD on the last day that they had been in Stryy had arrested and murdered numerous Poles and Ukrainians, above all persons who belonged to the intelligentsia. He then took me to a well in a school, where his brother had taught handicraft, and, sobbing bitterly, told me that the Bolsheviks had thrown some of the corpses, including the body of his brother, into this well and had then bricked it up with huge stones.

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### **METROPOLITAN COUNT ANDREAS SHEPTYTSKY ON THE NKVD MASSACRE IN LVIV IN JUNE 1941**

On June 22, 1941, the Germans went to war against the Russians and occupied Galicia: the physical and moral suffering which had prevailed so far now increased. On August 16, 1941, Metropolitan Sheptytsky wrote as follows: "God has protected us all this time in a truly miraculous way. He has allowed our Church and our people to make their sacrifice of many faithful believers to Him. The chief motive of the persecutions was undoubtedly hatred of Christ and of His Church, and those against whom this hatred was directed were convinced that they were suffering for the cause of Christianity and the Catholic faith."

"During the twenty-two months of their occupation the Bolsheviks did not feel secure enough to carry out all their plans. It was only after the German offensive on June 22, 1941, that they revealed their true intentions. They arrested everyone they could get hold of and massacred them in prison. Six thousand mutilated corpses of persons who had been murdered were found in the cellars of the police headquarters in Lviv. Among them were the bodies of 11 priests of my diocese. Other clergymen who were in prison were rescued in a miraculous way. And it was a miracle that we, too, survived. Two days before the Communists retreated, fire broke out in five places in our building and in the cupola of the church; by Divine Providence it was extinguished without the aid of the fire-brigade, without hose-pipes and without an adequate supply of water."

"During the first weeks of the Russian occupation all the monasteries were closed down and the monks were evicted. The Bolsheviks tried to disorganize our Church inasmuch as they offered the office of Metropolitan to a candidate who turned it down."

"The morale of the rural population was admirable. Here and there, it is true, there was an occasional traitor, but the majority of the population revealed more Christian spirit than one would have expected."



"Communism gave rise to a great revival of Christian faith and this is an argument which holds good for the truth of the Gospel which we preach."

"The Bolshevik regime, which lasted almost two years, destroyed practically all the prosperity and the modest way of living of our people. The number of victims deported to Siberia or to the shores of the White Sea, of persons imprisoned and murdered is extremely large. Even though no exact statistics are so far available, it can be assumed that the number of victims in my diocese amounts to 200.000 and to twice this number throughout the whole country. In my diocese the number of priests who have been murdered amounts to 11 or 12, and in the diocese of Peremyshl to 20. The number of priests in my diocese who have been arrested and deported amounts to 33."

"The people however, that is to say the faithful believers, who were neither deported nor exiled likewise suffered dreadful hardships, — slave-labour, confiscation of property, exorbitant taxes, and malicious and repressive measures on the part of the police regime which interfered in every sphere of life and propagated atheism everywhere. Whole villages were transferred from one place to another."

"The intellectuals in the towns suffered other hardships, but these were equally severe: arrests without end, interrogations, constant surveillance and the confiscation of clothing and household property. These persecutions, however, and the destruction of material possessions were compensated for by a marked regeneration of religious faith. The churches and the confessionals were besieged by persons who had formerly never gone to confession, and the young people, who had not had any religious instructions, now revealed an admirable zeal to defend and preserve their religion..."\*)

### TESTIMONY BY EYE-WITNESSES ABOUT THE NKVD MASSACRE IN LVIV

Lviv; Mr. B. K. testifies:

As a political prisoner I was confined in the prison in Lviv, first of all in Zamarstyniv prison, then in Lontsky prison and, finally, in Brygidky prison. The war broke out on Sunday, June 22nd, and on that day there were over 12 thousand prisoners in Brygidky prison. It was easy to estimate this figure, since anyone who knew how many cells there were in the prison could work out the total number of prisoners as being over 12 thousand, as there were on an average 80 to 90 prisoners in each cell and all the cells were crowded to overflowing.

\*) Dr. G. Prokoptschuk: Der Metropolit. Munich 1955.



On the first day of the war the NKVD already began to fetch individual prisoners out of all the cells. In groups of 10 persons and more, they were then driven into the cellars of the prison and shot there. The sound of shooting could clearly be heard in the cells. Some of the prisoners refused to go into the cellars and were then dragged there by force; others were seized with convulsions. Through the window of our cell which looked on to the courtyard of the prison, we were able to observe all these incidents unnoticed.

The shooting went on day and night without a pause. A few days later, mainly by night, the windows and the entrance to the cellars were bricked up. From then onwards, the prisoners were driven into the prison chapel in the cellars, as the entrance to the chapel had not been bricked up. On the Thursday and the Friday, large groups of prisoners were then shot in the trench which had been dug in the prison yard.

One day, we watched the NKVD men bring a family with two children into the prison yard. They must have previously taken some valuables or other off the family, for the mother, in tears, kept pleading: "You can take everything, but spare the children." But in spite of their mother's entreaties, the children were shot with their parents in the trench. It was truly amazing with what calmness the NKVD men carried out the executions, and they even went to the extent of cursing the prisoners and cracking silly jokes.

On the Saturday morning, June 28, 1941, there were only 12 prisoners left in our cell, in which there had, to begin with, been 95. The prisoners left in all the cells (9) on this floor were then rounded up — there were about 60 persons all together — and put into one cell. A few persons — I think about 7 — were then taken out of the cell, but their names were not called out. This was the last group to be shot. The NKVD men did not return to our corridor again, for the German artillery was already firing on Lviv. After a while we ascertained that the prison and the remainder of the prisoners who had survived were no longer guarded by the NKVD. But as the door was locked, we could not escape. Soon afterwards, a number of persons, armed with small firearms, forced their way into the prison courtyard and broke open the prison doors. These civilians told us that they were Ukrainian insurgents. In the whole prison there were only about 600 prisoners still alive. In small groups of about 10 persons, we cautiously left the prison, for there were still retreating units of the Red Army in the main streets. After leaving the cell in which we had been confined, we saw evil-smelling corpses in the prison chapel and in two trenches, barely covered with earth, in the prison yard. The insurgents hurried us out and we thus had no time to search the prison more closely. We — we were 21 persons — then found shelter in the cellars of St. George's Cathedral.

On Sunday, June 29, 1941, I went into town, for there were only one or two Bolshevik units proceeding now and again along Horodetska Street eastwards, and the town was otherwise quite



deserted. I went along to Lontsky prison in order to try and find the files on my case. I entered the prison yard from Lontsky Street and near to the gate I saw 7 corpses that had been mutilated and were in a state of putrefaction. They could hardly have been prisoners as there was no growth of beard on their faces as was the case with prisoners. In the prison yard there were two trenches, — one full of corpses, covered with earth, whilst the other trench was half-full and the earth had only been scattered on it. When I got to the so-called Guard Room (a large hall) in the prison, I found it piled half-full of corpses. For some reason or other, they had been stacked one on top of each other like blocks of wood. On top of the pile there lay the corpse of a young woman, fair-haired, half-naked, who had been stabbed in the breast. I noticed that many of the corpses were clean-shaven, so they must have been persons who were killed soon after they had been arrested. It was not until next day, June 30, 1941, towards sunrise, that the German troops and, with them, a company of the Ukrainian legion entered the town. With the help of the soldiers, the population of Lviv and environs began exhuming the bodies and searching for friends and relatives. It was impossible to get all the corpses out of the bricked-up cellars of Brigidky prison as part of the cellars had been destroyed by incendiary bombs, which were no doubt planted there by the NKVD when they retreated. Every one of the prisoners in Zamarstyniv prison was murdered and their bodies bricked up in the cellars. In fact, no one attempted to break open the cellars there on account of the dreadful stench of rotting corpses. Only part of the corpses in the prisons Brigidky, Lontsky and Jachowicz were exhumed; there were several thousands, and a report issued by the Germans mentioned the figure 5 thousand. But who knows how many corpses there were in the cellars that were not opened.

N. B.: I should like to mention the young prisoners whose acquaintance I made in the cell: one was a boy of seventeen, called Bereziuk, who came from the Radekhiv district, and the other a boy of fifteen, Oleh-Roman Luniv; the latter had been arrested for reading the history of Ukraine in a non-Soviet edition.

Lviv; Maria Strutynska related in "Svoboda," New York, 8. 1. 1960:

...As the widow of one of the murdered prisoners, the editor Mychajlo Strutynsky, I wish to make the following statement in this connection:

At the time of the entry of the German army into Lviv, all the prisons in Lviv were already full of murdered prisoners; the main prisons were: the so-called Brygidky prison (5,000 prisoners); the annexes of Zamarstyniv garrison (I do not know the exact number of prisoners confined there, but in view of the size of this huge





*Ukrainian wives identifying their husbands*





*Exhumed bodies from a common grave in Vinnytsia*



building it must have been thousands); the NKVD prison in Lontsky Street (where whole piles of bodies of persons who had been tortured to death in a terrible way were found before Germans entered the town, — I do not know the exact number); and the prison in Jachowicz Street, a transit prison, where my husband was confined (of the 900 prisoners there, 80 criminals and all the Poles were released, whilst all the rest were murdered).

All these facts were corroborated by members of the families of the prisoners, after the Germans, at their request, had the prisons opened in their presence.

In the prison in Jachowicz Street we found the cells filled with piles of things that we had sent the prisoners once a month. The cellars were full of corpses of murdered prisoners, and the corpses were already in a state of putrefaction. In the prison yard, near to the railed-in square where the prisoners took exercise, there were two huge trenches. They had been hastily covered with earth but here and there elbows and feet could be seen sticking out. The corpses were in such an advanced stage of putrefaction that there was a terrible stench about the whole place. In answer to our requests to have the bodies exhumed, the Germans said "pestilence, danger of pestilence!" — and they gave orders that everything was to be sprayed with lime and covered with cement.

When the Bolsheviks retreated they set fire to St. Brigid prison (Brygidky), and for a whole week the special labour gangs organized by the Germans carried charred corpses out of the prison, which were then buried in Yanivsky Cemetery.

#### **Mrs. A. K. testified as follows:**

In the autumn of 1940 the NKVD in Lviv arrested me because I was a member of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists. I was taken to Zamarstyniv prison and confined there until the beginning of June 1941, about two weeks before the outbreak of the German-Soviet war. I was then moved to Brygidky prison on account of illness, allegedly in order to put me in the prison hospital as I was suffering from jaundice and kidney trouble at the time, but instead of being taken to the hospital, I was put in a cell in the prison cellars. I was in this cell when the German-Soviet war broke out on June 22, 1941. The cell was crowded to overflowing with women who had been arrested.

In the afternoon of June 22, 1941, I and some of other women-prisoners were taken along to another cell (presumably No. 5) on the ground-floor of the prison. It was the first cell to the right of the main entrance to the prison, and the window of this cell was exactly opposite the prison chapel in the courtyard. During the night from June 23rd to June 24th, all was strangely silent in the prison; there were no jailers to be heard in the corridors and no one watched us through the spy-holes as had so far always been the case. Shortly



before dawn the male prisoners from the first floor, who had broken out of their cells, forced the padlock on the door of our cell and we swarmed out into the corridor and made for the prison door. When we got as far as the door we saw the corpses of six, or, rather, seven prisoners, one of whom was a woman, lying outside. We were so horrified at this sight that we promptly went back to the cell which we had just left. I then went into the cell next-door in order to see my friends — it was a cell for prisoners who had been sentenced — but next minute I heard the sound of shots in the corridor and promptly rushed back into my cell. A second or two later, the governor of the prison, accompanied by a number of NKVD men and jailers, appeared in our cell which was the first cell from the entrance door; they pointed their guns at us and ordered us to put up our hands. There were now prisoners from other cells, including male prisoners, who had not had time to get back to their own cells, in our cell too. The NKVD men now ordered the prisoners to lie down on their face and hold their hands on their backs. The prison governor then asked us: "why did you want to escape?"; to which one of the women promptly answered in Russian, as she came from East Ukraine, "we didn't want to escape, — as you can see, we are sitting here just as we were before." The governor then ordered the male prisoners to be led away and we women were told to remain lying on the ground, with our hands on our backs. Whilst we were lying there, we heard loud voices in the corridor; in fact, I clearly heard three voices and the following words: "I welcomed you so warmly when you entered the town, and what are you going to do to me now!" — a woman's voice shouted; then I heard a man's voice say: "Where are you taking me?" and a third voice — that of a man — entreated: "give me my life and freedom." The sound of steps and voices then died away; but after a little while I clearly heard the sound of three shots from the direction of the prison chapel.

Immediately afterwards, we heard the sounds of engines of lorries running in the prison yard. At first we thought the prisoners were being taken away, but the noise continued without a break and it was obvious that the lorries were not driving away. It was only some time later, however, that we realized that the noise of the engines had been intended to drown the screams of the prisoners.

At short intervals, the jailers now appeared in our cell and, according to a list, they called out the names of individual prisoners and ordered them to step out into the corridor with all their belongings, either separately or in small groups. This procedure went on from Tuesday to Friday. Towards evening on the Thursday, the following persons whom I knew personally were ordered to step out into the corridor: Olha Chemerynska and Olha Sparyniak. I now realized that the two women were not merely being transferred to another cell, but that something else was going to happen to them, for they had both been accused of offences which the Soviet rulers punished with the death sentence. In the meantime, we noticed that the list



of names of the prisoners had got mixed up, for the jailers kept calling out the names of persons whom they had already taken away and also the names of prisoners who were not in our cell.

At noon on the Friday, some more women were taken out of our cell, but after a while they came back again as the men in the guard room had not known what was to be done with them, since there was no information in their files regarding an offence. During the night from Friday to Saturday, the names of some more women were called out according to a list and they were told to collect their belongings and be ready to step out into the corridor. But hours passed and no one came to fetch them. At dawn on Saturday, we heard the voices of prisoners on the other floors; they were calling to their relatives who were confined in other cells. Soon afterwards, when it had become obvious that there were no longer any guards in the prison, the prisoners forced open the cell-doors and swarmed out into the corridor. Our door was forced open from the outside and we saw a civilian standing there, who assured us that the prison door leading on to Jachowicz Street was unguarded and that he had just entered the prison by this door. At first, we were frightened of leaving the cell because we dreaded the consequences if we should be caught again trying to escape, but eventually a friend and I ventured out into the corridor and safely reached the prison door and freedom. In the streets of Lviv we caught sight of retreating units of the Soviet army and we hurriedly sought shelter.

On the Sunday, I learnt from Dr. Kashubynsky that the prisons were full of corpses of prisoners who had been murdered, and that this was, above all, the case as far as Lontsky prison was concerned. At dawn on the Monday, June 30, 1941, I noticed a German patrol on the street, through my window. Early that same morning I went along to Lontsky prison, but the stench of rotting corpses was so dreadful that it was impossible to enter the prison. I then walked on in the direction of Zamarstyniv prison, and on the way there I met a woman who had been in the same cell with me in Zamarstyniv prison; she told me that she had learnt from another prisoner that my brother had been murdered in Zamarstyniv prison. As I had already known during my imprisonment that my brother was also confined in the same prison, I now went there to search for his body. When I got there, I found a large crowd standing outside. German sentries were posted in front of the prison and they were letting people in, either separately or in small groups. When I told them that I had come to look for the body of my brother who had been murdered, they allowed me to go straight in.

I then witnessed the following scene: there were four rows of corpses of murdered prisoners, I counted 40 corpses, including 23 female ones. From their clothes, I recognized the bodies of three women with whom I had shared the same cell, but their faces were no longer recognizable. One of the women was called Iryna Shust and came from Brody; the other woman was from Lviv, and the third was a Polish woman, whose Christian name was Marysia. One



could see from the corpses that some of their bones had been broken. I failed to find my brother's body amongst the male corpses, and, in any case, I did not know what clothes he had been wearing whilst in prison, I then asked whether there were any more corpses and was told that there were, but that they could not be viewed as they were no longer recognizable, since they were already in an advanced stage of putrefaction.

A few days later, I met a Jewess and a Polish woman on the street, with whom I had also shared a cell, and they told me that most of the executions in Zamarstyniv prison had taken place on Thursday, June 26, 1941. The two women had been taken into the cellar to be shot and on the way there had met my brother, who was likewise being taken there to be shot and who had enquired after me. The women said that the prisoners were shot in the neck from behind when they reached the entrance to the cellar. They had escaped death by dropping down at the cellar entrance; they had then lain hidden amongst the corpses of those who had been murdered until all was quiet again and they had been able to leave the prison.

#### **Lviv; Mr. J. M. testifies:**

From the evening of February 21, 1940, to the morning of February 24th, the NKVD unexpectedly started a large-scale arrest campaign in the whole of West Ukraine against the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN). During the said time, over 80,000 Ukrainian patriots were arrested throughout West Ukraine because they were suspected of being active members of the OUN.

During the morning of February 22, 1940, whilst I was going about my work as head zoological technician near Lviv, I was arrested, together with one of my OUN comrades, M. from L., by the rayon NKVD. We were taken to the local NKVD prison, from which we were moved to Brygidky prison in Lviv on February 23, 1940.

The arrests were carried out by the rayon NKVD chief Potapov, the Communist Party district secretary Dobrovolsky, and Prosecutor Fedorovich.

From Brygidky prison I was taken to Zamarstyniv prison and then to Lontsky prison, where I remained until May 20, 1941, when I was once more taken back to Brygidky prison.

In Zamarstyniv prison I was put in the big cell on the first floor. And it was here that I realized the extent of the large-scale arrest campaign against the OUN. There were about 150 prisoners in this cell and about 70 per cent of them were OUN freedom fighters. It was here that I made the acquaintance of a leading OUN member, Engineer Mykola Matviychuk, who was the main person involved in the so-called trial of 59. The remaining 30 per cent of the prisoners consisted of 25 per cent Poles, mainly former officers, and 5 per cent Jews and Germans, etc.



About three weeks after I had been arrested I was interrogated for the first time in Zamarstyniv prison by a young Russian NKVD official and was accused of being an active member of the OUN. During the whole of the time I was confined in Zamarstyniv prison, that is until January 1941, I was constantly interrogated by NKVD officials, mostly at night, and was subjected to dreadful physical and moral tortures during these interrogations. I was so exhausted by these tortures that I was frequently brought back unconscious to the cell by the NKVD jailers.

In January 1941, towards the end of my confinement in Zamarstyniv prison, I was interrogated on one occasion by an NKVD general from Moscow. In spite of all the physical and moral tortures inflicted on me, I refused to admit that I was a member of the OUN. Despite this fact, however, I was sentenced at the final trial, which took place behind locked doors on May 16, 1941, to be shot, together with many other persons. From Zamarstyniv prison I was taken to Lontsky prison in Lviv. That was in January 1941. Here I was subjected to several more rigorous interrogations before I was sentenced. I and others of my comrades were sentenced by a so-called "Special Troika" (three-men) NKVD court. On the last occasion I was beaten by the NKVD men to such an extent that I fell down unconscious and did not realize that sentence was being pronounced on me. It was only a few days later that I was informed of the sentence in the cell, and we were told that the NKVD procurator had filed an appeal for amnesty for us as a matter of form. On the strength of this amnesty — so we were told — we might perhaps get imprisonment for life or 25 years in a penitentiary or hard labour in a prison-camp. After sentence had been passed (on May 16, 1941), I and my comrades who had been sentenced were taken to Brygidky prison. Whilst we were waiting for the amnesty decision, war broke out between Germany and the Soviet Union. It was obvious to us from the air raids carried out by the German Luftwaffe during the night from June 23rd to 24th, 1941, that a war really was in progress. During that same night all the NKVD men got ready to flee eastwards. Some NKVD units surrounded the prison from without, whilst other units were already fleeing. A large number of the prisoners managed to get out of their cells and went into the prison yard. In the meantime some prisoners or other destroyed the entire record cards in the prison office. At about 10 o'clock tanks drove along Kazymyryvska Street and drew up in front of the prison. As we were hoping for our speedy liberation we assumed that they were German tanks. But after one of the prisoners had looked out of a window in the corridor to try and see the tanks and had been shot whilst doing so, we realized only too clearly that they must be Russian tanks. The NKVD then fired at random on the crowd of prisoners in the prison yard. Panic broke out in the prison. Between the volleys we could hear the screams of the wounded and the dying. There were hundreds of victims. After a while, the NKVD unit stopped firing and entered the prison building. The NKVD men ordered the prisoners to lie face



downwards on the ground for about 3 to 4 hours and later restricted their freedom of movement in the cells. In the evening the NKVD officials gave us each a card and a pencil and told us to write our surnames, Christian names, date of birth and the sentence passed on us on these cards. All the record cards in the prison had been destroyed and the NKVD now had no personal data about us. But of course we did not know this at that time. We filled out the cards as told.

From the night of June 24th until the evening of June 25th, the NKVD systematically fetched 5 men out of every cell and took them into the prison yard, where they were driven off in lorries.

These prisoners who were taken away by lorries were then shot in mass graves in various districts outside Lviv, in particular in Ponykovetsky Forest. From the night of June 25th to June 26th until early in the morning on June 27th, the NKVD men carried out mass murders of the prisoners even more quickly and on the prison premises. Prisoners were fetched out of the cells en masse and were murdered by the NKVD in a ruthless, terrible and inhuman way in the cellars, in the wash-rooms, sick-wards, in the garage and in front of the chapel and the prison.

I heard the screams of these prisoners and saw them being murdered by the NKVD through the window of the cell I was in. Whilst they were carrying out these murders, the NKVD men switched on the engines of motors and kept them running. Nine prisoners were also brought in from the town and murdered. When our names were called out by the NKVD men as the next to be murdered, I and some of my comrades kept quiet. By this time there were only about 10 to 15 men left in each cell. Originally there had been 60 to 70 prisoners in each cell. There were 8 cells on our corridor. On the Saturday morning, June 28, 1941, the NKVD men moved the remaining prisoners from these 8 cells into one cell and ordered them to "get ready for transport," in other words for being murdered. But towards noon the NKVD suddenly left the prison and fled as fast as they could, for German troops had broken through the fighting front and were advancing on Lviv. Thus, at the last moment we escaped death. And this time the Soviet Russians had really fled from Lviv.

The Ukrainian Nationalists then entered the prison and set us free. At the last moment, the NKVD, on leaving Brygidky prison, set fire to the building by igniting petrol and paraffin in the cellar. After leaving the prison, we former prisoners assembled in the Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral of St. George and hid there in the cellar, as the Germans had not yet occupied the town and there was danger of our falling into the hands of armed Soviet Russians who here and there were still patrolling the streets. Next day, June 29, 1941, we heard of the dreadful mass murders that had been carried out in all the prisons in Lviv, in particular in Lontsky prison. The corpses of the murdered prisoners in the prisons were already in a state of putrefaction. There were some terrible sights: priests who had been crucified on walls; pregnant women whose stomachs had been slit



open and the foetus of six or seven months removed; bodies tied up with barbed wire; persons who had been wounded had been buried alive; in the cellars prisoners had been nailed down alive in coffins and had later bitten the flesh off their fingers; in the sick wards there were bodies of prisoners who had been gassed, etc.

#### **Lviv; Mr. T. D. testifies:**

I, the undersigned, T. D., born on October 22, 1907, in K. in the district of B., was arrested by the NKVD in S. B. on December 21, 1940, and after two days in the prison in Z. was put into cell No. 20. After I had been in custody for three weeks, I was taken to Zamarstyniv prison in Lviv. On February 22, 1941, I was removed to Lontsky prison in Lviv, cell No. 26, where I remained until June 6, 1941. Then I was taken to Brygidky prison in Kazymyryvska Street. I have no desire to go into details regarding the methods of interrogation used by the NKVD against me and all the other prisoners. These methods were contrary to all human laws and consisted in dreadful tortures which were applied in order to make the prisoners confess to crimes that they had never committed.

The following prisoners, whose names I recall, shared a cell with me: the Reverend Zhdan, the Reverend Koverko, Engineer Bohdan Durbak, Kushpeta and Leonid Halandiuk, all of whom were Ukrainians. Of the prisoners of Polish nationality who were in the same cell with me, I recall the names of the following: Major Wilczynski, Captain Berezowski, Skrzydlowski (probably a poet from Poznan) and a Polish priest by the name of Orzechowski from Yavoriv.

The Soviet-German war broke out on June 22, 1941 (a Sunday), and on the Tuesday evening, June 24, 1941, the NKVD already began shooting prisoners. The prisoners were shot in the cells, after having been ordered to lie face downwards on the floor. Two prisoners were shot in our cell and three were wounded. During the night, immediately after this had happened, two of the wounded men were told to come out of the cell and they never came back again. The bodies of the two prisoners who had been shot dead were not removed from the cell until the Thursday morning, June 26, 1941. In order to deaden the noise of the shots, the NKVD switched on the engines of lorries and tractors in the prison yard.

The massacre of the prisoners continued for nights on end until the Saturday morning, June 28, 1941. During the daytime prisoners were called out by name and told to come out of the cells, allegedly because they were to be released and sent home (as "Stalin issued a manifesto"), but none of them ever returned home.

There were 115 prisoners originally in cell No. 84 in Brygidky prison. When my name was called out to leave the cell, at three o'clock a.m. on Saturday, June 28, 1941, there were only two persons



left in the cell: the Polish priest, Orzechowski, from Yavoriv, and the third of the three prisoners who had been wounded, whose name I no longer remember. Four NKVD men, armed with bayonets, took me along to the guard room, where there were already 16 prisoners, with their hands crossed and tied on their backs with wire. They then did the same thing to me. A few minutes later, we were taken through the yard and into the cellars of the prison. Here a dreadful sight met my eyes: countless corpses of prisoners who had been shot and their bodies maimed with all sorts of instruments. We were ordered to face the wall. On seeing the pile of bodies with smashed skulls, I fainted and fell on top of the corpses. It was not till about 8 o'clock on the Sunday morning, June 29, 1941, that I regained consciousness. I heard a dreadful scream and the sobs of the women who had come to search for their relatives and friends. They were dragging the corpses from the heap. I had probably lain under the corpses, for I was covered with blood but not wounded. When they got me on my feet again and untied my hands, which were fastened together with wire, I did not realize what they were doing and in my fright rushed up the stairs and out of the prison. I continued running in a panic until I reached the street, where some people stopped me and tried to calm me by telling me that the Bolsheviks had left the town. Someone then took me into a house, where they washed me and gave me something to eat, and by degrees I came to again. The room was full of persons and they kept asking me the names of the prisoners who had been in the same cell with me. They mentioned the names of a lot of prisoners, but I did not know any of them. Whilst they were asking me all sorts of questions, three soldiers of the German army came into the room. But as none of us could speak any German, we could not talk to them. That same afternoon I went along to Uspenska Church in Rus'ka Street and told the vicar that his curate Zhdan had been in the same prison cell with me. When I asked him whether the latter had returned, he said no. Later in the afternoon the vicar and I went along to Zamarstyniv prison. In the yard we saw a pile of clothes in a corner, and I recognized a jacket which had belonged to Mychailo Zalizhchyk from my village and which I myself had made him. The collar of the jacket was stained with blood. Later, the vicar and I went along to Lontsky prison and I showed him the cell in which the Reverend Zhdan and I had been confined. There were a lot of people in the prison yard, standing by a heap of corpses and weeping. The sight greatly upset me and the vicar was obliged to support me and take me out into the street, otherwise I should have fainted. That same Sunday evening, someone came to see the vicar in Uspenska Church and then took me home with them to spend the night at their house. On Monday morning I set out for home on foot, but it took me five days to cover the 87 kilometres, even though I was given a lift for part of the way. When I was arrested I weighed 16 stone, but when I came out of prison only 8 stone, which was far too little for my height — 5 ft. 10.



**Lviv; Mr. Vasyl G. related in "Shlyakh Peremohy,"  
Munich, 17. 1. 1960:**

In answer to the request of the editorial office of the "Shlyakh Peremohy" for testimony on Moscow's Bolshevik atrocities in June and July 1941, I should like to give the following brief account of what I saw with my own eyes in the prison in Lontsky Street, Lviv.

During the last three days before the Germans entered Lviv, there were no Bolshevik troops to be seen in the town, but a lot of NKVD men kept driving through all the streets in trucks. They set fire to the largest prison, in Kazymyryvska Street, and I saw dense clouds of smoke coming out of the windows and the lower roof; the entire prison yard was screened in smoke.

On June 30, 1941, I was walking about the centre of the town, together with my comrades, — mainly in those streets where the Bolsheviks had formerly lived in groups. Before the Germans occupied all the administrative buildings, I and my friends had already gone along to Lontsky Street, where the NKVD had had its headquarters. The fence round the building and round the vegetable garden in Lontsky Street consisted of high, thick boards nailed together so that there was not a chink between them anywhere. The iron entrance-gate had also been boarded up. We managed to break open the gate and immediately beyond it I saw a large pile of male and female corpses, which were half-naked and were already decomposed. We went into the cellar and there, too, the same sight met our eyes. We also saw the bodies of children there, whose skulls had been smashed and who had been stabbed by bayonets.

As we went up the stairs to the first and second floor, we noticed that the whole staircase from top to bottom had been surrounded with string-nets; there was an egg-shaped hand-grenade on the table in each room; there were photographs of prisoners and unfinished stereo casts in the cupboards. We called to some German soldiers who were marching past and showed them all these dreadful things. Half an hour later, numerous Ukrainians who lived in the town arrived at the prison and, weeping bitterly, began searching among the corpses for their relatives.

The same sight could also be seen in the former Jewish school in Zhovkivska Street.



## **TESTIMONIES BY EYE-WITNESSES ABOUT NKVD MASSACRES IN VARIOUS UKRAINIAN TOWNS**

### **BEREZHANY**

The witness M. M. (now in England) reported that during the first days of the German-Soviet war the NKVD shot 12 prisoners in Kushnirka woods and another 6 in Pysarka woods. After the retreat of the Soviets a large number of corpses were found in the town prison; only three persons were still alive. Corpses were also found in the cellars of the castle nearby on the other side of the River Zolota Lypa, the family seat of the Sieniawski.

### **BIBRKA**

At the end of June 1941, the female witness K. F. (now in England) talked to two political prisoners who had managed to escape alive out of the town prison. The prisoners were taken into the prison yard and, two at a time, were subjected to dreadful tortures, whilst all the others were forced to look on. After the flight of the Bolsheviks, 18 (recognizable) corpses were exhumed in the prison yard and the bodies of four other prisoners who had been shot were found in the prison building; 120 corpses were retrieved out of the river which passes through the town. Most of the bodies bore traces of dreadful tortures.

The witness S. D. (now in England) estimates the number of persons who were murdered at 105; tortures and executions (which were carried out on June 22nd and June 23rd) usually took place in the cellars; many of the victims were scalded with boiling water. Of those who were murdered, the bodies of Dr. Roman Kulchytsky, a lawyer of the town, and of Bodnar and Kozakevych, both inhabitants of the town, were identified.

### **CHORTKIV, UMAN, BERDYCHIV**

The witness **Dibrova** testifies that on July 15, 1941, he was removed from the town prison of Chortkiv, where he had been confined, together with other political prisoners (there were 3 groups consisting of 500 persons in each group), and that they were forced to proceed on foot, under guard, to Skala and from there to Uman. The prisoners were treated in a most inhuman way, 11 persons who were unable to walk any further were shot by the guard before reaching Skala. In Kamyanets-Podilsky the witness managed to escape, but he knows for certain that all his comrades were shot when they got to Uman,



including the personal acquaintances of the witness, Ivan Provalny and Ivan Tretyak, both of them from the village of Bila near Chortkiv, and Engineer Turula of Derenivka (district of Budzaniv); the body of the latter was identified by his wife (after the Germans entered Uman).

In the town prison of Chortkiv (after the entry of the Germans) the witness saw with his own eyes the bodies of hundreds of political prisoners who had been tortured and massacred by the NKVD (their genitals had been injured with barbed wire, in the case of female prisoners, too, and their breasts had been cut off). The body of Olya Yurchynska had also been mutilated in this way. The witness recognized the body as she was the daughter of a lawyer in Chortkiv whom the witness knew personally.

The witness also testified that at that time he met a former political prisoner who had fled from Berdychiv and returned to his village, Romanivka (district of Budzaniv); this man told him that when the NKVD were about to retreat they set fire to the prison in Berdychiv; the prisoners smashed the doors from within and tried to rush out through the flames, but most of them were shot by the NKVD men. Actually, one side of the man's face was completely disfigured by fresh scars received from burns.

## **DROHOBYCH**

The female witness M. F. (now in the Federal Republic of Germany) reports that after the entry of the Germans several hundred corpses were exhumed in the Jewish cemetery of the town; they had been buried in 6 large graves, each grave measuring 18 ft by 6 ft, and there were about 50 bodies in each grave. The corpses bore marks of tortures and were fastened together with barbed wire. The victims had been killed by a shot in the neck. The bodies of two German airmen were also found amongst the corpses, a fact which clearly indicates when this massacre must have taken place.

## **LOPATYN**

The witness V. L.... reports that during the night from June 22nd to 23rd, 1941, 12 persons were murdered in the prison in Lopatyn. They were young men who had been called up for service in the Soviet army. Some persons heard screams and shots from the prison that night. On June 24th, the Germans entered Lopatyn. About 30 persons went along to the prison. In the cellar we recognized the bodies of our friends, who had been killed by a shot in the back of the neck. The bodies were lying about on the stairs. To judge from all the signs, it was obviously a case of murder. Not all the corpses could be identified as they had been horribly disfigured by tortures.



## LUTSK

At the end of June 1941 — so Y. A., now in Canada, testifies, — the Russian NKVD murdered 1,800 prisoners in Lutsk. He had this information from a friend of his who had a miraculous escape when he pretended to be dead during the shooting of the prisoners. I myself, Y. A., was at the funeral, which was attended by thousands of persons from Lutsk and the neighbouring districts. The bodies were buried in the prison yard. There were three graves, two of which contained 500 bodies each, whilst in the third there were 800 bodies. The instruments of torture of the NKVD were set up by the side of the largest grave. Among them was a drum, which was lined with barbed wire; the Russians threw their victims into this drum and then turned it until the latter died in dreadful agony.

\* \* \*

I, S. N., was not arrested by the Bolsheviks, but my friend, N. N., was, and he related the following incidents to me: When the Germans advanced on Lutsk, the NKVD took the prisoners into the yard in groups and made them stand against the wall. Machine-guns were then fired at them from the other side of the yard. Anyone who survived of the groups was ordered to carry the corpses to the craters which had been torn up by the bombs dropped by the German planes, that had bombed the prison. Whilst these executions were in progress, some of the prisoners tried to flee, but they were shot as they were scaling the prison walls. Some of the prisoners were wounded during the executions and begged the guards to kill them, but in spite of their entreaties they were thrown into the trench alive and corpses were dropped on top of them. My friend was in the last group but one to be shot. During the execution he fell to the ground; later, he was ordered to carry the corpses to the trench. He then returned to the cell, where the NKVD were selecting the persons for the last group. The sudden appearance of the Germans saved his life.

## NADVIRNA

H. G. and Y. K., now in England, testify: about the middle of July, 1941, two trenches were discovered not far from Nadvirna: one in a forest, the other on the banks of the Bystrytsia. There were 36 corpses in the first trench. They were fettered and there were marks of a blow with some heavy object, probably a hammer, on their foreheads. In the other grave there were 25 corpses. They, too, were bound, either with barbed wire or with rope. Rags had been wrapped round their heads, and the marks of blows were also visible on their foreheads.

Later on, another grave was discovered, but the Germans would not give permission for it to be opened, as it was the height of summer and they were afraid of pestilence. It was therefore only strewn with lime.



The witness, Father **M. K.** (at present in America) reports that soon after the flight of the Bolsheviks 82 corpses were exhumed in a nearby wood; with the exception of the body of a woman, who was recognized by her clothes by her young children, none of these corpses could be identified as they had been in a state of putrefaction for over a month.

The female witness **M. S.** (now in England) reports that after the retreat of the Soviets the corpses of some young Hutzuls\*) were also found in the town prison; iron nails had been driven through their tongues.

### PEREMYSHLYANY

The witness, **N. N.** now in England, testifies as follows: Before the arrival of the Germans, the Bolsheviks murdered many Ukrainian political prisoners in Peremyshlyany. In order to drown the sounds of the shooting and the screams of the victims, engines were switched on. Before they died, the prisoners were tortured in a dreadful way: parts of their body were cut off, — tongue, ears, nose; their eyes were put out. Many of them were stabbed with red-hot wire, scalded with boiling water, or boiled alive.

The witness **M. D.** (now in the Federal Republic of Germany) reports that he was told by eyewitnesses that immediately after the entry of the German troops the bodies of hundreds of prisoners who had been murdered were found in the town prison. The victims had their noses, ears, fingers, etc., cut off, their eyes put out or burnt out, or else they were pierced with red-hot wire or scalded with boiling water; many of them were boiled alive in huge boilers.

### SAMBIR

The witness **Eugen Rudy** (now in the USA) already testified before the U.S. Congress Kersten Committee on October 12, 1954, and his testimony was published in Record No. 37, p. 150-151.

On June 26, 1941, there was some shooting by Soviet troops on various streets in Sambir. By June 28th the NKVD had already fled and many people went along to the prison in order to look for their relatives. Suddenly, six lorries with NKVD men on them drove up from the direction of Radlovychi. The NKVD men immediately headed for the prison, and anyone they found there or nearby — old people, women and children — they promptly shot; about 80 persons were murdered in this way. After the entry of the Germans, 720 corpses were found in the prison buildings and yard, and, in addition, another 117 corpses were exhumed from a mass grave on the other side of the River Dnister; all the victims had been killed by a shot in the neck; many of them had their arms and legs broken, their eyes put

\*) Ukrainians inhabiting the easternmost part of Ukrainian Carpathians.



out, their genitals (in the case of the women their breasts, too) cut off, or their scalps torn off. A wood-cutter and his fourteen-year old son saved themselves by hiding in a sewer-pipe of the prison before the massacre began.

The witness P. N. (now in the Federal Republic of Germany), who testified under oath, said that he had received his information from two eyewitnesses, two former Ukrainian Communists, Mykola Pylypchak and Vasyl Gerech, who were arrested by the NKVD but by chance managed to escape death. The prisoners were taken into the prison yard and shot there by machine-guns. Many of them, who threw themselves flat on the ground at the right moment, managed to survive, although most of them were given a "last merciful shot," too. Those who refused to leave their cells were killed by means of hand-grenades. The corpses were later examined by a non-German commission invited by the Germans, — the witness no longer remembers whether it was a Swedish or a Swiss commission. The bodies of two women and a child were found amongst the 117 corpses that were exhumed on the bank of the River Dnister.

#### **SAMBIR; Mr. P. N. testifies:**

I, P... N..., testify to the following facts on oath: When the Bolsheviks carried out their massacres in West Ukraine, I was in my native village Vilshanyk near Sambir. Two former Communists, Mykola Pylypchak and Vasyl Gerech, of Vilshanyk, had been arrested in Sambir because they did not share the same views as their comrades, the Russian imperialists. On the Wednesday or Thursday evening, June 25th or June 26th, 1941, I met Pylypchak returning home from Sambir. He was terribly upset and frightened. He asked me to go home with him. When we got to his house, he told me the following: "We prisoners could tell from the strange behaviour of the NKVD that something must have happened. In the course of the Monday and Tuesday we heard that war had broken out between Germany and Russia. We were overjoyed because we hoped that the war would bring us our freedom. Today, all the cells in the prison were opened and the NKVD requested us politely but definitely to step outside into the prison yard. Most of the prisoners went into the yard. So did I. The remainder of the prisoners, who were afraid something terrible was going to happen, stayed behind in the cells. When we got into the yard we saw a few cars there and a lot of NKVD men with machine-guns. It looked as though there was going to be an execution. We were told to stand against the fence. When we lined up there, all the engines of the cars were switched on. There was a terrific din. Then all the machine-guns were levelled on us. At the last moment, I suddenly had an inspiration of how I might save my life. When the first shot was fired, I threw myself on the ground. That was what saved me. I heard the Russians go on shooting, the screams of the prisoners and the din of the engines. After a while all



was quiet, but the stillness was only of short duration. Then I heard the engines running again, the sound of a few shots and the explosion of grenades. After it had grown quiet again once more, I heard the gate of the prison being opened and the cars driving away. As I was in danger of being suffocated by the corpses that were on top of me, I tried to push them away in order to get some air. It was a difficult job, for I had to be careful, and there were many corpses on top of me. When I managed to see daylight again, I decided to wait until evening before moving. One or two hours later, the NKVD men came back again with the same cars and machine-guns, in order to look at their handiwork. Then they drove off again.

It seemed like eternity to me until it grew dark. I was lying there amongst the corpses, scared out of my wits, but I knew for certain that I was cured of Communism for good. When it was quite dark, I pushed the last corpses away and stood up. All was quiet in the prison. I did not venture to go through the prison gate, so I climbed up the fence on the side where the canal runs past and then jumped into the water. Now you know what has happened and why I am covered with blood and dirt and am all wet!"

When I went to Sambir with a number of other persons next day, I wanted to see whether what Pylypchak had told me was really true. There were several people standing in front of the prison, but we could not go inside as there were Russian sentries on guard outside. It was only when the German troops entered Sambir that we saw that there were hundreds of corpses lying in the prison yard. In the cells the corpses had been mutilated so badly by grenades that they were unrecognizable.

In the month of August a mass grave was discovered amongst the bushes along the River Dnister, not far from Sambir. The bodies of 114 men, 2 women and a child were found about two feet under the ground. This murder had been carried out in May 1941. This could be ascertained from the dates on various slips of paper found in the pockets of many of the persons who had been murdered.

When the massacre in West Ukraine was carried out, I myself was a member of the organization of Communist youth. But all these incidents and all that I learnt in this respect completely cured me of Communism.

#### **STANYSLAVIV; Mr. Mykola K., now living in Austria, testifies:**

During the first German air raids on Stanyslaviv (in June 1941), a small but determined and well-armed group of Ukrainian partisans was formed in my native village Ch. (near Stanyslaviv). When the Soviet troops began to withdraw from the environs of Stanyslaviv, this group — upon higher orders — carried out a raid on the prison in order to liberate the Ukrainian political prisoners. There were still a few Bolshevik units here and there in the town but they put up



no resistance. When we broke open the door of the prison and entered the building we found that there were no longer any NKVD men there and practically no prisoners who had survived; it was only in one or two cells that the prisoners were still alive; all the rest had been murdered.

I can well recall searching for the body of a Ukrainian patriot who was a close friend of mine, amongst the corpses. The marks of dreadful tortures were clearly visible on most of the bodies; broken arms and legs, or their eyes had been put out, and in the case of some of the women, their breasts had been cut off. Many of the prisoners had been killed by large nails driven through their nostrils into their brain, others by having their throats cut. In the prison yard three bodies were exhumed of persons who had apparently been buried alive.

The bodies of small children, who had been tied to the corpses of their parents with barbed wire, were also found.

### **STRYY; Mr. Y. Stryysky testifies:**

When the Soviet troops withdrew from the town of Stryy on June 27, 1941, a group of Ukrainian civilians hurried to the prison, broke open the entrance-gate and found the bodies of 200 prisoners, who had either been shot or tortured to death in some other way, in the prison yard; some had been boiled alive in the big boilers used for making soup, other had been baked alive in special iron cabins with gas heating; and others, as was discovered when the cellars were searched, had been bricked in alive. Most of those who had been shot had had their ears, noses or fingers cut off, or their eyes put out. Of those who had been bricked in, only very few were found alive, and (with the exception of one woman) they all died before they could be taken to hospital.

Although Stryy is only a small town, where practically everybody knows each other, only 46 of the 200 bodies could be identified, — partly because the corpses were already in such a state of putrefaction that the Germans who went into the prison buildings had to wear gas-masks.

("Shlyakh Peremohy", Ukrainian weekly published in Munich, edition of — January 1960).

### **UMAN**

The witness R. W., now living in France, testifies: In July 1941, a German tank suddenly rolled into an open trench near to the prison in Uman. It was then discovered that there were numerous corpses in the trench. They had all been killed by a shot in the back of the neck. There was a tunnel leading from the cellars of the prison to



the water-pipes, and corpses had been piled up in this tunnel and strewn with lime and salt. They appeared to be the bodies of persons who had been killed fairly recently, but when the corpses were touched they fell apart. Some women from the village of Polyanetske recognized the bodies of their husbands who had been arrested in 1938. Among the corpses were the bodies of persons from Podolia, Vapniarka and environs. There were 4,500 corpses.

**A list of the Ukrainians from the district of Chortkiv who were murdered by the NKVD in the prison of the town of Uman after the outbreak of the German-Soviet war<sup>1)</sup>**

- 1) Engineer Petro Turula, born in Terebovlya in 1907. 2) Mykola Kvasnytsia, graduate of the Theological College in Lviv, born in Dzhuryn, district of Chortkiv, in 1913. 3) Mykola Sysak, high school student, born in Dzhuryn. 4) Fed'kiv Zynoviy (Kryvenke). 5) Berezhansky Omelyan (Kryvenke). 6) Brukhal' Stefaniya (Hadyunkivtsi). 7) Bilynsky Victor (Tovstenke). 8) Sorokivsky Roman (Tovstenke). 9) Velychenko Mykola. 10) Masliy Ivan. 11) Honchar Mykhaylo. 12) Ocheretny Antin. 13) Soltys Volodymyr (Ulaskivtsi). 14) Glembitsky M. 15) Bala Osyp (Kotsyubyntsi). 16) Savytsky. 17) Honchar Mykola, born in 1921. 18) Uhryn Antin. 19) Masliv Mykhaylo. 20) Karatnyk Stepan. 21) Koloda Ivan. 22) Mykhaylyuk (Hadyunkivtsi). 23) Masliv Antin. 24) Kovalsky Yaroslav (Chornokintsi Velyki). 25) Koval'... Mykolayevych (Probizhna). 26) Heyda Dmytro. 27) Chylynsky Stepan. 28) Shevchuk M. A. 29) Osadtsa Y. A. 30) Kutsorsky M. P. 31) Dyak E. A. 32) Bodnar I. D. 33) Baran V. M., born in 1921. 34) Lytvyniuk D. P. 35) Hlukh I. H. 36) Ivantsiv D. Yu. 37) Yaremko Y. S. 38) Sovetsky. 39) Khaba. 40) Hrabets. 41) Danylyshyn. 42) Yanytsky. 43) Fedortsiv. 44) Havrylyshyn. 45) Hutsal E. S. 46) Holovinsky D. or O. I. 47) Oliynyk P. S. 48) Holodivsky I. Ya. 49) Mel'nyk M. S. 50) Proval'ny I. P. 51) Tretyak V. Ya. 52) Holubovych V. K. 53) Lyubinetsky I. 54) Malytsky L. Ya. 55) Medvid' I. N. 56) Protiskiv L. or R. S. 57) Hrebeniuk E. S. 58) Skoropada P. 59) Kazanivsky Bohdan. 60) Volokhatyuk (L) A. 61) Halyas. 62) Kovyak H. 63) Manko P. A. 64) Tymbalyuk M. 65) Zahorodnyy. 66) Tsaruk P. 67) Hrehorashchuk P. M. 68) Sahan (Sohan) A. 69) Maruk. 70) Yurkevych Evhen (passport from Horodyshche). 71) Vinyavka Pavlo Illich. 72) Dyts (or Hets) Il'ko (Zolotyy Potik). 73) Zaporozhets A. P. (Vasyly'kiv). 74) Tsaruk (Chortkiv). 75) Fedorovych (Polish document). 76) Telepko Ivan Dan. (Chortkiv). 77) Mykhaylyuk. 78) Surgot. 79) Atamanyuk. 80) Dzolk. 81) Kozlovsky. 82) Korotnyk. 83) Kozak.

<sup>1)</sup> The victims were sentenced to terms of imprisonment ranging from 5 to 10 years, during a political trial on May 17, 1941.



## VINNYTSIA

The witness T. P. testifies as follows: In the spring of 1941 I was moved from the prison in Lviv to Vinnytsia. When the Bolsheviks began to withdraw from Vinnytsia after the outbreak of the war, the NKVD started murdering prisoners in the prison yard and in the cells. On hearing the screams of those who were being murdered, the prisoners in the cells began rioting; they broke open the doors of the cells and hurled themselves at the murderers. There were only comparatively few NKVD men and they fled before the thousands of prisoners. We thought we were already free, but a large unit of NKVD men suddenly appeared at the main entrance to the prison and began firing at us. We fled back to the cells again. There was no way of escape and no mercy. The NKVD fired into the cells and hurled hand-grenades. I lay on the floor in one of the cells. The bodies of those who had been shot were on top of me and I was unable to move. I heard shots, groans and the explosions of hand-grenades. Many of the prisoners went mad. Blood flowed in streams on the floor and reached my mouth. I became unconscious.

Later, people told me that I had been carried away with the dead and that they had only realized that I was still alive when they washed my face.

## ZHOVKVA

(renamed Nesterov by the Soviets)

The witness T. P. (now in England) reported that he had his information from Stepan Makar, a member of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN), who succeeded in escaping from the town prison. (Later, S. Makar was arrested by the Nazi Gestapo and died in the concentration camp in Buchenwald).

After the retreat of the Soviets, hundreds of corpses were exhumed in the prison yard; the bodies bore the marks of dreadful tortures, — broken arms and legs, and some of the victims had been scalped. 36 of the bodies could be identified. S. Makar personally recognized the bodies of a girl-student, Salivna, of the teacher Mykola Yevych, of the farmers Onyshko and Kyryk, and of two other persons.

## ZOLOCHIV

The witness **I. Rubizhny\*)** reports that an air raid was carried out on Zolochiv during the night from July 4th to July 5th, 1941, and that the Germans then entered the town on July 6th. That some day hundreds of corpses were exhumed in the prison yard and, to judge

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\*) The name and exact address of this witness, now residing in England, is known to the Editor of the Ukrainian weekly "Shlyakh Peremohy" (published in Munich). The witness is prepared to testify before an international court commission, if necessary.



from the advanced stage of decomposition, they must have lain buried there for two or three weeks. Many of them had had their arms and legs broken or twisted, their finger-nails and toe-nails torn out, and their genitals injured (as for instance in the case of the women).

They had all of them been killed by a shot in the neck. In addition, a number of corpses were found of persons who had been murdered more recently; they had been bricked in in their cells and had suffocated. The total number of persons murdered amounted to 752, of whom only 21, however, could be identified.

### **BOLSHEVIST MASS MURDER IN JUNE 1941**

*From the Report of the Kersten Committee, U.S. Congress, of  
December 31, 1954, — House Report No. 2684*

On June 21, 1941, the German-Soviet war broke out, and as the German troops crossed the frontier, the Soviets were forced to retreat hurriedly. **But in every city in Western Ukraine in the first days of the war, the NKVD and its agents shot all political prisoners except a mere handful, who were miraculously saved.**

One of these prisoners, Valentyna Nahirnyak, who had been connected with the theatre in Rivne, has given a graphic account of her escape. She had been put in a cell with seven other women, one an informer of the NKVD, set there to spy on the others. A band of the murderers came into the cell and shot at the prisoners until they fell. All but three were dead. A little later a man entered the cell and bayoneted all three of them. But although Nahirnyak had sustained six bullet wounds and two bayonet cuts, she survived.

The same process continued as the German armies advanced into Western Ukraine, but even in Vinnytsia some 700 bodies were found near the railroad station. In Kharkiv, one of the main prisons was closed and set on fire, while the NKVD remained on guard to prevent any assistance until the interior was destroyed and the inmates were all dead.

Following the orders of Stalin to leave only scorched earth, the Communists destroyed all supplies of food which they could reach, so as to leave nothing for the population which had been left behind. They mined as many buildings as they could and allowed fire to finish off their work. It is small wonder that in the early days after this reign of terror, many of the Ukrainians welcomed the invading German forces. They hoped for the restoration of a free Ukraine. Accordingly, on the day of the German entrance into Lviv, the political leaders still alive formed a provisional government under Jaroslaw Stetzko. This was later broadened by a Committee of Seniors under Dr. Kost Levytsky, who had been the Prime Minister of the Republic of Western Ukraine in 1918. This movement spread eastward with the German advance during the summer of 1941.

It did not, however, fit in with the plans of Hitler; and so, in August, most of these political leaders were arrested and deported to Germany.



V. Petryshyn

## MOSCOW'S FLAGRANT LIE

### A Clumsy Attempt of the Kremlin to Shift the Blame for Its Crimes on the Ukrainian Nationalists

#### I

For the past 20 years it has been an established fact, and, indeed, one that has been verified historically, that, with the retreat of the Soviet Russian occupation forces from the West Ukrainian territories in June and July, 1941, the Russian NKVD murdered thousands of prisoners and other civilians there before these territories were occupied anew by the German forces. At the last moment, before the Soviet Russians retreated, the NKVD agents carried out additional arrests among the civilian population. The persons arrested were taken eastwards and most of them were murdered on the way.

I myself saw victims of these murders with my own eyes. I was living not far from the prison in Lontsky Street and the NKVD building, and, at 6 o'clock in the morning on June 30, 1941, on learning that the Bolsheviks were no longer in the West Ukrainian capital of Lviv (Lemberg) and that German military units were patrolling the streets of the town, I ventured forth out of my hiding-place. Upon ascertaining that there were no longer any guards in front of the prison in Lontsky Street, I ventured inside the building. I immediately noticed a foul stench, and then I saw piles of corpses that were already in an advanced stage of decomposition. It was such a dreadful sight that I shall never forget it as long as I live. That same day, I also learned that the NKVD units had committed similar bestial atrocities in the other prisons in the town. Passers-by whom I encountered on the street told me that there was already Ukrainian infantry in the courtyard of St. George's Cathedral. I therefore proceeded from the prison to the Cathedral, where I found the Ukrainian soldiers reverently listening to divine service. After the service I talked to some of these young men, who told me that they had been the first to enter the town in the early hours of the morning and that they belonged to the so-called "Nightingale" battalion, which had been formed at the instigation of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists.



I did not see these young Ukrainian infantry soldiers again in Lviv, but later heard that they had only been in the town a short time and had then moved eastwards with the German army. I should like to stress that they were mere boys who were hardly of an age for military service, still less capable of committing the mass murders imputed to them by the Soviet Russians.

I was therefore amazed to read in the Communist paper "Radyanska Ukrayina" of September 5, 1959, that these young men of the "Nightingale" battalion were allegedly the gangsters who, during the night from June 29th to 30th, 1941, had murdered hundreds of Communists in Lviv on the strength of lists which had been drawn up beforehand. Nearly 20 years later, the real criminals are trying to falsify history in order to thrust the blame for their obvious crime onto the Ukrainian soldiers of the "Nightingale" battalion. But a lie of this kind is doomed to exposure, for it is an established fact that during the week commencing June 22, 1941, all the civilian occupation staffs left the town in endless queues and that the only troops that passed through Lviv on June 29, 1941, were Soviet Russian troops. Even local supporters of the Communists managed to escape eastwards in time.

In any case, how could the "Nightingale" battalion within a couple of hours during a short June night have managed to arrest hundreds of Communists, scattered throughout the large town of Lviv, and shoot them! In order to get hold of these Communists, at least a thousand men who knew the town extremely well, as well as a considerable number of trucks would have been needed. Who is likely to believe that Communists remained in Lviv, when they had about a week's time to get out of the town! So who murdered the local Ukrainian political prisoners in the Lviv prisons? Surely not the men of the "Nightingale" battalion!

As already stressed above, the said lie is entirely unfounded, for even the Soviet Russian "Reports by the State Special Commission to investigate the crimes committed by the Germans in the region of Lviv," which were drawn up in 1944, did not venture to impute the murders in the Lviv prisons to the "Nightingale" battalion.

The shaky foundation on which this obvious lie on the part of the Soviet Russian press is based can be seen from the very fact that at a conference held in Moscow on April 5, 1959, the NKVD murders in the Lviv prisons were no longer imputed to the "Nightingale" battalion, a point which we shall refer to again, later on. Immediately after the press conference in Moscow, the inhabitants of Lviv naturally, at the orders of Moscow — condemned the "atrocities committed by the bourgeois nationalists" during the time from June 30th to July 6th, 1941, in letters to the Lviv papers. There can be no doubt about the fact that these letters, in compliance with the press conference, were fabricated in the Lviv editorial departments and no longer mentioned the murders in the Lviv prisons.



## II

At the same time as the German troops entered Lviv on June 30, 1941, special police detachments, which had the same powers as NKVD had previously had, also arrived there.

After July 3, 1941, I learnt that the German police had arrested various well-known Polish scholars and professors, etc. One of them was a friend of mine, with whom I had worked in Lviv during the Soviet Russian occupation.

Otherwise, all was fairly quiet in Lviv from June 30, 1941, onwards. Some of the houses that had been hit by bombs were still smouldering; there was no electricity, the trams were not running, and all the shops were closed. For this reason and as I had nothing else to do, I spent most of the day in the centre of the town, where our Ukrainian institutions were located. Here I met my friends from Lviv and the Ukrainian nationalists who had come from Poland, which was under German governor-generalship. I should like to point out that neither I nor my friends, who came from various parts of the town, saw any corpses in the streets or hanging from balconies of buildings, during the early days of the German occupation. We were, however, all aware of the fact that over 30 highly esteemed Poles, including persons who had not taken any part in politics at all (as for instance my colleague, who had been in the same profession as myself), had been arrested. But none of us, including the Ukrainian nationalists who had come to Lviv from Poland, knew anything at all about the further fate of the persons who had been arrested. We were firmly convinced that they had already been taken or would be taken to concentration camps.

On the strength of the above-mentioned "Reports by the State Special Commission," the Soviet Russian prosecutor Smirnov presented an indictment before the International Military Tribunal in Nuremberg and in this connection made the following statement: "Professor Groer of the Faculty of Medicine of Lemberg University, who by a stroke of luck escaped death, testified before Commission (in the above-mentioned it is meant — the Soviet Commission. Translator's note.) as follows: 'When I was arrested at midnight on July 3, 1941, I was put on a truck, together with Professor Grek, Professor Boj-Zelenski, and others. We were taken to a room in the Abrahamowicz Theological College. As we were taken along the corridors, the Gestapo men jeered at us... over the head... (At this point in the official English statement, dots have been inserted, whereas in the official German statement the following words are to be found: "they hit us with their carbines, dragged us by the hair and beat us over the head." See the official German text, Vol. VII, p. 493.) Later, in the same building, I saw some Germans taking five professors along the corridor. Four of the professors were carrying the corpse, which was covered with blood, of the son of the well-known surgeon, Dr. Ruf, who was murdered by the Germans during



interrogations. Young Dr. Ruf was also a specialist. Closely guarded, the group of professors was taken to Cadets Hill. About fifteen to twenty minutes later, I heard the sound of shots from the direction in which the professors had been taken'." (See Vol. VII of the Records, p. 493.)... On the strength of the above testimony, Smirnov affirmed that the German police already had a list of the well-known Polish scholars who were to be murdered after the capture of Lviv, before the Germans entered the town. And this seems quite possible, for subordinate organs of the German police would not have been able to carry out a mass murder of scholars, who for the most part had not played any political role at all, without the permission of the head authorities.

From this document, that is to say from the testimony given by Prof. Groer, it is perfectly obvious that his colleagues were arrested and murdered by Gestapo men, for Prof. Groer, who had escaped death, frequently saw these Gestapo men in uniform later on. Having studied abroad, he could also tell by the way they spoke German that they were Germans and not young men of the "Nightingale" battalion, since the latter would most surely have only spoken broken German and with a foreign accent.

At that time there was no Oberländer affair. Hence, prosecutor of the USSR, in keeping with the truth and on the strength of the testimony of the Crown witness, Prof. Groer, accused the German police of having murdered the elite of the Polish intelligentsia in Lviv on July 3, 1941.

But what happened twenty years later, regardless of the records in three languages of the Nuremberg Tribunal, regardless of the "Reports by the State Special Commission" on the crimes committed by the Germans in the region of Lviv, and regardless of the fact that there are still thousands of eyewitnesses at home and in exile abroad who know perfectly well that the so-called "Nightingale" battalion was in no way whatever responsible for the murders in Lviv?

The Soviet Russian government suddenly decided to hold a "re-trial" of the case against the German war criminals of World War II and to exonerate the German Gestapo and thrust the blame for the events which took place in Lviv from June 30th to July 6th, 1941, and, above all, for the murder of the elite of the Polish intelligentsia in Lviv on July 3, 1941, on to the "Nightingale" battalion.

It is interesting to note and, indeed, significant that the Soviet Russians in their "re-trial" of the crimes committed by the German occupants in Lviv refused to refer to the records of the trial before the International Military Tribunal and, instead, ordered their "State Special Commission" to fabricate a new report on the events in Lviv, which report was then published at the press conference. It is likewise significant that the witnesses at this press conference were persons who had never been mentioned previously, and that no attempt was made to cite the most reliable witness in this case, namely Prof. Groer, who is still living in Warsaw. Prof. Dr. Piotrowski, who likewise lives in Warsaw and, incidentally, was the Polish delegate in the Inter-



national Military Tribunal, published a letter dated November 9, 1959, in the daily paper "Życie Warszawy" of November 13, in which he wrote as follows about Prof. Groer: "Prof. Groer has by no means forgotten the events which occurred after Lviv was occupied by German troops. I talked to him a few days ago. He can even recall typical details..." But the organizers of the Moscow press conference passed over this witness in silence, for he by no means fits in with their new theory regarding the murder of the Polish intelligentsia.

The statements made by the "eyewitnesses" at the press conference are of such a nature that no judge in the world and, in fact, no sane-minded and, at least, partly objective-minded person would believe them. For there is not a single word in these testimonies which states that the witnesses themselves saw men of the "Nightingale" battalion either arrest or shoot one of the said Polish scholars. And not one of the murdered persons is mentioned by name in these testimonies, even though their corpses allegedly lay in the streets of Lviv.

In order to prove that someone committed a murder, one needs such a witness as Prof. Groer. This witness should be questioned in a public trial in the presence of both parties and in the presence of the prosecution and the defence, that is to say in accordance with all the usual trial rules and regulations in the free world and before entirely independent, impartial and experienced judges. And in this connection we should like to point out that if there had been any mention of the "Nightingale" battalion and its participation in the murder of the Polish intelligentsia on July 3, 1941, and in other and similar crimes, in the "Report" of the Soviet Russian State Special Commission of 1944, then the Soviet Russian prosecutor would most certainly have referred to this fact and it would have appeared in the records.

Hence, it is perfectly evident that the statements read out at the Moscow press conference about the "crimes" of the "Nightingale" battalion and, in particular, about the murder of the Polish intelligentsia are a flagrant lie, purposely invented for the Oberländer affair.

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*Searching for missing relatives*



*Here are the sons and husbands  
of Ukrainian wives*





*Bodies of exhumed Ukrainians murdered  
by the Russian NKVD*



*Foreign medical experts examining bodies  
showing earth in mouths and stomachs*



## **THE ATTEMPT OF SOVIET AMBASSADOR TO WEST GERMANY, ZORIN, TO FRUSTRATE THE EXPOSURE OF KHRUSHCHOV'S CRIMES**

The majority of the above-mentioned testimonies were given before the "International Investigatory Commission Lemberg 1941." Even the initiative taken in setting up a commission for the purpose of investigating the mass-murders in Lviv aroused fierce protests on the part of the Bolsheviks. Below we publish an authentic report by Kurt Ziesel, taken from his book "Der rote Rufmord," Eine Dokumentation zum Kalten Krieg ("Red Murderous Libel," Documents on the Cold War), published by Fritz Schlichtenmayer, Tübingen, 1961\*):

The extent to which the Communists had a hand in the matter can be seen from the significant fact that, when Oberländer for the first time affirmed that he would request the setting up of an investigatory committee in Germany on the murders in Lemberg (Lviv), the Soviet embassy sent a letter to the German Federal Foreign Office to the effect that the Soviet Union would regard it as an unfriendly action on the part of the German Federal Government if the Lemberg mass-murders and Soviet participation in the same were investigated on German territory. It was only due to this threatening attitude on the part of the Soviet Union that Oberländer decided to put his suggestion to leading resistance organizations abroad. After the Commission had taken up its activity, however, an equally threatening campaign was launched against all its members. They were constantly threatened with murder and received telephone calls in the middle of the night, and a session of the Commission in The Hague was accompanied by Communist demonstrations in the streets."

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\*) Kurt Ziesel, "Der rote Rufmord," p. 89.



Since "co-existentialist" and "anti-Stalinist" Nikita S. Khrushchov himself is personally responsible for these mass-murders, it is not surprising that the work of the Commission evoked such a counter-action. It is of interest in this connection to quote the statement made by the Bonn Public Prosecutor in the case of the Lemberg murders, taken from the above-mentioned book by Kurt Ziesel:

"After the outbreak of the German-Russian war on June 22, 1941, a new wave of arrests began which was, above all, directed against persons who were suspected of belonging to the national Ukrainian movement... When the position of the Soviet administrative authorities in Lemberg became critical as a result of the rapid advance of the German troops, the chief of the NKVD, according to a witness who as a Russian subject was on an official mission in Lemberg at that time and had been given accomodation in the house of said NKVD chief, received orders by radio to liquidate the Ukrainian nationalists imprisoned in various prisons listed in these orders."

The Public Prosecutor in this his conclusive report avoids quoting verbatim the testimony of the witness, the former NKVD employee, whose name cannot be disclosed for the sake of his own security.

In his report the Public Prosecutor then gives a detailed account, based mainly on testimony given under oath by Jewish witnesses, of the indescribable massacre of freedom-loving Ukrainians and Poles by the NKVD hangmen prior to their withdrawal from Lviv.

In this connection Kurt Ziesel quotes the report, mentioned by the Public Prosecutor, by Borys Levytsky, which was published in the Polish journal "Kultura" and concluded with the following words:

"The mass-executions in the Lviv prisons during these tragic June days was an established and known fact in the town and neighbouring districts. The population was reduced to such a state of despair and alarm that it regarded Hitler's soldiers as saviours. It is no lie, nor is it propaganda to affirm that Hitler's armies which marched into Lviv were welcomed by the terrorized population — both by the Ukrainians and Poles — with a feeling of relief."\*\*)

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\*\* ) Ibid. ,p. 97.



Jaroslav Stetzko

## I ACCUSE KHRUSHCHOV OF MASS-MURDER OF THE UKRAINIAN PEOPLE

*"Three-quarters of mankind may perish so that  
the rest may experience Communism!"*

V. I. Lenin

"I am a Russian and proud of my nation!" — said Khrushchov during his visit to the Leipzig Fair in 1959 and thus refuted the assertions made in the free world, to the effect that he was a Ukrainian.

The Ukrainians accuse Khrushchov as one of the biggest and most ruthless mass-murderers of their people in their tragic history. For many years Khrushchov held the post of Stalin's governor in Ukraine and on the strength of his cruelty and ruthlessness proved himself to be the most loyal henchman of his master. From the beginning of the German-Russian war onwards, there was a man in the other camp who might have been his twin-brother, — Hitler's governor in Ukraine, Erich Koch, an equally ruthless tyrant and servile today. Two mass-murderers in Ukraine, two representatives of the two most terrible totalitarian systems, which clashed in 1941.

**The Ukrainian attempt to use the German campaign in the East to advantage for the restoration of an independent Ukrainian state.**

For centuries Russia was the deadly enemy of Ukraine. After the unfortunate battle of Poltava in 1709, in which the head of the Ukrainian state, Hetman Ivan Mazeppa, together with his ally King Charles XII of Sweden, was defeated by the huge armies of the Russian Tsar Peter I, Russia restricted the rights of the Ukrainian people to an ever-increasing extent until eventually even Ukrainian was prohibited as a written language. Again and again, the Ukrainians revolted until in 1917/18 they succeeded in regaining their independence for a short time. As a people oriented to the West with a thousand-year old national culture, history and state tradition, the



Ukrainians constantly hoped for the support of the Occident in their fight against the Russian-Eurasian "urge towards the West," all the more so since they were convinced that with the restoration of the Ukrainian state, with its population of over 50 million, Russia's pressure on Western Europe would be broken for good. As Germany at that time was the only anti-Russian power, the Ukrainians took this objective fact into account in their liberation plans. Neither ideological, party or internal political systems of the allies that might eventually be won over played a part in this respect.

After the Ukrainians realized that the Western allies had no intention of relying on the fight for freedom of **all** the peoples subjugated by totalitarianism (both Nazi and Soviet Russian), in the future campaign against Hitler, they sought to use the German-Soviet war to advantage for their own interests, that is to say, for their national state independence. On June 23, 1941, the leaders of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) handed the German government a memorandum, which not only clearly formulated the principles for a possible co-operation, but also contained certain warning if the German war aims in the East should not be in keeping with the Ukrainian ideal of freedom.

This memorandum contained the following statement:

"Even if the Germans on entering Ukraine are naturally welcomed there as liberators, this attitude may soon change if Germany does not enter Ukraine with the aim of restoring the Ukrainian state and with the appropriate watchwords in mind. A new order in Europe is unthinkable without an independent national Ukrainian state. For centuries and not only during the past twenty years, the Ukrainians have revealed their infinite love of freedom. It is this urge to independence, this fighting spirit and an attitude of constant defence against foreign influence that have created the typical Ukrainian as he is today, namely an individual who adopts an attitude of distrust and opposition to all foreigners..."

It was further stressed in the OUN memorandum that a military occupation in East Europe would eventually prove untenable, and the Hitler government was warned against possibly pursuing its occupation policy based on violence and against disregarding the national rights of the East European peoples. The memorandum then added:

"The Ukrainian military power will have to defend the East European continental front when Ukraine, released from its two-front war, will be able to use its entire military potential against Russia. An independent Ukrainian military power, which would be in keeping with the mental attitude of the Ukrainians, will put a stop to Russian pressure on Europe."

It was clearly emphasized in the memorandum that Ukraine would not conduct a war against the Western allies but solely against Soviet Russia.



The Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists systematically organized its cadres for the independent revolutionary fight for freedom (training in Ukraine and also abroad), in order to use these cadres independently of the Eastern policy of the German Reich. The main factor of the liberation campaign of the OUN was thus not reliance on foreign support but on one's own forces, on a Ukrainian insurgent army, and on the national revolution of all the peoples subjugated by Russia. And it was this same idea which prompted the intention of not letting soldiers of Ukrainian nationality in the Red Army fall into the hands of the German troops but of making them members of a Ukrainian insurgent army before they were taken prisoners-of-war.

### **The Ukrainian Legion**

Quite apart from all this, however, the decision was also reached to form a Ukrainian legion within the German army, namely for the following reasons: on the one hand, relations with pro-Ukrainian German Supreme Command circles would in this way be strengthened and activated politically, and, on the other hand, the legion would under favourable circumstances fulfil the task of a collecting point for prisoners-of-war and deserters of Ukrainian nationality. Should it transpire that the German policy in the East did not intend to effect a disintegration of the Russian imperium into independent national states and thus opposed the vital interests of the Ukrainian people, then the Ukrainian legion might play an extremely important part in turning the active Ukrainian national revolutionary groups into a regular army (a measure which was to a certain extent carried out later in 1943).

Neither Churchill nor Eden became Quislings when they made a military alliance with Soviet Russia in order to defend their own country against Hitler's advance; why then should the Ukrainian partner have acted differently when there was still a certain prospect of helping Ukraine to regain its national state independence with Germany's support? Surely the Ukrainians were not in any way to blame for the fact that Hitler's policy with regard to the East later turned out to be completely mad!

Prof. Theodor Oberländer, Prof. Hans Koch and Prof. Georg Gerullis, who at that time belonged to the German Supreme Command as reserve officers, conducted the negotiations and completely agreed with the Ukrainian political aims. In an arrangement agreed upon, the following points were stipulated.

- 1) The Ukrainian legion is a unit which is formed for the fight for the Ukrainian state.
- 2) The legion swears allegiance to the Ukrainian state but not to Germany and not to Hitler as the latter's representative; accordingly, the political training of the soldiers in absolute loyalty to the Ukrainian political aims will be guaranteed.



3) The legion will be commanded by Ukrainian officers; the German officers will only be in charge of the general supervision. Every day military training will begin with the hoisting of the Ukrainian flag and will end with the singing of the Ukrainian patriotic prayer. German political or ideological subjects of instruction will not be included at all in the curriculum of training.

A few days after outbreak of the war the Ukrainian legion was used in active service, and on June 30th it entered the capital of Western Ukraine, Lemberg (Ukrainian name Lviv). Joyously and hopefully, the people of the town welcomed the Ukrainian soldiers of the "Nightingale" legion and the German troops. The fact that the Ukrainian legion had been incorporated in the German army was regarded by the population as a sign of Germany's friendship in the Ukrainian fight for freedom.

When Hitler's government revealed its true intentions as regards Ukraine by its policy, Captain Roman Shukhevysh, the Ukrainian commander of the "Nightingale" legion, which at that time was stationed in Vinnytsia, decided to send a memorandum to the German Supreme Command, in which he stressed that under the given circumstances the legion did not feel that it could continue to fight on the German side.

On August 28, 1941, the German Supreme Command replied that the "Nightingale" Legion was to be withdrawn from the fighting front. It was then transferred to Neuhammer (in Germany). The same thing happened to the detachment "Roland," which was operating in South Ukraine. On September 15, 1941, the Legion ("Nightingale" and "Roland" together) addressed a memorandum to the German Supreme Command in Berlin. It was signed by every soldier and contained the following demands:

1) Independence for the Ukrainian state, which was to be subsequently recognized by Germany.

2) All Ukrainian political prisoners, headed by Stepan Bandera, and all the members of the government in Lviv, headed by Jaroslav Stetzko, were to be released from custody.

3) The legion was only to be used for active service on the Eastern front and on Ukrainian territory.

4) The legion was to be led exclusively by Ukrainian officers; the duties and rights of the Ukrainian officers were to be equal to those of the German officers.

5) The relatives of soldiers who have been arrested were to be released from custody and were to have the same rights as the Germans.

6) The soldiers of the legion must not be expected to swear allegiance to Germany.

7) The legion would be prepared under these circumstances and preconditions to sign a contract of service for one year, which contract would be signed by each soldier in his own name.



By way of answer the Legion was moved to Frankfurt on the Oder. On November 1st a reply to the memorandum was received from the German Supreme Command. It declared that it was not competent to deal with political demands. As regards the other points in the memorandum it was stated that: "The legion is only to be used for active service on the Eastern front; an additional oath of allegiance to Germany need not be sworn;" other demands were also agreed to.

Although the political points of the memorandum were not dealt with, the members of the legion nevertheless decided to sign the contract of service, since one already foresaw the necessity of an armed fight against Hitlerist Germany and at the same time against Russia, and a thorough training of a military character in practical service in the German army to be of decisive importance in the future fight for freedom.

After a year of fighting against Red partisans in Byelorussia, in the course of which the legion won the friendship of the Byelorussian population and full recognition on the part of the German army command, all the legionaries on October 31, 1942, rejected the German suggestion to renew the contract of service; the legion was disbanded, the officers of the legion were arrested by the Gestapo and all the non-commissioned officers and soldiers were placed under police surveillance. Captain Shukhevych, who had already been arrested prior to this date, escaped during transport and a few months later became the commander-in-chief of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) under the name of **Taras Chuprynka**.

Practically all the legionaries went over to the UPA, where they immediately assumed important posts. In the course of time the UPA developed into a big army, 200,000 strong (a fact which is even corroborated by German sources at that time).

### **The Ukrainian two-front war against Soviet Russia and Hitlerist Germany developed on a large scale**

"In the fight against the UPA under the command of General Taras Chuprynka, the Chief of the Nazi Sturm Abteilung (S.A.), Victor Lutze, was killed in May 1943, near Kovel; on March 20, 1944, the Soviet Marshal Vatutin was killed in North Volhynia; on May 3, 1946, Colonel General Moskalenko of the NKVD was killed in the neighbourhood of Stanyslaviv; on March 28, 1947, the Polish Vice-Minister of Defence, General Walter Swierczewski, was killed; on May 12, 1947, the USSR, Poland and Czecho-Slovakia signed a tripartite agreement to combat the UPA — so great and dangerous did the power of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army seem to Soviet Russia."

*(From the report of the US Congress Committee, of December 31, 1954. — Rep. No. 2684, part 7, Congressman Kersten's Report, p. 31).*



**The discoveries made by the "Nightingale" detachment in Lviv  
on June 30, 1941.**

Elsewhere in this book we publish accurate reports on the mass murders committed in Lviv against Ukrainian political prisoners by the NKVD **prior to the entry of the German troops** there. Numerous witnesses who have survived and who were in Lviv prisons at that time, as well as other trustworthy persons report here at length on these atrocities committed by the Bolshevik criminals. We also include the testimony of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Metropolitan, Archbishop Count Andreas Sheptytsky, who mentions as many as 6,000 murdered persons in one prison alone and definitely accuses the Russians of having committed these atrocities. The great Patriarch of the Ukrainian Church and the greatest moral authority for all the 45 million Ukrainians accuses the Soviet Russian NKVD units of the mass murders in Lviv and other towns in Ukraine. There is no one in the free world who would doubt the accusations made by the aged Patriarch of the Ukrainian people, who may soon be canonized by the Apostolic See, or who would question the truth of his words. For he is the man who, during the Soviet Russian occupation of Ukraine, had the courage to ask the Pope to give him his apostolic blessing and send him to a martyr's death for the faith and unity of the Church. "The Church has nothing to lose by this; it can only gain by such a step; as the spiritual father of the poor people who are obliged to endure so much suffering, have I not the right to die for their sake?" — And he also had the courage to intercede with Hitler himself for the persecuted Jews, a fact on which the Jewish Rabbi Dr. Herzog in Palestine commented as follows: "When the Germans carried out a pogrom against the Jews in Rohatyn, the Metropolitan Sheptytsky addressed a petition to Himmler, in which he emphatically objected to the murder of innocent and defenceless persons. This action on his part caused a considerable sensation for it was definitely proof of his great courage. There was no one in Europe at that time who ventured to openly support the Jews against the ruthless Gestapo. **And the entire Ukrainian people took his action as an example and helped the persecuted Jews in every way possible, and, at risk to their own lives, frequently hid them in their own houses, a measure which was prohibited under penalty of death. It must also be pointed out in this connection that the Ukrainians themselves had to endure great suffering and hardship under the terrorism of the Gestapo.**"

When the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) defended the rights of the Ukrainians, Himmler requested the Metropolitan on the strength of his authority to inform the Ukrainian Insurgent Army that their activity was a violation of the fifth Commandment. To which the Metropolitan replied: "The National Socialists do not believe in God and hence have no right to refer to God's Commandments!" When Himmler thereupon answered that for every German or every person



of German descent who was shot, 20 Ukrainians were to be shot, the Metropolitan addressed a sharp and warning pastoral letter to the occupation army, in which, among other things, he stressed: "God will punish those who disregard His Divine laws!" If the Metropolitan showed such courage in censuring the crimes of the Gestapo, he would most certainly not conceal any of the mass murders which, so it is alleged, German units committed when they entered Lviv. **On the other hand, however, the Metropolitan, in keeping with the true facts, accuses the Soviet Russian NKVD units and holds them responsible for the mass murders in Lviv, — murders which the Russians, in a mendacious and defamatory manner, are trying to blame on to the unit "Nightingale" and on to Prof. Th. Oberländer.**

The Soviet Russians, incidentally, contradict themselves in their own accusations against the "Nightingale" unit and also in their accusations against Prof. Oberländer.

The "Krasnaya Zvezda" (the official organ of the Ministry of Defence in Moscow) of October 20, 1959, the "Radyanska Ukrayina" of October 21, 1959, and the "Komsomolskaya Pravda" of October 22 and 25, 1959, accuse the battalion "Nightingale" and Prof. Oberländer of murdering over 310,000 persons in the district of Lviv, and they insinuate that Bandera was in command of the "Nightingale" and was in Lviv together with Prof. Oberländer at the same time. Bandera is supposed to have known certain secret details about Oberländer's alleged crimes and for this reason was murdered at Oberländer's instructions. Actually, Bandera was not in Lviv at all at the time, but in Cracow, where he was under the police surveillance of the Gestapo. He was already arrested on July 5th and taken to Berlin. He was never a soldier, nor did he ever command the "Nightingale." The Ukrainian commander of the "Nightingale" was Roman Shukhevych, who found the body of his brother in a Lviv prison amongst the corpses of the persons murdered by the NKVD, a fact which became generally known.

The shameless manner in which the Soviet Russians lie can also be seen with regard to another point mentioned in the said organ of the Ministry of Defence, "Krasnaya Zvezda," which, among other things, accuses Bandera of having "joined the service of Nazi espionage as early as 1936 under the name of "the grey man" ("Siryy")." The actual truth is that at that time, namely from June 1934 onwards, Bandera was in the worst Polish prison, the "Święty Krzyż," to which he had been sentenced for life-imprisonment on account of his revolutionary activity.

Only fools believe the Kremlin liars!

The fact must also be mentioned that the "Nightingale" legion was organized by opposition circles of the German Supreme Command, including Admiral Canaris, who naturally did not set up this legion in conjunction with the German army for Himmler's purposes, but with the intention of supporting the Ukrainian independence aims in this way.



## The case of the Polish professors

The Soviet Russians are now also blaming the "Nightingale" detachment and Professor Theodor Oberländer for the murder of the Polish professors in Lviv, in spite of the fact that the Soviet Russians themselves recently accused not the German army but, quite definitely, the Gestapo of having committed these murders. The Russians trip up on their own lies and defamations.

We should like to quote from the previous accusations made by the Soviet Russians<sup>1</sup>):

"...the case of the professors who were shot in Lviv also caused a sensation in the Nuremberg trials. In the collection of documents on the Nuremberg trials, published in several volumes in the Soviet Union, we find a precise report on pages 243-245 of volume 3: "At the orders of the Reichs government, **the Gestapo authorities**, prior to the capture of Lviv, made a list of all the leading members of the intelligentsia who were to be liquidated..." (a list containing the names of 38 professors in Lviv is then given). "Immediately after the capture of the town of Lviv, mass arrests and executions were carried out. **The Gestapo arrested...**" etc. There is no mention of any army unit or of the "Nightingale." Thus, during the Nuremberg trials no one accused Prof. Oberländer or the "Nightingale" battalion of these crimes.

"...On February 15, 1946, during the afternoon session of the Nuremberg tribunal, the Soviet Prosecutor Smirnov read out a testimony by Prof. Groer of the Faculty of Medicine at Lviv University, who escaped death only by a stroke of luck, in which testimony Prof. Groer definitely states that **the Gestapo** arrested and ill-treated Polish professors on July 3, 1941, and in this connection mentions his own case and that of Prof. Bartel.

"Prof. Sosnicki told me in the winter of 1941/42" — so the author of the article published in the "Kultura" writes — that some of the families of the professors had received an official confirmation to the effect that their husbands or fathers had been shot on the strength of a 'special order by the security headquarters'."

In a pamphlet published by the Bolsheviki under the title "**Pid chuzhymy praporamy**" ("Under Foreign Flags"), the security service units are likewise held responsible for these murders and no mention whatever is made of the "Nightingale" in this connection.

Incidentally, Himmler organized special security police units and security service units which were designated as "action groups" and divided into "action commandos, special commandos and part commandos." They were intended to be used for the so-called pacification of the occupied East territories. In sections 2b, 4 and 5 of the directives for special regions in connection with regulation 21

<sup>1</sup>) Quoted from the Polish periodical "Kultura," Paris, No. 1/147-2/148, p. 176, 1960.



(the "Barbarossa Case"), the army was informed of Himmler's **independent** action as regards the security service (of March 13, 1941):

"2b) In the theatre of operations of the army the Reichs Leader of the S.S. in order to prepare the political administration has, at the orders of the Führer, been entrusted with special tasks, which arise out of the fight that must ultimately be fought between two opposite political systems. As far as these tasks are concerned, the Reichs Leader of the S.S. is acting independently and on his own responsibility."

"In the rear theatres of operations of the army the action groups and commandos were only subordinated to the field army in so far as service with the troops was concerned, but as regards commands and their scope they were under the RSHA (Reichssicherheits-hauptamt)."

(Declaration on oath by Lieutenant-General Heusinger, Chief of the Operation Section of the German Supreme Command, of February 1, 1945).

The entire police force depended exclusively on Himmler. The action groups which operated in West Ukraine were under the command of the higher-ranking S.S. and police leader, Korsemann. Otto Ohlendorf, commander of the Action Group D, declared on oath: "As Chief of the Security Service, Section 3, of the head department of the security police and of the security service (RSHA), I declare that the action groups and action commandos were led by the personnel of the Gestapo, of the Security Service and of the criminal investigation police."

It is thus obvious to everyone who is unbiassed that the liquidations were carried out not by army formations, but by security police and security service units; and in the case of the Polish professors in Lviv, too, there can be no question of the murders having been carried out by army units.

Furthermore, there appeared in the Polish daily published in London, "Dziennik Polski," of August 18, 1958, a letter by a Mrs. Wl. Chomsowa of London, who was in contact with the family of Prof. Bartel from the outbreak of the war until January 1944. She writes that Prof. Bartel was shot on July 22, 1941, by personal order of the Reichs Leader of the S.S., Himmler. At that time, the "Nightingale" and Prof. Oberländer had for the past sixteen days been hundreds of kilometres away from Lviv, in the east<sup>2</sup>).

At that time there was a special S.S. commando under Eberhard Schöngard and Heinz Heim, which had come to Lviv via Rudky, operating in Lviv. These two Gestapo officers are responsible for the physical liquidation of the Polish professors and for the political liquidation of the Ukrainian national government.

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<sup>2</sup>) See the article by V. Stakhiv, "A Monstrous Lie," in "Suchasna Ukrayina," of February 7, 1960, Munich.



It is likewise obvious beyond all doubt to anyone who is unbiassed that — as the Swedish, Swiss, Portuguese and American press reported in this connection — the mass murders of the political prisoners in the Lviv prisons were carried out by the NKVD at the personal orders of Khrushchov, the First Secretary of the Communist Party of Ukraine at that time and Stalin's governor there, before the Germans entered the town.

We hardly venture to put a rhetorical question: why should the Ukrainian nationalists of the "Nightingale" have committed mass murders against the other Ukrainian nationalists in the Lviv prisons; and why should Roman Shukhevych have murdered his own brother, whose decomposed body he found among the corpses of those who had been murdered in Lviv?!

Such shameless defamations and lies can only be invented by the criminal minds of the Kremlin murderers.

Why should the Ukrainians shoot the Polish professors and thus open an additional and third front at a time when they already had Soviet Russia and Hitler's Germany as their enemies?! It was, on the other hand, precisely in the interests of Ukraine to form a joint front with all the subjugated peoples against the oppressors, a fact which is explicitly stated in the political resolution of the OUN conferences and congresses.

In an article entitled "Oberländer from Berlin's Perspective," which is published in the Polish periodical "Kultura," No. 3, 1960, p. 138, a statement by the Polish professor Sokolnicki, who still holds lectures at the Technical College in Soviet-occupied Lviv, is quoted. In this statement he quite plainly and definitely holds the Gestapo responsible for the murder of Prof. Bartel and the other Polish professors, and blames neither the Ukrainian nationalists of the "Nightingale" battalion, nor any German army for these murders.

It is obvious to any objective-minded person from the gross contradictions in the Soviet sources that have been published at various times that the Soviet Russian accusations are based on lies.

### **The neutral press on the Russian mass murders in Lviv in 1941.**

The Ukrainian socialist periodical "Vilna Ukrayina" ("Free Ukraine"), No. 25/1960, Detroit, USA, definitely accuses the Soviet Russians of having committed the mass murders in Lviv in June 1941. It also quotes the Swiss paper "Die Tat" of July 6, 1941, which contained the following comments:

"When the Soviet Russians were no longer in a position to assert themselves in Lemberg (Lviv) the NKVD, prior to its flight, carried out a terrible massacre of innocent prisoners. According to the reports of neutral press correspondents, this massacre is one of the most



dreadful and ruthless massacres ever heard of in the history of the world. In the police prison 20 prisoners were crowded together in each of the smallest cells; they were then shot through the spy-holes. 2.000 to 2.500 persons were murdered in this way."

On July 7, 1941, the "Stockholms Tidningen" wrote as follows:

"Prior to their retreat the Russians, giving vent to their hatred a last time, carried out mass murders with inhuman brutality in many of the prisons. Shortly before they retreated, they set fire to Brygidky prison. In the cellars the Communists stacked up the corpses of the murdered like blocks of wood. On each layer of corpses they strewed sand so thickly that one could walk on it. On this layer of sand they then spread another layer of corpses. I found no one alive amongst the prisoners" — so the correspondent added.

In the book "Genocide in the U.S.S.R.," published by the American Institute for the Study of the U.S.S.R. in Munich (in July 1958), the following facts are stated regarding the NKVD crimes in West Ukraine: "In 1941, when the German army began its Eastern campaign, the Bolsheviks murdered prisoners on the spot or else during transportation. In Lviv, Stanyslaviv, Chortkiv, Berezhany, Stryi, Ternopil, Berestya, Rivne, Kremyanets and Lutsk, mass executions of thousands of prisoners were carried out at that time..."

**Wherein lies the primary motive of the Kremlin's defamatory campaign against the Ukrainian "Nightingale" unit incorporated in the German army?**

The primary motive of Moscow's defamatory campaign against the "Nightingale" unit lies in the aim to defame the symbol of the armed Ukrainian fight for freedom and the heroic commander-in-chief of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA), General Taras Chuprynka.

As was already mentioned above, Roman Shukhevych, later known as General Chuprynka, was the Ukrainian commander of the "Nightingale." After the Reichs government had refused to recognize Ukraine's independence, Shukhevych and his unit broke with the Germans, and practically all the members of the "Nightingale" went over to the UPA; the latter was now strengthened with these new cadres, and soon afterwards, Roman Shukhevych under the name of Taras Chuprynka assumed command of the UPA.

The attempt to make out the "Nightingale" soldiers as mass-murderers was intended as a deadly blow to the UPA, which has become the immortal standard-bearer of the Ukrainian fight for freedom, and to the memory of the former Ukrainian commander of the "Nightingale," General Chuprynka.

To this end a systematic defamation campaign has been carried on in the Soviet press for over a year. The said press accuses the



members of the OUN of having committed unthinkable crimes against the innocent population during the time of the German occupation of Ukraine. In this way the Ukrainian freedom fighters are to be held to blame for the Bolshevik mass murders!

A further aim of this campaign is to create a false picture of the Ukrainian liberation movement in the minds of the young Ukrainians, to whom the traditional ideas of freedom and liberation of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists and of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army have gradually become an ideal.

When the staff of the KGB (Committee for State Security in Moscow) planned the murder of Stepan Bandera, its intention was to divert public attention from itself to the Germans. For this reason the murder of Stepan Bandera was planned in such a manner as to be able to lay the blame, later, on Prof. Oberländer and thus kill two birds with one stone. The intention was, of course, to defame Adenauer's government!

It is easy to accuse the Germans with their Gestapo persecutions in Ukraine of various crimes, for the population there suffered great hardships under the Nazi occupation. On the other hand, however, Moscow is also trying to stir up hatred against the West, for Bandera was greatly loved and respected by the Ukrainian people. At the same time, the German Federal Republic is an ally of the Americans and a member of the NATO. Federal Minister Oberländer was to be the scapegoat for the perfidious game of the Russians, which aims to defame and discredit the Ukrainian revolutionary fight for freedom in the eyes of the youth of Ukraine and of the public in the free world.

The German side, led by former Federal Minister Oberländer, however, defended itself very unskillfully; for it would do better to start a large-scale counter-attack and, in doing so, make use of the very accusations which the Russians are bringing in against it; namely, that the Germans actually did not commit any mass murders in Ukraine at that time, but that the Russians did; and the German side should also support the Ukrainian fight for freedom, which later was also directed against the Nazi occupation. But, unfortunately, nothing whatsoever is being done in this respect in Germany. In fact, some Germans even joined in the Moscow defamation campaign against their own Federal Minister and, like the Communists, demanded his resignation, instead of **exposing the mass-murderer Khrushchov, who at that time was Moscow's governor in Ukraine and gave orders that these mass murders were to be committed there.** Side by side with this new defamatory campaign against the Ukrainian unit "Nightingale," the Soviet government naturally has continued its constant campaign against the Ukrainian national government of 1941, which was and is accused of having consisted entirely of quislings.



## What were the real facts of the situation?

In the early morning hours of June 30th, 1941, a group of leading OUN men, headed by Jaroslaw Stetzko, who were disguised as a propaganda unit and had false identity papers, after an adventurous journey from Cracow, drove into Lviv in cars. On the route to Lviv they held rallies in all the villages and places that they passed through and proclaimed the restoration of the Ukrainian state to the inhabitants; the administrative power was taken over by the Ukrainians and in this way a "fait accompli" was established. In Lviv the OUN, with the help of its local organization there, took over the broadcasting station, and at a rally of the leading Ukrainians there, held that same afternoon, the mayor and the town council were appointed and the administration of the town taken over by the Ukrainians.

Although the OUN in Lviv had suffered considerably as a result of the revolt crushed by NKVD units on June 27th, it was nevertheless still powerful enough to effectively and actively aid and support the OUN that arrived there on June 30th. After Jaroslaw Stetzko had discussed the plan for the proclamation of the restoration of the Ukrainian state and the formation of the national government in all its details with the Metropolitan Count Andreas Sheptytsky, he convened the National Assembly in the venerable building of the oldest Ukrainian national society of recent times, the "Prosvita," on the evening of June 30th. This Assembly consisted of the leading politicians who had remained in Lviv, economists, scholars, clergymen of both confessions and other prominent personalities in Ukrainian public life, who had managed to survive Russian terrorism; these persons were headed by the former President of the government of West Ukraine in 1918, Kost Levytsky, and the envoy of the Metropolitan, Bishop Joseph Slipy. On the following day, the Metropolitan announced the joyful news to his people, in a pastoral message, that the independent Ukrainian state had been restored once more, and he exhorted the citizens of Ukraine to prove themselves worthy of their freedom. He recognized the new government and expressed the hope that all citizens irrespective of their origin, nationality, race and religious faith, would enjoy equal treatment and prosperity. The same attitude was also expressed by the head of the Ukrainian Orthodox Autocephalous Church, Metropolitan Polikarp, who gave the Lviv government his blessing.

The National Assembly unanimously approved the proclamation proposed by the OUN of the restoration of Ukrainian national independence and appointed Jaroslaw Stetzko head of the government. Towards the end of the meeting, the authorized representative of the German Supreme Command and of the German Ministry for Eastern Affairs, Prof. Dr. Hans Koch, suddenly appeared, and the opposition which he expressed in his address clearly revealed the true intention of the Nazi government to those present.



The original plan of the OUN leaders to hold the proclamation of the Ukrainian independent government and of the restoration of the Ukrainian state in Kyiv, was, however, changed by Jaroslaw Stetzko at the last minute when he realized that the deferment of the proclamation until July 2nd in the opera house, a suggestion made by his comrades, would undoubtedly be prevented by the Gestapo, who would be sure to hurry to the scene.

The proclamation of the independence of Ukraine was intentionally held in Lviv, since in this way one intended to compel Germany, even at this early stage in the war, to adopt a clear and definite attitude with regard to the question of Ukraine's state independence. It would have been impossible to have waited until Kyiv had been taken by the Germans and then hold the proclamation in the capital of the whole of Ukraine, because by that time the Nazi government would have taken steps to prevent this. The formation of the government in Lviv was intended to make Ukraine the main centre of events from the very outset. And this was, in fact, accomplished. The government in Lviv always acted as the government of the whole Ukraine and it was likewise regarded as such at that time and also later by the outside world.

It became the symbol of the Ukrainian state will. By means of a plebiscite, which was carried out spontaneously in every village and town and which expressed approval of and enthusiasm about the Lviv action, the state action of June 30, 1941, gained the approval of the entire people; and in this way the people also approved of the internal justification of the National Assembly in Lviv, which the action of June 30th had achieved.

The broadcasting station and all the public buildings in the town of Lviv were in the hands of the Ukrainian nationalists and the insurgents or armed Ukrainian militia; Ukrainian insurgent units, which on June 27th had engaged in street fighting with Soviet Russian tanks in Lviv, were stationed in the forest near the town. There was also a Ukrainian unit in German uniform ("Nightingale") in Lviv. Under these circumstances it was impossible for Himmler to resort to any measures of violence before stronger units of the Gestapo and the Security Service were brought up. It was only ten days later, when the Security Service had completed its preparations, that violence was resorted to.

On July 10th, in the evening, an attempt to assassinate the head of the government by shooting at him was made, and his chauffeur was seriously wounded. It was assumed that this attempt was carried out either by NKVD agents who had remained behind in Lviv, or by some Gestapo centre or other.

On July 11th, the head of the government was arrested and taken to Berlin, where, together with Mr. Bandera, he was placed under police surveillance; various means were now resorted to in order to persuade them to revoke the action of June 30, 1941. When all these efforts failed, however, Bandera, Stetzko and thousands of other



Ukrainian nationalists were arrested on September 15, 1941, and taken to Sachsenhausen and other concentration camps. On September 30, 1944, Bandera and Stetzko were taken to a villa near Berlin. That the Germans had made certain mistakes was admitted, and an attempt was now made to find a basis for cooperation by recognizing Ukrainian independence, but in view of Hitler's ruthless terrorist regime in Ukraine, this suggestion was once more turned down by the two spokesmen of the Ukrainian liberation movement. Incidentally, Ukraine was already being occupied again by the Russians. After Bandera and Stetzko had once more been put under the surveillance of the Berlin police they managed to flee, with the help of members of the Ukrainian underground movement, who were employed as civilian workers from the East in Germany<sup>3</sup>).

### **The democratic basis of the Ukrainian government of 1941.**

The defamatory character of Soviet Russian propaganda in its discrimination campaign against the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists can be seen from its lies about the alleged one-party composition of the national government of June 30, 1941. This government was not a one-party government, but was composed of the representatives of various party political trends in Ukraine, namely socialists, national democrats, Catholics, non-party representatives, and nationalists. Although the overwhelming majority of the population supported the OUN, the latter decided to take over only a certain number of Ministries, namely, in addition to the office of Prime Minister, the police administration, the post of the second deputy of the head of the government, the department of political co-ordination, which the territorial leader of the OUN Evhen Legenda, who was later murdered by the Gestapo, took over; the OUN member V. Stakhiv took over the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; there were two deputy Ministers of War, — one was the later General Taras Chuprynka, and the other the later Chief of the UPA General Staff, Colonel Hasyn; the Minister of War was a social revolutionary, the famous Ukrainian general of the war of liberation 1918/20, General Petriv; and the Minister of Interior, for instance, was a socialist, the Minister of Economy a national democrat. In number the nationalists were in the minority in the Cabinet.

In addition, a provisional parliament, the Ukrainian National Council, under the honorary presidency of the Metropolitan Count Andreas Sheptytsky, was formed, and here, too, the representatives of the OUN were likewise in the minority. Dr. Kost Levytsky (national democrat), who had spent two years in "Lubianka" prison in Moscow, was elected President of the National Council.

After the head of the government had been arrested, the other nationalist members of the government, who had not gone into hiding,

<sup>3</sup>) See also "Germany and Ukraine" by R. Ilnytzky, East Europe Institute, Munich, 1958.



were arrested and put in concentration camps. It was only the nationalists who at that time actively combated the Nazi occupation. Neither the socialists nor the national democrats, nor the non-party representatives were arrested.

Of the nationalist members of the government, the following were murdered by the Gestapo: as already mentioned, the Minister of Political Co-ordination and territorial leader of the OUN, Evhen Legenda-Klymiv; the deputy Minister of Economy Yatsiv; the Minister of Forestry Piasetsky (Front of National Unity, a small nationalist-minded group).

The following persons were arrested: the deputy head of the government and member of the OUN, Dr. Lev Rebet; the Minister of Foreign Affairs V. Stakhiv, as well as other OUN members of the government, and, of course, the Head of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists, Stepan Bandera, who at that time was in Cracow and was arrested there on July 5th.

We have intentionally reported on the events in Lviv on June 30th and at the beginning of July, 1941, in detail, in order to prove, on the strength of these irrefutable facts, how defamatory and treacherous Soviet Russian propaganda is. In defaming the Ukrainian government of 1941 and also the "Nightingale" detachment and Prof. Oberländer, it ruthlessly resorts to its usual methods of attack, namely that if one repeats the same lies a thousand times, then some of them will eventually make an impression.

Khrushchov gave orders that the mass murders in Lviv and in other places in Ukraine were to be committed at the time in question. And he alone bears the whole blame!

### **We accuse!**

We, Ukrainians, accuse Khrushchov of the mass-murder of the Ukrainian people, whom, in his capacity as First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine from January 1938 until December 1947, as Prime Minister of Soviet Ukraine in 1947, and again as First Party Secretary from January 1948 to December 1949, he exterminated in a most ruthless way.

We accuse him not only of the mass-murders in Lviv in June 1941 and of having been responsible for other mass murders at that time in numerous towns and villages all over Ukraine, but also of the mass-murders of Vinnytsia in 1938/40 where over 10,000 Ukrainians were massacred at his orders. Khrushchov is the most ruthless hangman of the Ukrainian people, and it is this policy of extermination pursued by him in Ukraine that has fitted him so ably for the post of hangman of the entire Soviet Union.

We accuse him of mass murders in Budapest, in Poznan and in East Germany; we accuse him of ruthlessly crushing the riots of Ukrainian internees in the concentration camps during the years 1953



to 1956 (Vorkuta, Norilsk, Magadan, Mordovia, Tayshet and Kingir) and in 1959 in Temir-Tau. At his orders 500 Ukrainian women internees in Kingir were crushed by Russian tanks when, singing Ukrainian patriotic songs, they tried to hold up the tanks in order to prevent a massacre in the concentration camp.

We accuse him of the mass deportation of young Ukrainians to Kazakhstan and Siberia. We accuse him of the treacherous Russification of Ukraine and of the perfidious persecution of the Ukrainian freedom fighters.

**We accuse Khrushchov of the murder of the leader of the Ukrainian liberation movement, Stepan Bandera.**

We accuse him of ruthlessly exterminating and fighting the Ukrainian Insurgent Army during and after the war when he held the office of Moscow's governor in Ukraine. We accuse him of ruthlessly crushing the Ukrainian insurrection by the most perfidious methods, including the use of gas and bacteriological means.

We accuse him as the blood-stained persecutor of our autocephalous Orthodox and Catholic Churches!

**We demand that an international court be formed, before which we can bring forward the accusations against Khrushchov and his hirelings regarding the mass murders in Lviv in June 1941, which he is trying to blame on the Ukrainian nationalists, so that this blood-stained murderer will for the time being at least be condemned morally.**

We demand the severance of all diplomatic, economic and cultural relations with the government of this hangman. We demand the exclusion of the Soviet Union and all its satellite governments from all international organizations, as for instance from the UNO, etc.

We warn against the coexistence policy and against the pilgrimages of Western statesmen to Moscow, as well as against invitations to this criminal to visit the West, on which occasions the said statesmen shake hands with this ruthless hangman, who is stained with the blood of millions of innocent men, women and children, and greet him as a "peace-maker"!

The so-called "Summit" conference did untold damage to the honour and conscience of the statesmen of the Western powers, who believe in God and respect human rights, but tried to sit at the same table with the most ruthless of mass-murderers, Khrushchov. He consistently pursues his aim, namely the recognition of the status quo by the West, a fact which is to provide the further starting-point for his conquest of the world.

We warn the free world not to fall into the abyss!  
Caveant Consules!

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