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Katyn 60 Years On: Uncovering a Stalinist Massacre

By

Victoria Teresa Plewak

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in History.

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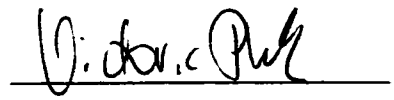

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ABSTRACT

This thesis explores new information made available during the 1990s about the massacre of Polish officers at Katyn forest near Smolensk in 1940, as well as the fate of the prisoners from the Soviet camps at Starobelsk, Ostashkov, and the question of where these men were executed. It examines the various theories that have been offered and assesses their merits. It also outlines the ambiguous attitude towards the execution of both the Russian and Polish governments, in addition to the duplicity of the Allied forces during the Second World War. Using new documentary evidence, interviews with eyewitnesses and the families of the victims, and a visit to the site, it offers a new analysis of one of the most debated and complex crimes of the 20th century.

University of Alberta

Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled Katyn 60 Years On: Uncovering a Stalinist Massacre submitted by Victoria Teresa Plewak in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in History.

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INTRODUCTION

The year 2000 marked the sixtieth anniversary of one of the most deplorable acts committed by one state against the citizens of another. The mass execution of the citizens of another country is heinous enough in itself. However, the fact that the Soviet Union had invaded Polish territory without even a declaration of war made this an even more serious infringement. The event is the massacre of approximately 15,000 officers of the Polish army, police, border guards and others by the NKVD in the spring of 1940. The event is commonly known as the Katyn forest massacre, although Katyn is only one of the sites in which executions took place: prisoners from the Kozelsk camp (Russia) were brought here and executed. For many years the fate of their compatriots in the camps at Starobelsk (Ukraine) and Ostashkov (Russia) could only be speculated upon, and not until the 1990s were the graves of these individuals exhumed at Mednoe and Pyatikhatki. In addition to the massacre of almost 15,000 people, an estimated 1.2 million Poles were deported deep into the Soviet Union, many of whom, particularly those who were captured during the second wave of deportations in April of 1940, were the families of the executed men, their wives, parents and children who were sent off to fend for themselves. Many did not survive the ordeal, and the fates of others are still unknown till this day.

On the sixtieth anniversary of the Katyn massacre it is necessary to examine how our knowledge of this tragedy has deepened. Until the fall of communism the event could only be discussed in the west and the vast majority of published literature on the subject originated there. For years the families of those who were murdered were forced to remain silent, forbidden to seek the truth or to even receive official

acknowledgement of their loss. Although in Soviet propaganda the Nazis were condemned as the perpetrators of the crime, the issue was never openly discussed during the Communist era.

The past ten years have seen the fall of communism. The event resulted in increased openness and the past several years have revealed much information about the massacre. Though many of the revelations had been suspected, they were finally confirmed by the publication of the documents passed from the Russian government to the Polish in 1992. Can one say however that we have learned all the secrets? The reply to this is negative. The process of acquiring even the knowledge that we possess today has not been a simple one. Even after the fall of communism, it required immense effort as well as specific circumstances which will be discussed later, for Russia to acknowledge that the NKVD had been responsible for the crime. The process of revealing documents related to the event has also required much time and considerable effort from both the Russian and Polish sides. The Soviet Union did eventually acknowledge responsibility for the massacre and it made available to the Polish government some documents, but as will be discussed below, the Soviet Union was placed in a position whereby failing to do this would have placed the country and the leadership in a very awkward situation.

After six decades historians still have not learned all the details of the massacre, not all the Russian archives have been made accessible, and today's Russian government, like its Soviet predecessor, is not always willing to reveal the full extent of the crime. There are many important documents that would shed light on these mysteries but which still remain inaccessible.

In discussing what new information has become available over the past decade I will also demonstrate how efforts to suppress information about the massacre continue, how the Polish government has been remiss in sufficiently pursuing the issue as well as what we still need to learn. Why is there such reluctance to reveal the details? Although Russia is no longer in a position of "Big Brother" in relation to Poland, Polish politicians are not overly eager to antagonise Russia and prefer to allow certain issues to lie dormant. They have a history of being passive about this issue. Another aspect is that the issue of Katyn is no longer discussed as much now than it was a few years ago. It was suppressed for many years, then in the initial post-communist years it was an important issue and several facts were revealed, but subsequently interest in the subject declined among the general population. Many people believe that the issue has already been sufficiently discussed and that now it is necessary to focus on more important problems, issues that Poles face on a daily basis, such as the economy of the country. Many Poles believe that since we now know the truth about Katyn, it is unnecessary to delve any further. This change of attitude towards Katyn can be demonstrated by the number of articles that were written on the topic in various periodicals: much was written prior to 1995, after which output virtually stopped. Currently the Polish government can afford to be more lethargic as public opinion appears to be less concerned with the event, with the exception of those who were directly involved, i.e., those people who lost friends or relatives.

These are some of the reasons why perhaps the Polish side would be less motivated to pressure Russia for more information. Russia is not overly enthusiastic

about pursuing the issue for several reasons, but most notably because some of the people that played an active role in the murders are still alive and might have to be prosecuted despite their advanced ages. The problem of Katyn also raises the question of the other Poles who disappeared in the Soviet Union during the war: the fate of thousands is still unknown. It is not simply a matter of acquiring data. There remains the question of what to do with this information. Sixty years is not a very long time, the memory of the event and Polish suffering at the hands of the Soviet Union is still fresh. With a history of animosity between the two nations, there is much that could tarnish relations.

This thesis is comprised of five chapters: the first discusses "Historiography" and provides the reader with a description of the sources utilized in this thesis. It also describes the various sources that have been available in the past and new sources accessible now. The second chapter is entitled "Background" and it provides a brief description of the events that led up to and followed the Katyn Forest massacre. The third is entitled "Cover-Up" and describes the efforts of the Soviet Union, the Polish communist authorities after the war, as well as the West's efforts to conceal the truth regarding the Katyn massacre. The fourth is entitled "New Information" and discusses how new sources have contributed to the increase of our knowledge about the massacre, what new information we have learned as well as what still remains a mystery. Finally the "Conclusion" provides an assessment of the information as well as some final thoughts.

HISTORIOGRAPHY

Between the late 1940s and 1990 scholars found little new information about the Katyn forest massacre. The documents generally used as sources by historians during this period were the following: 1) German documents assembled in the collection generally known as *Amtliches Material zum Massenmord von Katyn*; 2) collections of interviews of informants, witnesses, diplomatic documents, and others collected by various American agencies and which were collected during the Ray Madden Commission investigation in 1951, the results of which are housed in the Library of Congress; 3) documents relating to the fate of Poles in the USSR, containing a great deal of information regarding the deportations; and interviews with survivors from the three camps, which are housed in the Hoover Institution at Stanford University. Historians were less acquainted with the sources available in Britain, mostly due to the fact that many of these documents remained classified and as a result, inaccessible for many years. The reports of ambassador Owen O'Malley were published only in 1972 and the British government only released the SOE (Special Operations Executive) documents relating to Katyn in 1995.

Among Polish collections, the most important were the documents housed at the Sikorski Museum in London, which has a collection of documents relating to Polish-Soviet relations during the war.[1] These are some of the better known collections. Despite the limited amount of information available to them, historians had been able to create a fairly clear picture of the events surrounding the tragedy. However, there remained some details which could only be learned upon examination of the Soviet archives. After 1990 and especially 1992, historians could examine at

least some of these documents when the Russian government gave its Polish counterpart copies of many of the documents relating to the crime. These have subsequently been translated and published and are cited extensively in this thesis.

The majority of works published prior to 1989 were published in the West. Many sources, however, were only published several years after they were written. The exception are a few underground books published in Poland, such as Jerzy Lojek's *Dzieje Sprawy Katynia* and Czeslaw Madajczyk's *Dramat Katynski* . These are for the most part works written by people who were somehow directly involved, either as prisoners of the camps who survived, or people who witnessed the exhumations. They generally take the form of memoirs and personal recollections if the author was somehow involved and they present a narrative account of the Soviet invasion in September of 1939, a description of the camps and life in the prisons, including a portrayal of how the men were killed, indicating the culpability of the Soviets, and finally an account of the efforts to find the men and what impact this quest had on international relations. The majority of the books written before 1990 were written using this format. Most of these works were written prior to any official acknowledgement by the USSR of its responsibility, though the authors were all convinced of the guilt of the Soviet Union and they attempt to convince the reader regarding Soviet culpubility. The authors are generally patriotic Poles who are strongly anti-communist and in their books they attempt to demonstrate how the Polish nation in general has suffered at the hands of the Soviet Union and communism. The authors also tend to be quite critical of the West because of its unwillingness to seek the truth, which de facto helped the USSR to suppress information.

The majority of memoirs written in the period prior to 1990 are written by former prisoners who survived and they provide a description of camp life, particularly in Kozelsk and Starobelsk. The authors include Stanislaw Swianiewicz, Bronislaw Mlynarski, Jozef Czapski, and Zdzislaw J. Peszkowski. There are also other accounts written by people who were present at the exhumations in 1943, such as Jozef Mackiewicz, Dr.Tramsen from Denmark who had been a member of the German Commission in 1943 and Ferdynand Goetel.

What is interesting however is that once much of the information was out in the open and there was no longer a need to convince people that the Soviet Union and not Germany was responsible, Polish authors wrote far fewer books. An exception to the general rule was Jacek Trznadel's *Powrot Rozstrelanej Armii*, which is a refreshing change from many of the other books in that it does not provide a detailed account of the background but discusses questions that have remained unanswered and provides an analysis of Katyn related problems. However, it is not a book for someone who is looking for an introduction to the issue as it assumes a knowledge of the background.

Many of the newest books on Katyn, which discuss new findings have been written by Russians: they include works such as *The Murderers of Katyn*, written by Vladimir Abarinov, *Katyn: Zbrodnia Przeciwko Ludnosci*, written by historian Natalia Lebedeva and *Katyn: Zbrodnia Chroniona Tajemnica Panstwowa*, written by Inessa Jazborowska, Anatoli Jablokov and Yuri Zoria. It is common for Russian historians to be critical of Stalinist crimes although, they also--particularly Lebedeva--

try to create a distinction between Stalin and the Soviet Union, claiming that Stalin' s actions should be examined separately from those of the Soviet Union or the system in general.

Although it is true that the Stalinist period was a unique time in the history of the Soviet Union it cannot be examined entirely in isolation either, as even after Stalin's death, those who had played a part, to a greater or lesser extent in his crimes continued to play a role in the Soviet system and were hardly innocent bystanders themselves. Nikita Khrushchev himself is a typical example of this. Even prior to the Second World War he was First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Ukrainian Communist Party and therefore he could not have been ignorant of the deportations and executions that were taking place in his territory. It is also common for Russian authors to attempt to appease Russian guilt by writing on topics such as Katyn. They appear to feel that the Russian nation, because of its Soviet past, has a large number of sins to attone for and as a result it is their duty to attempt to reveal the whole truth and to get past the curtain of lies that had always enveloped this and other related issues. Lebedeva's book, however, is an excellent source as the book is based upon her research in three archives, the CGASA (Central Government Archives of the Red Army), CGOA (Central Government Special Archives) and CGAOR (Central Government Archives of the October Revolution)

The majority of works on Katyn in the Soviet period were written by emigre Poles. These were written either in English or Polish. One of the few works that was written only in English is the classic Katyn "textbook," *Death in the Forest*, written by Janusz Zawodny. The issue of Katyn was considered to be of great importance

among emigre Polish intellectuals because there were still so many questions that remained unanswered and they felt it necessary to increase awareness of the importance of this event in the West and they also likely wanted to discredit communism in general.

Few western historians got involved in the topic, though an exception was Louis Fitzgibbon. More recently the historian Allen Paul published his book *Katyn: The Untold Story of Stalin' s Polish Massacre.* However, this is basically a general introduction to the Katyn massacre intermingled with some background to Polish history for the western reader, rather than an exhaustive analysis of new information, or even a detailed description of events. In addition to providing some background to the event, the author also includes the stories of three families who lived through these events; he tells their story. The author condemns Soviet actions but he is somewhat defensive of the West's role in suppressing the truth, claiming that Great Britain and the United States were to a degree justified in suppressing the truth because Allied unity was of paramount importance at this time. However, it needs to be borne in mind that ultimately the involvement of the United States and Great Britain in the cover-up tended to undermine the authority of these countries. The West's reasons for doing so are not entirely justified as it is unlikely that the Soviet Union would have abandoned the war effort against the Germans. The means used by the Allies, and the United States in particular, hardly seem justifiable, as will be discussed below. In the end the Allies sacrificed one ally that had been faithful from the very beginning of the war and who contributed greatly to the war effort in favour of another, more recent ally, which was more powerful but less trustworthy.

The literature used in this thesis is comprised of more recent sources, mostly from the 1990s and the majority of which are Polish. I do not devote much attention to examining older documents since this has already been done extensively in the past and is not the purpose of this thesis. My concern is rather to examine new sources, particularly the documents that were released by the Russian government to Poland in 1992. Older sources are used in order to specify which problems had remained unsolved and to see if the new sources have managed to shed any light on these problems.

Chapter 1: BACKGROUND

It is difficult to provide an exact date for the beginning of the series of events that led to the murder of 15,000 individuals. This number, which refers only to those from the three camps of Kozelsk, Starobelsk and Ostashkov, as the numbers would be much higher if we were to examine all the Poles who perished and disappeared in the Soviet Union. These were not blue-collar workers or peasants but represented the intellectual elite of pre-war Poland: the majority were reservists who had led civilian lives prior to the war. Among those killed were doctors, lawyers, university professors: all individuals who could provide strong leadership in post-war Poland, and therefore this is likely one of the reasons why they were murdered. The Nazis also believed that the Polish intelligentsia should be destroyed; however, they were quite open about their intentions. The Soviet Union, on the other hand, was very secretive about the crime it had committed and fifty years passed before it would even acknowledge responsibility for this act.

On August 23, 1939 the Soviet Union and Germany signed the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, a non-aggression pact on the surface, which contained an additional secret protocol through which the two countries agreed to divide Poland between themselves. On September 1, 1939 Germany, as planned, attacked Poland. On the night of September 16, 1939, Polish ambassador to the Soviet Union, Waclaw Grzybowski, was called to the Commissariat of Internal Affairs and was informed by Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Molotov that the Polish state had ceased to exist and that the Red Army was to cross the Polish border that very morning purportedly in order to aid the Belarusians and Ukrainians living in Poland's eastern territories. The

Red Army invaded Poland at 4:20 AM on September 17, 1939. This act was in contravention of numerous treaties and protocols signed between Poland and the Soviet Union; however, the Soviet Union never did declare war upon Poland, the situation was somewhat unclear and even the Polish armed forces were unsure of how to interpret the actions of the Red Army. Although orders were given not to oppose the Red Army the attitude of the Polish army was generally one of distrust and hostility toward the invaders.[2] The Polish army fought bravely, but it was impossible for it single-handedly to fight off aggressors attacking from both the east and the west.

The Red Army attempted to create a division between the Polish officers and the lower-ranking soldiers and in an effort to appeal to the class consciousness of the soldiers, leaflets were dropped by the Red Army Air Force that demanded that the soldiers abandon their officers because the latter despised them. This transparent attempt to incite mutiny, however, proved futile. Jozef Mackiewicz claims that the Soviet leadership was willing to use any dishonourable means in order to benefit the party and the Soviet Union; he claims that Stalin and his associates possessed their own form of morality, or lack thereof. After the Red Army entered Poland, it promised the soldiers and officers that if they laid down their weapons and registered with the Soviet Military Chancelries they would be given the option of returning to their homes or crossing the Romanian or Hungarian borders to join the Polish army being formed abroad. The Soviet Union was concerned that persons of high rank would go into hiding or join the underground. These "class enemies" had to be located and neutralised, therefore it is clear that the Soviet Union's efforts to locate and at least neutralise the Polish intelligentsia were planned in advance. This campaign was to a large extent successful. The Soviets made false promises which

they had no intention of keeping, and many Poles believed that once registered they would be treated as equals with the Red Army officers. They could not have suspected that they would be transported to the Soviet Union and that most of them would not live to see the end of the war.[3]

The Soviet authorities were anxious to neutralise not only officers and other military personnel but also employees of the Polish Ministry of Internal Affairs, functionaries of the Polish and Silesian police, prison guards as well as border guards, prison employees and others. These men would eventually be placed in their own separate camp at Ostashkov, be murdered at Kalinin (Tver) and buried in mass graves at Mednoe. The NKVD did not have to search very far in order to find them since as a result of the order given for the evacuation of the country's administration from the areas threatened by the German invasion, many police functionaries from all parts of Poland were already in the territories east of the Bug river on the eve of the Soviet invasion. The majority had been evacuated to Brest and Ternopil. These men were sought by the Soviets because they constituted a highly nationalistic element of the Polish nation. Many had taken part in the Silesian uprising, and in the Polish Soviet war of 1920.[4]

On September 21, 1939 the Soviet command gave the order to treat all officers of the former Polish army as prisoners of war and to place them in POW camps in the USSR. During the September campaign, approximately 250,000 prisoners of war, of various ranks, were taken into custody and interned in over 100 various camps in eastern Poland and the western Soviet Union. The Kozelsk, Starobelsk and Ostashkov camps became specialized camps after they were cleared of privates and other lower

ranking soldiers. The prisoners were given the status of prisoners of war, despite the fact that no war had been declared. As a result of this ambiguity, they were not regarded as being prisoners of war by the international community and were therefore in theory not subject to the rights of POWs. However, this in itself would not have guaranteed that the Soviets would have conformed to international conventions even had this been the case, since the Soviet Union had not signed the Geneva Convention regarding the treatment of prisoners of war. In addition to this, the fact that the Soviet Union invaded a foreign country and imprisoned its citizens in itself demonstrates the leadership's lack of adherence to international conventions.

Already in the 1950s it became evident that all of the dispositions relating to the interned men were given by the Section of the NKVD Division of Military Affairs led by Major of State Security P.K. Soprunenko. Order number 0308 for the formation of this section was personally signed by Lavrentii Beria on September 19, 1939. In order to house these interned men, 138 temporary camps and eight separation camps (Ostashkov, Yuchnov, Kozelsk, Putivl, Kozelshchina, Starobelsk, Yushk, Oranki) were created, [5] and on October 3, 1939 Beria ordered the UPWI (Administration for Prisoners of War) to concentrate all of the Polish gendarmes in the three camps of Kozelsk, Starobelsk and Ostashkov and specified which categories of prisoners were to be released.[6] This act was also a contravention of international agreements since nowhere, not even in Nazi Germany were prisoners of war placed under the control of the political police. Yet by September 20, 1940, the NKVD already had control over the prisoners of war.

In mid-October the Soviets signed an agreement with the Germans regarding an exchange of prisoners. Those Poles who had lived in the now German occupied territories were exchanged with the Germans. Between October 24 and November 23, the USSR released 42,492 people to the Germans and prior to 1941 the Germans released 13,757 to the Soviet authorities.[7] Although the order specified that these privates and non-commissioned officers were to be sent home, this did not always occur in practice since many were sent to work in labour camps and various industries in Ukraine or to work on road construction. Not all of these men have been accounted for and it is also difficult to determine the exact numbers of work camps that existed and how many perished in them.[8]

All three camps were former monasteries. The Kozelsk camp, which contained approximately 4,500 officers of various ranks, lay along the train line Smolensk-Gorbachevo-Tula, 250 km south-east of Smolensk, the Ostashkov camp was situated northwest of Kalinin (Tver) along Lake Seliger, it was along the train route Velikie Luki-Bologoe and it contained 6,567 prisoners. The Starobelsk camp was located southeast of Kharkiv and contained 3,920 individuals, mostly professional officers and reservists. Half of these prisoners had been interned here after the capitulation of Lviv to the Red Army, contrary to the agreement the prisoners had made upon their surrender. The total was close to 15,000.[9]

I had the opportunity to speak with the daughter of Captain Leon Szuchatowicz, one of the Starobelsk prisoners captured after the capitulation of Lviv. The capitulation order, signed by General Langner, was to come into effect on September 22, 1939. At this time Captain Szuchatowicz's family was in Ternopil. He

had sent them there during the first days of the German invasion thinking that since Ternopil was further east, the family would be safer there--this was of course prior to the invasion of the Red Army. At this early stage of the Soviet invasion many Poles escaped across the border into Romania and Captain Szuchatowicz had also been about to follow them when he heard the order of General Langner that Polish troops should lay down their arms and gather in Lviv and this he did. Despite being taken into custody he was still able to see his family on two occasions. He attempted to send several notes to his family, which were sent not by mail but indirectly in the hope that his family would receive them. In the only one that did reach his family, he wrote that he was a prisoner of war, that he and others would be released shortly and that they were being sent in the direction of Ternopil. The prisoners were on a side railway track in the village of Berezovice and they were being held in the railway cars. It is uncertain exactly how long they were there but Captain, Szuhatowicz's daughter visited her father with her mother and brother on October 3, 1939, which she recalls was St.Teresa's day. She claimed that it was very easy to obtain access to the men, that it was only necessary to bribe the guards with vodka and that the prisoners were not closely guarded. The family had brought some civilian clothes with them and they wanted Captain Szuchatowicz to put them on and walk out with them, apparently it would have been possible but he refused because he did not want to abandon his fellow soldiers.[10]

Mrs. Szuchatowicz-Woloszyn described the spirit of camaraderie that was evident among the Poles. She described how if one man received food or a thermos of tea, he would pass it around to everyone. Escape was feasible since there was no careful monitoring of activities. There were men from all parts of Poland in the

process of being transported, but there was no close supervision. This is confirmed by one of the sources: at this point the men were being conveyed by the Red Army to areas where they would be taken over by the NKVD and the supervision was very loose. The source therefore questions why the men did not take advantage of this opportunity and try to escape. The ostensible reason is that their honour did not allow them to abandon their comrades. In addition they considered themselves to be upright people who had committed no crime, thus it seemed unthinkable to them that they could be treated as criminals, and they assumed that everything would be cleared up shortly.[11] At this early stage, the men assumed that they would eventually be released, therefore they were not fearful about what was to happen to them. The Soviet authorities also kept telling the men that they would only register them and then they would be released. The family wanted to visit Captain Szuchatowicz again but they learned that the men were to be taken from the railway cars and were to be marched through Ternopil. This was the last time that family members saw Captain Szuchatowicz, (the exact date is not known); they were able only to see him briefly as he was passing and to give him a small package. The Poles were marched through Ternopil guarded by Soviet soldiers on horses.[12]

By mid December 1939, the prisoners were finally able to correspond with their families. They were allowed to write once a month and were forbidden to mention the fact that they were in a camp. This is corroborated by the account related to me by Mrs. Zofia Szuchatowicz-Woloszyn. The letters that her father wrote to the family contained little information about camp life. The majority of the letters expressed interest about the family and in the few letters that he did write, he always made a point of specifying that the family should only write about personal matters.

What is interesting, however, is that, at least in Starobelsk, it was possible to send telegrams, but the sources do state that the Starobelsk camp was the least rigorous of the three and that there were far fewer restrictions. Hence Starobelsk was probably the only camp that allowed the sending of telegrams. The first letter or rather postcard, was received by the family in December 1939 and was written on November 28, 1939, the second was written on February 11, 1940 and the last on March 9, 1940 with seven telegrams in between. Judging by the tone of concern in the letters, it is difficult to believe that this loving husband and father would not have written more often and that the letters would not have been lengthier had it been possible for him to send such. One difficulty, however, may have been access to stationery as in the letters he asks his wife to send paper and writing materials. The seven telegrams were all sent in 1940. The family also sent him some telegrams and some packages with food, clothing, writing materials, etc. In the beginning of December 1939, the family was able to receive some information about its father from a friend of his, a young lieutenant who had been with him in the transit camp at Sheptukhovka and who had been released--this must have been around the time when people of lower ranks were being released. Although under normal circumstances he would not have been released since he was an officer, he was able to pass himself off as a private. He was in a poor state, all of his clothes were infested and had to be burned. The family provided him with new clothes. He did not stay with the family for very long because he wanted to cross the border and escape from the German and Soviet occupied territories. Though he told the family that he would write to them, the family never heard from him again and his fate is unknown.[13]

In March 1940, the first transports of those men who were marked for execution left Kozelsk for Smolensk. These transports of between 60 and 100 prisoners were to continue until May 12, 1940, from Starobelsk, and Ostashkov, as well as Kozelsk. The prisoners were not grouped according to any particular order, although people who were related or who were friends were generally not transported together. Perhaps they were segregated to prevent difficulties while they were being transported.[14] By April 1940 all correspondence from the prisoners in the three camps had ceased. Initially the families thought that the lack of mail was due to the inefficiency of the Soviet postal system, as well as the great distances, but as time progressed the families began to fear for the lives of their loved ones. The over 400 that were spared were first sent to Pavlishevsky Bor and then to Gryazovets a few weeks later, and they remained in Gryazovets till August 1941. As those in the Gryazovets camp began to correspond with their families, they began to learn that all contact with their fellow prisoners from the former three camps had ceased. Father Zdzislaw Peszkowski, a survivor from the Kozelsk camp describes how letters began to come from the prisoners' families and how they inquired about the fate of the other prisoners.[15] Of the over 400 men that remained alive, only a small percentage reacted positively to Soviet propaganda, they established what was called the "Red Corner," they held discussions about communism and were generally willing to collaborate with the Soviets; the majority, however, remained strongly patriotic. These were generally ethnic Poles, and there was also a small group of Poles of German background who were loyal to Germany and a small group of Jews. There were marked divisions between the various groups, which led to conflict.

Among the small percentage of Poles who reacted positively towards communism and who were willing to collaborate with the Soviets, was Zygmunt Berling, who had been promoted to the rank of general by the Soviets. In October 1941 he began to discuss with the Soviet authorities the possibility of forming Polish divisions that were to be subordinate to the Red Army, this was his own decision and the Polish government-in-exile played no role in these discussions. On October 31, 1940 the fifteen men that had demonstrated a readiness to cooperate with the Soviets were sent to Malakhovka, situated 40km south-east of Moscow. Here the conditions were superior to those that they had previously experienced. Although they were no longer considered as being prisoners they were still closely observed.[16]

The situation changed when the Germans invaded the Soviet Union in June 1941. Subsequently the Soviet Union joined the Allied camp, which in turn meant coming to some kind of agreement with the Polish government-in-exile in London. The latter was under pressure from its western Allies to present a conciliatory attitude towards the new ally, which was quite difficult given the interwar period of hostility and the fact that the Soviet Union had invaded Poland when it was already weakened by the German invasion in September 1939. The issue of borders, in particular, was one that caused great tension throughout the war, one on which the Soviets refused to negotiate. Relations between the Polish government and the Soviet Union were re-established on July 30, 1941 and the Soviet government also granted amnesty to all Polish citizens residing on Soviet territory. Shortly afterward, in August, Polish military divisions began to be formed on Soviet territory and it soon became evident that there were an extremely large number of men, particularly among the higher and lower level officers, who were missing. There was a great deal of consternation as a

result of this discovery and the Polish government began to make inquiries regarding the whereabouts of these missing officers, to which they received mostly vague responses from Soviet officials. The Soviets claimed that all prisoners had been released and that they simply had not yet presented themselves. The Polish government-in-exile did not want to question the goodwill of the Soviet Union and initially thought that perhaps local authorities were creating problems or that communication difficulties, in addition to the massive size of the country, were factors which contributed to this inability to locate the missing men. However, two months after the signing of the amnesty, approximately 8,000 Polish officers and 7,000 other POWs could still not be located. Where could they be? The Poles demanded lists of prisoners and their release dates, which the Soviet authorities could not produce, claiming that they had no such lists. The Soviets claimed that the men had likely either returned to their country, or had escaped abroad, probably to neutral countries, or that they had died along the way. To the Poles, none of these reasons appeared to be particularly convincing.[17] The only hint that was provided by the Soviet leadership was on one occasion when General Berling met with Beria and Merkulov, and Beria mentioned that „a mistake" had been made regarding the prisoners when Berling wanted to specify the exact numbers of men who would be available.

In the late summer of 1941 the Germans occupied the area around Katyn. The 537th Signal Regiment under Lieutenant Colonel Friedrich Ahrens used the dacha in the NKVD compound near the forest, as its headquarters. In the spring of 1942 some Polish workers who had been working for the Todt organization, a German construction company run by engineer Dr. Fritz Todt until his death in 1942, after

which it was under the control of Albert Speer. The company was quasi-military in nature and oversaw the construction of roads and military installations in Nazi-occupied countries in the area. Its Polish workers had apparently heard from locals that their countrymen had been shot in the nearby forest, and according to one source, Parfenon Kisselev, a local peasant had shown them the spot and they had placed a wooden cross here. In February 1943, the Germans heard about this spot from Ivan Krivozertsev, (also a resident of the area who died under mysterious circumstances in Scotland several years later). Krivozertsev went with the Germans to the forest but since he did not know the exact location, he went to get Kisselev who took them to the exact spot, where they verified the existence of a mass grave but took no further action. Only in the spring of 1943 was the discovery announced.[18] Mieczyslaw Lisiecki, a Pole, was working in the area in 1940 and he also relates how he located the graves as early as the autumn of 1940.[19]

There is another version of the sequence of events, which led to the discovery of the bodies, though it only appears in one source. On June 4, 1995 an interview was published in the Polish weekly *Tygodnik Powszechny* with Piotr Ganczar who had been employed by the Germans during the war in the area of Katyn. He claimed that the workers had become acquainted with the local Russians and that the Russians were rather fearful about discussing this issue. One day, in the spring of 1942, he recalled that a car containing Germans and a Russian civilian pulled up. He stated that the Germans called upon him and two others to take shovels and to go to the forest, where they found the bodies. They were then told to rebury these bodies, to remember the spot and to write about it to their families. Ganczar claimed that he wrote to a friend about what he had seen and that later he became fearful because this

friend became a member of the UB (*Urzad Bezpieczenstwa*, the Polish Security Police). He then claimed that the following day the two wooden crosses were erected. If this story is true, then this would bring to the fore the question of why the Germans waited a year before making the information public. It is plausible to think that since the Germans had occupied the area since autumn of 1941 they could have learned of this massacre sooner. Why would they not have revealed the truth? The story, however, does not sound very plausible in that it is not corroborated by other sources and has not been mentioned other than in this article. If the story is true then the only plausible explanation could be that the Germans involved did not report this finding to any higher authorities.[20]

Some new sources however have revealed that there was some knowledge about the graves at Katyn even earlier than the above. Jacek Trznadel, in his book *Powrot Rozstrzelonej Armii*, describes his interview with Zbigniew Kozlinski who, as early as 1940, heard about the graves from his father and then saw them firsthand as well. Zbigniew Kozlinski was a member of an aristocratic family that had owned Gnezdovo and the region around the Katyn forest prior to the revolution. He had been separated from his father during the war but met him briefly for the last time in May 1940. His father had been arrested by the NKVD. The NKVD knew that he had been a communications officer during the First World War and demanded that Kozlinski show them the spot where the documents and weapons from his division were hidden. It was in the Katyn forest. He took them there and saw the open graves of the Polish army officers. He was then placed under arrest in Gnezdovo but miraculously managed to escape. When Zbigniew Kozlinski met with his father, the latter was writing two copies of a report, one of which he gave to his son, who in turn

delivered the report in Hrodna where it was encoded onto two banknotes, which he and another man taking a different route, delivered in Warsaw, presumably to Polish Intelligence, although it is not mentioned specifically. In late 1941 he himself was in Katyn and heard various rumours, some exaggerated, from the local people. He issued a report to the ZWZ intelligence service in Grodno. The account provided by Zbigniew Kozlinski appears to be unrealistic at some points, but the author believes in its authenticity because Kozlinski mentioned that he had spent some time in a village called Sofieka, which is never mentioned in any sources or maps and in fact no longer exists. This knowledge is very specific and it would have been difficult for Kozlinski to have manufactured such information.[21]

On April 13, 1943 Radio Berlin announced the finding of the grave and accused the NKVD of having committed the crime. Two days later Sikorski, head of the Polish government in London, requested a Red Cross Investigation into the matter as did the German side. In order for the International Red Cross to respond to the request, the Soviet Union would have also had to have assented, but since they did not the Germans formed a committee of twelve experts from various collaborating and occupied countries, at the same time the Polish Red Cross also set up a commission to investigate that was led by Dr. Marian Wodzinski.[22]

Chapter 2: COVER-UP

The cover-up of the issue of Katyn cannot be blamed solely on the Soviets. During the war the United States and Great Britain were unwilling to discuss the Soviet Union's culpability, despite the fact that evidence clearly pointed in its direction. It is unnecessary to present an extensive analysis here of the evidence indicating Soviet culpability, as this has been ascertained already; therefore I will only describe this evidence briefly. At the same time as the Poles requested that the Red Cross conduct an independent investigation, the Germans also made the same request. This factor eventually became one of the reasons why the Soviet Union severed relations with the Polish government in London, on the grounds that this government was collaborating with the Germans, an absurd accusation. However, it is unlikely that the Germans would have requested an independent investigation had they been uncertain of their own innocence. When this request was rejected by the Soviet Union the Germans established their own investigative commission in the spring of 1943, composed of experts from various European universities. It is true that all members of the commission, aside from Switzerland, were from countries that were either allied with or occupied by Germany, but this does not make their conclusions any less important. The commission concluded that the men must have been killed in March or April of 1940, whereas the Soviets claimed that the men had been killed in September of 1941. The Soviets claimed that after the Kozelsk, Ostashkov and Starobelsk camps had been "liquidated" the prisoners were relocated to other camps. According to Soviet reports the prisoners were taken to the Gnezdovo station (that much is true, at least for the Kozelsk prisoners) and were then taken to three special camps.

According to a witness statement, at approximately thirty-minute intervals prison vans took prisoners to these camps. The prisoners were taken to the Katyn forest and murdered there and since the forest was approximately three kilometres from the station, a half-hour would have been a sufficient amount of time to commit this deed. However, the camps where the Soviet authorities claimed the prisoners were taken were purportedly between 25-45 km west of Smolensk and it would not have been possible for the prisoners to be transported so quickly, aside from the fact that it would have been easier in this case to simply take the prisoners from stations that were closer to the camps, rather than to Gnezdovo. The Soviets then claimed that the prisoners, while being interned in these camps (ON1, ON2, and ON3), were supposed to be engaged in road construction until August/September of 1941, a period of approximately sixteen months. If this was the case then why were the prisoners in the graves found together alongside those with whom they had been initially transported? If they had then been segregated into three camps, it would have been impossible for them all to have remained in these same groups.[23]

There were several pieces of evidence which proved decisively that this could not have been the case, such as the fact that numerous Russian newspapers were found on the bodies, none of them dated later than April 1940. Given the state of decay of the bodies, and the fact that the uniforms had to be cut open, it would have been impossible for the Germans to have planted these papers on the prisoners. Other important indicators were the fact that the men had been dressed in heavy coats, which would indicate that they were killed during frosty weather and generally the month of September is not a cold time of year in the region of Smolensk. Also of

importance was the fact that for the bodies to have been at such an advanced stage of decomposition they would have had to have been there for over a year, whereas the Soviets had accused the Germans of having transferred the bodies there.[24]

The issue of Katyn was not generally discussed in Poland in the postwar period, however there were some books written which supported the Soviet version of events. One of these is the book written by Boleslaw Wojcicki, entitled, *Prawda o Katyniu*, written in 1952. It was probably written in response to the Ray Madden Commission investigation in the United States, which had conducted its investigation the year before and which undermined the Soviet version of events. At the beginning of the book the author attempted to denigrate American authority by extensively describing American aggression in Korea. The author also did not fail to include photographs of crying Korean women standing over the bodies of their husbands and sons who had been killed by the Americans. The book contained a great deal of anti-German, anti-capitalist propaganda, however it did provide some unusual arguments for why the Germans were to have supposedly murdered the Poles. One such argument was that:

> Already in September of 1941 the Germans were conscious of the deathly danger that the power of the Soviet Union posed to them and this evoked great joy and hope in Poland as well as the other countries burdened with the German occupation. The Hitlerites may have been fearful that the Polish officers would attempt to escape and join the Red Army.[25]

It does not seem likely that the Germans would have had to have been fearful of this occurring. The author also presented his own version of events, which he hoped would lead the reader to conclude that the Germans were responsible. However, any

discerning reader would see through these transparent lies. At the end of the book the author presented some opinions of "experts" who provided "evidence" of German culpability. All these "experts" were from Soviet-dominated countries. The author then presented copies of newspaper articles written by western reporters who were unfortunately fooled by Soviet propaganda. One was written by correspondent Jerome Davies of the *Toronto Star*, who was at Katyn during the investigation of the Burdenko Commission. He reached the conclusion that the Germans were responsible because he was shown some letters and newspapers that were dated 1941. Though it seems obvious with hindsight that these materials were planted on the victims, they proved to be sufficient evidence to convince many western reporters of German perpetration.[26]

After the German announcement of the finding of the mass graves at Katyn in 1943 the Allies became concerned about maintaining Allied unity and since the Soviet Union was very important to the war effort, western leaders did not think that they could afford to antagonise Stalin by pursuing the issue of Katyn. One example of this is Colonel Van Vliet' s experience. He was an American who was captured by the Germans during the war and was in a POW camp. During the investigation by the committee in 1943 he was forced by the Germans to visit the site, but he was unwilling to go because he believed that his visit would be used for propaganda purposes. However, he had no choice in the matter. Initially he had been prepared to believe that the Germans were responsible for the crime, but his own observations eventually led him to conclude otherwise. After leaving Katyn he decided not to reveal his thoughts regarding Soviet culpability, as he was concerned that his statement would be used by the Germans for propaganda purposes. After the war he

reported his conclusions to General Bissel of American intelligence, and also presented some photographs as evidence. He made his report and then heard nothing further for several years. During the Korean war he learned that his report and the photographs had been lost. He also learned that many other reports that had been critical of the Soviets had similarly been "lost."[27]

A similar example is the experience of another American, George Earl, a long-time government official. Throughout 1943 and 1944 he had collected a great deal of information about Katyn while serving as minister to Austria and Bulgaria and as Special Emissary of the President for Balkan affairs, stationed in Turkey. Based upon his findings he concluded that the Soviets had been responsible for the crime, but when he presented his findings to the President of the United States, the information was ignored. When he approached the president in 1945 with his plan to write a book about the issue he was forbidden to do so. He was then sent to a post in distant Samoa, which was quite ludicrous since he was an expert in east European affairs. Upon his return from Samoa he received an apology from the Navy Department; apparently it had played no role in the decision to have Earle sent to Samoa but the President had requested it.[28]

After the war, the Katyn issue was discussed in the West with a greater degree of freedom. However, there was always the likelihood that the West would be exposed in a negative light given that it had also played a role in the cover-up. It was engaged in collecting information, but there was no mention of bringing the accused to trial . Initial efforts to obtain more information regarding the Katyn crime began in 1949 when a Commission was established in the United States under the leadership of

Arthur Bliss-Lane, former US Ambassador to Poland. However, it did not uncover many additional materials. Again in 1951 a Special Commission was established under Ray Madden, a Congressman from Indiana. The Commission interviewed informants and was able to collect several important documents relating to Katyn. However, the United States government was still fearful of the possible ramifications that could result from pursuing the issue too far. When the Commission completed its investigation it recommended to President Truman that the Katyn affair be brought before the United Nations or the International Court of Justice, but this recommendation was not acted upon by the President.[29]

There is less information regarding the role of the British in concealing the affair, yet it is well known that Churchill had also wanted to avoid conflict with the Soviets over the issue and was constantly trying to persuade Sikorski to be more conciliatory towards the Russians, by claiming that the men were dead and that nothing he could do would bring them back. British SOE documents, which were only released in 1995, reveal that Churchill knew the truth but did not want to antagonize Stalin and as a result he stated openly that the British government should pretend the issue did not exist.[30]

For the Polish communist leadership, Katyn was also an unwelcome issue. Any revelations would equally undermine its credibility as it had played a central role in perpetrating this false interpretation of the events surrounding the massacre. As soon as the Red Army reoccupied central Poland, the NKVD and the prosecutors directed by the Lublin government began the process of seeking out those who had some knowledge regarding Katyn. The purpose of this was to strengthen the Soviets'

argument that if a hearing in Poland confirmed the Soviet version of events then the Soviet Union's case would be much stronger at Nuremburg. However this was not how things worked out.[31]

It is rumoured that at the time of Khrushchev's revelations regarding Stalin's crimes (1956 and 1961), the Soviet leader had also been willing to reveal that the Katyn massacre had been among the misdeeds. At this time the Polish leadership was led by Wladyslaw Gomulka, who apparently dissuaded Khrushchev from making these revelations public. There is no definite date when such a discussion may have taken place; it may have been in 1956 or between 1958 and 1959 when Gomulka made several visits to Moscow. One source indicates that Gomulka was quite anxious when he learned of Khrushchev's intentions. He realised that Khrushchev's aim was to make a declaration stating that Stalin had been responsible for the crimes, believing that as both Poland and the Soviet Union would condemn him for this the brotherhood of the two nations would be strengthened. Gomulka knew this was unrealistic. He knew that the issue of Katyn was a very sensitive one for Poles and that any public statement would lead to further questions. The Polish public would demand concrete details, it would want to see documents, and to know if all of the bodies were buried at Katyn and if not, then where? Gomulka knew that neither the Polish nor Soviet authorities would be prepared to answer such questions and as a result, he thought it better simply not to discuss the issue at all.[32] It was very dangerous in Poland to possess any kind of information or to have been involved in anything related to Katyn. It is not very commonly known that there had been repercussions for those Poles who visited Katyn under German auspices in 1943. One example was Hieronim Majewski, who had been working for the Germans in Poland

during the war. He was forced to go to Katyn as an observer and as a result he was arrested by the Polish authorities in 1950 and was sentenced to six years in prison. Although he was released seven months early, his military rank was reduced and he was stripped of all rights of citizenship.[33]

After several years of concealing the truth behind the events of the spring of 1940, at the end of the 1980s Soviet and Polish leaders made some initial efforts to explain some of the "blank spots" in Polish-Soviet relations. This process officially commenced on April 27, 1985 when Gorbachev met with Jaruzelski and they agreed that efforts to explain some of these "blank spots" would begin. A further step was taken two years later with the April declaration, which was signed by both Gorbachev and Jaruzelski and outlined why as well as what means were to be used to eliminate these "blank spots."[34] This declaration resulted in May 1987 in the establishment of a Joint Commission of Polish and Soviet historians. This Commission met on three occasions and discussed several issues that remained unclear. During the first meeting, the issues of Katyn, as well as the deportation of the Poles under the Soviet occupation of 1939-41, were ignored. During the second meeting, Katyn was discussed under the heading of deportations and only during the third meeting was it discussed as a separate issue, though no significant progress towards revealing the truth was made for several more years.[35] These initial efforts whetted the appetites of both Polish and Russian historians who began to be more vocal about the need to discuss openly these issues and who stressed the importance of cooperation between historians in both countries in order to reach the truth. Russian historian Yuri Afanasyev was one of the first to debate the issue openly and he was honest enough to mention the affair of Katyn as one of the questions that had to be discussed.[36]

Until the 1980s Katyn was not mentioned by the Polish authorities. Despite this fact the majority of Poles were not ignorant of the fact that the massacre had occurred and that the Soviet Union and not Germany was responsible for the crime. Families had lost husbands, fathers, and grandfathers at Katyn, and even people who had no direct connection to the dead had some idea of the circumstances surrounding the death of the men. A public opinion poll taken in 1987 revealed that 82% of the adult population knew about the crime and 68.4% of high school respondents blamed the USSR for the misdeed.[37] The main sources of information accessible to the Poles were the independent press in Poland, western Polish language radio broadcasts, and probably the most important source of information, relatives.

Although efforts to fill in the blank spots in the history of Polish-Soviet relations were not initially fruitful, the fact that a joint commission of Polish and Soviet historians had been established was an important first step and opened the door toward further efforts in this direction. Yet it took several more years before the Soviet Union would admit responsibility and even then it did so only when examination of the Soviet archives led to the discovery of the documents that proved Soviet culpability, and it was on this basis that the authorities of the USSR admitted for the first time in a TASS communique of April 14, 1990, that Beria, Merkulov and their subordinates in the NKVD were to blame. However the communique made no mention of the responsibility of the highest political authorities in the USSR. If the threat of these documents being made public had not existed, it is difficult to say whether any public admission would have been made at all. Even after the admission

was made, however, Poland still did not receive (and has never received) an official apology.

It is known that the Soviet authorities went to great lengths to conceal the truth. However, it would be useful to have access to more documents that would indicate exactly what means were utilized to do so. After the Germans evacuated the territory in September 1943, the Soviets established a "Special Commission to Establish and Research the Circumstances Relating to the Katyn Forest Shootings of Polish Officers and Prisoners of War by the Fascist German Invaders." The name itself is an indicator of how objective the investigation was going to be. The commission was headed by Nikolai Burdenko who was a member of the USSR Academy of Sciences and who was also head surgeon for the Red Army, and therefore the Commission is generally known as the Burdenko Commission. Prior to the investigation by this Commission there must have been some kind of preparation of the area in order to ensure that the results of the inquiry would be favourable to the Soviets. The Commission conducted its investigation between January 16 and 23, 1944. It revealed that there were 11,000 bodies found at Katyn, 925 of which were subjected to autopsies. These bodies were shown to foreign correspondents, though these could not have been the same bodies that had been examined in 1943. The Polish Red Cross had attached metal identification tags to these bodies, in accordance with Red Cross regulations, and yet the bodies examined by the Burdenko Commission did not have these tags. This would imply that the Burdenko Commission did not examine the same bodies as had been examined during the exhumations in 1943. If this was the case then where did they come from? Since the Commission was not working under any kind of international control it would be very

easy for it to manipulate the facts. It is plausible that prior to the investigation other corpses could have been brought to the site and that documents and papers could have been planted, but there is no documentary corroboration to prove this supposition.

The only evidence that we do have comes from aerial photographs taken by the Luftwaffe, which have revealed a great deal of information. Although the Burdenko Commission "officially" began its work in January 1944, the photographs, as well as logic, indicate that the area had to be prepared somehow so that the results of the investigation would be favourable to the Soviets. Aerial photographs taken prior to January 8 demonstrate that the Polish Red Cross cemetery was partially excavated at least several weeks before the beginning of the investigation as the photographs reveal corpses lying on the northern embankment near the cemetery. It is likely that the Soviets were manipulating the evidence at this time, removing papers and documents that could date the crime as well as planting evidence that the executions took place in 1941.[38]

During the Burdenko Commission investigation, some observers remarked upon the fact that many of the bodies that they saw were those of privates, although there were not supposed to be any men of such low rank killed at Katyn. This information was related by American ambassador Harriman to the Secretary of State in Washington, based upon the observations of his daughter Kathleen Harriman, who had been at Katyn, as well as those of reporters. The only logical explanation is that prior to the investigation of the Burdenko commission, the bodies of Polish privates were brought here, which would immediately lead to the question of who were these people, where were they from and where were they killed? However, another

explanation may be that during the Polish and German exhumations, many of the insignia were removed and therefore this would give the impression that the men were of lower rank than was really the case. However, this would likely account for only a small number of the victims, though it is possible that prior to the Burdenko Commission investigation bodies were brought to the site in order to prove the Soviets' argument that there were 14,000 bodies at Katyn.[39] These bodies could likely have been removed later, as some aerial photographs from April and June of 1944 show bulldozers that were likely removing Polish bodies from the site.[40]

Aside from the report published in brochures and entitled "Communique of the Special Commission to Establish and Research the Circumstances Relating to the Katyn Forest Shootings of Polish Officers and Prisoners of War by the German Fascist Invaders," which was more of a piece of propaganda rather than a true report, there were no official documents relating to the investigation of the Committee that outlined its findings based upon solid facts, and no such documents have been found in the archives.[41] Having completed the exhumations, the Soviet authorities established a second cemetery made up of one grave marked by a cross and a second communal grave.

What is interesting is that on January 31, 1944, after the exhumations, General Berling along with his division visited Katyn. Some soldiers claimed that during this visit General Berling placed flowers on the one newly formed mass grave that was there and that there was no evidence of the six graves in which the bodies were buried by the Polish Red Cross in 1943, nor the crosses. It would appear that during the Burdenko Commission investigation the Polish Red Cross cemetery had been

destroyed and the cemetery that the Polish soldiers saw must have been the one that had been previously described.[42] Aerial photographs taken on October 13 and 23, 1943 indicate that the crosses that had been placed by the Polish Red Cross had been removed by the Soviets. This was soon after the area had been reoccupied by the Soviets in September 1943.[43] Aerial photographs reveal that between April and June 1944 the Polish Red Cross cemetery, as well as the second cemetery built by the Soviets was destroyed. One aerial photograph taken on April 28, 1944 shows parts of the Katyn forest being bulldozed, as well as other activity.[44]

The first reliable documentation of what happened to the Katyn forest after the war appeared in June 1957 when a Polish witness rediscovered the third cemetery. The cemetery contained a wooden cross, which stood over a small unmarked concrete slab. This cemetery was liquidated, perhaps around 1960. Photographs also indicate the existence of a fourth cemetery established by the Soviets, which was characterized by a stone obelisk stating in clumsy Polish that the area held the interred remains of Polish officers murdered by the Germans in 1941. Later this cemetery vanished without a trace; it was probably destroyed around 1974. The Soviet authorities established a fifth cemetery, which was known as the "Memorial," and which consisted of two communal graves, two more were constructed in 1988.[45] On July 28, 2000 the Polish Military Cemetery was officially opened, along with the Russian cemetery beside it. The Polish Military Cemetery consists of six communal graves marked with crosses, in addition to the two graves of generals Smorawiski and Bohaterewicz. The generals had been buried there by the Polish Red Cross in 1943 and had not been moved. The death trenches are marked, and the names of 4,412 prisoners executed at Katyn are printed in alphabetical order on individual rust-

coloured metal plaques. We know that there were 4,594 prisoners are Kozelsk, but since the names of certain individuals were not on the transport lists and we do not have access to the personal files of any of the prisoners, from Kozelsk, and also from the two other camps, it is difficult to say what happened to them. Prior to the opening ceremonies, which I attended, the families of those that perished searched for the names of their loved ones among the metal plaques. Many cried when they found what they were searching for, but along with this sadness there was also a sense of relief because they knew that this was the final resting place of their loved ones. It was worse for those who failed to find a plaque with the name of their family member since they could not be sure of his fate.

The Nuremburg Trial demonstrated the willingness of the Allies to partake in the cover up of the truth. The issue of Katyn was included, but the normal course of proceedings would eventually either have led to the prosecution of the accused or to a declaration of their innocence. However, the Nuremburg trial reached no conclusion. It would have been a mockery of the whole legal proceeding to prosecute the Germans for this particular crime. Yet, if it was officially announced that the Germans were innocent then this would automatically have meant that the Soviets should be held accountable, therefore the issue was simply ignored.

Even as late as 1990 the Soviets still appeared to want the world to believe that all the murdered men from the three camps were buried at Katyn. On April 3, 1990 a documentary film about Katyn was aired on Polish television. The documentary presented some interesting information, among which was the claim of one historian that he and others had located the leader of the convoys who was responsible for

transporting prisoners from Ostashkov to Katyn. This was an obvious falsification since even the German investigations in 1943 did not reveal any bodies dressed in police uniforms and the prisoners from Ostashkov were later found at Mednoe.[46]

Prior to the Soviet admission of its culpability in 1990 it had been in the Soviet Union's best interest to propagate the view that all 15,000 bodies had been found at Katyn so that there would not be any questions raised about where the remainder of the bodies were buried. It also strengthened the argument that the Germans were responsible for the atrocity. The Ostashkov camp was situated in an area that was very briefly occupied by the Germans, Kalinin was not. Nonetheless, at this point the location where the Ostashkov prisoners were killed was not known. The area around Starobelsk had not been occupied, therefore if the prisoners from Starobelsk were not buried at Katyn and they were never in German occupied territory, it would be somewhat difficult to prove that they were murdered by the Germans! When the Germans made the announcement in 1943 that they had found the mass grave at Katyn they also cited the higher number of 15,000. They had known that approximately this number of Polish men had been missing and thus assumed that the victims would all be found here. When the Germans realized that only a little over 4,000 bodies were to be found at Katyn, they chose to continue propagating this version, which suited the Soviets as well, to sustain their credibility. During the exhumations the Germans published lists of the prisoners that had been identified at Katyn, therefore many families, particularly those of prisoners from Kozelsk, learned the truth about what happened to their relatives.[47] Zofia Szuchatowicz-Woloszyn claims that when the Germans discovered the graves at Katyn, her family was relieved because these prisoners were only from Kozelsk and they held onto the hope that

their father was still alive. After several years the family suspected that the father had been killed, but they never knew for certain. Mrs. Szuchatowicz-Woloszyn only learned the truth in 1989 when she obtained a copy of Moszynski's book, which contained one of the earliest published lists of those executed and which had already been available in the west for decades. When she looked through the names she found the name of her father (her mother did not live long enough to learn the truth).

Chapter 3: NEW INFORMATION

Prior to the 1990s, much information regarding the Katyn crime was already known. Many books had been written about the topic and aside from specific details, the general course of events had been deduced, and the version of events that was propagated by the Soviet Union was generally regarded with scepticism. Under Gorbachev's policy of glasnost many new revelations were surfacing about the crimes perpetrated during the communist period, and particularly those committed by Stalin. The first important step that the Soviet Union made towards expressing its willingness to reveal the truth about the Katyn massacre was the TASS communique from April 14, 1990, which stated that the Soviet Union officially acknowledged that the NKVD had been responsible for the murder of the Polish prisoners of war. This admission occurred during Polish President Wojciech Jaruzelski's visit to Moscow and on this same day Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev gave his Polish counterpart two volumes of copies of documents. They contained transport lists of prisoners from Kozelsk and Ostashkov who were to be executed and on which basis the transports were determined and also a register of prisoners from Starobelsk arranged in alphabetical order.[48]

A month and a half after the declaration an article written by Leon Bojka appeared in the Polish daily *Gazeta Wyborcza*, which revealed that the prisoners from the Starobelsk camp were buried at Pyatikhatki, which was on the outskirts of Kharkiv in Ukraine. There was some consternation over the article on the Soviet side, but on June 12 *Izvestiya* confirmed the information and subsequently the Kharkiv KGB gave the Polish consul in Kiev the first document and then on June 18 the Polish

embassy in Moscow was unofficially informed that the Ostashkov prisoners had been located at Mednoe, outside of Kalinin (Tver).[49]

One of the reasons why the Soviet Union made the admission at this point was because it was possible that some very important facts regarding the crime of Katyn were about to be revealed, which would cause the Soviet leadership a great deal of embarrassment. Russian historian Natalia Lebedeva had been working in the Soviet archives for many years and she had first found some documents relating to the Katyn crime during the 1970s while conducting research related to the Nuremburg trials. At this time she had not pursued the issue any further. However, in 1988 when the joint Polish-Soviet commission to examine blank spots in Polish-Soviet history was established, Lebedeva became interested in the issue. At this time she found documents which proved definitively that the NKVD had been responsible for the crime. Had the Soviet Union not acknowledged responsibilty at this time, the information would have been made public nevertheless. Therefore, this admission was an act of desperation, to avoid future embarrassment, though, as yet, no official apology was forthcoming. As a result of these discoveries it was also possible to locate the graves of the prisoners from Starobelsk and Ostashkov, which were found in Pyatikhatki near Kharkiv and Mednoe near Tver.

The Russian authorities have attempted to convince us that this admission was a result of their good faith and feelings of moral obligation, although, this has clearly not been the case. In addition to the fear that the information regarding the crime would be released before an official admission could be made, Soviet authorities also acknowledged responsibility in 1990 for reasons of political expediency and calculation. One reason, aside from those previously mentioned, was to undermine the

credibility of the Communist Party and Gorbachev personally. Since Gorbachev was not only a member of this Party, but its head, this admission was meant to discredit him as well. During the discussions about the blank spots in Russian-Polish relations, one of the major issues was the secret protocols attached to the Non-Aggression Pact signed between Germany and the Soviet Union in 1939. Valerii Boldin, assistant to Gorbachev at the end of the 1980s, claims that Gorbachev had wanted these protocols to be destroyed and the only reason he had not done so was because it was simply not possible. Documents of such great importance were registered in several files and book storages, and these would have had to have been destroyed as it would have been impossible to recopy them excluding the relevant information. Even if this had been done, it would have been impossible to conceal the contents. In order to destroy the documents through conventional means, Gorbachev would have needed to sign a letter with the order to destroy them, which would inevitably have compromised him, especially since he had made a commitment to the Polish authorities that these blank spots would be clarified. Since he could not destroy these documents, he attempted to conceal them. Despite these efforts, these documents were found and the truth was revealed. This is an issue very closely linked to that of the documents relating to Katyn and Gorbachev's opponents were successful in compromising him through crimes committed in the distant past. At this time the Communist Party was already falling apart and such an admission would have been its death knell. Therefore, even though Gorbachev was propagating glasnost, he continued to conceal information and acted indecisively. The admission was made, but it was only a partial admission, which made no mention of the role of the Party. The argument was that Stalin did not use the Party as a means to instigate repression, but rather used the organs of repression, such as the NKVD, which acted independently of the Party. He distrusted

the Party and it was always in the background when important decisions were being made.[50] This may be true, but it does not absolve the Party of guilt since it allowed such abuse of power and the CPSU of the late 1980s and early 1990s could not divorce itself completely from the sins committed in the past and attempt to atone for them.

There are also three documents which demonstrate that the Soviets wanted to take advantage of the issue of Katyn for propaganda purposes. The first document is from the CC CPSU Politburo meeting held on May 5, 1988, which gave the order to grant the Poles easier access to Katyn and to use this for propaganda purposes.[51] The second document is from February 23, 1990 and it ordered the committee dealing with television and radio, as well as the two newspapers *Pravda* and *Izvestiya*, to publish the Soviet government's efforts to learn the truth about who was responsible for the crime, as well as the circumstances relating to it.[52] The most important document is the one prepared by Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev on November 3, 1990, which states the president's wish that the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, the State Prosecutor of the USSR, the Ministry of Defence of the USSR, the Committee of State Security of the USSR, as well as other institutions should work together to uncover archival materials relating to Polish-Soviet relations that would provide examples of Soviets being killed by the Poles and to use these documents when discussing "blank spots" with the Polish side.[53] It is uncertain as to whether or not they were used during these discussions but some publications did appear in Russia which claimed that during the Polish-Soviet war of 1920 the Poles murdered numerous Soviet citizens and held them in concentration camps. It was argued that Katyn was a form of reprisal against the murder of Soviets by Poles. The Polish side

invited the Soviets to examine the Polish archives as to the fate of Red Army prisoners of war in Poland, but the Soviets did not respond to this offer. It is evident that at the highest levels of government the Russians attempted to use the issue of Katyn for propaganda purposes and were actively spreading false information.[54]

Once the Soviet Union had made the declaration admitting its responsibility the Polish government wanted to obtain documents that would further clarify the situation. It was intererested specifically in three groups of documents: the results of the deliberations of the "troika," which issued the death sentences for the prisoners; the personal files of those murdered; and those documents located in the Presidential Archives relating to the March 5, 1940 decision to execute the prisoners. However, it was not yet possible to access the documents since the Ministry of the Defence of the Russian Federation closed the archives to outsiders, indicating the Soviet Union's unwillingness to delve further into the issue.[55] In October 1990, however, the Supreme Military Prosecutor's office of the Soviet Union did undertake the task of investigating the Katyn massacre and since the fall of the Soviet Union, the investigation has been led by the Military Prosecution of the Russian Federation.

Ultimately, on October 14, 1992, Russian president Boris Yeltsin and Professor Rudolf Pihoya, head of the committee that dealt with government archives for the Council of Ministers of the Russian Federation, attended a meeting at the Presidential Palace in Warsaw. The purpose of this visit was to give to the Polish president copies of classified documents relating to the Katyn massacre. The most important of these documents was that of March 5, 1940 proving that the Politburo of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union made the decision that 14,700 Polish

citizens interned in the Kozelsk, Starobelsk and Ostashkov camps, and over 11,000 Polish citizens who had been arrested and imprisoned in various prisons in the western regions of the Ukrainian and Belorussian SSRs were to be executed. It was signed by Stalin, Voroshilov, Molotov, Mikoyan, Kalinin, and Kaganovich. This order specified the number of prisoners and that potentially all of them could be executed but it also called for the formation of a "troika," composed of Merkulov, Kabulov and Bashtakov. This body was to be responsible for deciding who was to be sentenced to death (or rather which individuals were to be spared, since the majority were, in the end executed).[56]

The establishment of such troikas was not a new phenomenon in the Soviet Union. Because of the large number of cases that the Soviet courts faced in the period of the Stalinist purges, special troikas had been created in 1936 in order to issue sentences. The latter could be issued in absentia and initially the sentences were fairly mild and excluded the death penalty. The troika mentioned in the documents was of a special sort, however, in that it was given power by the highest level of authority, i.e., the Politburo of the CC CPSU and it had the authority to issue the death penalty without having to go through the process of a trial, or even a formal charge.

It is difficult to determine the exact number of prisoners who were murdered. Prior to the signing of the March 5, 1940 decision the NKVD leader Beria recommended to Stalin that 14, 736 men should be liquidated, in addition to 11,000 prisoners.[57] On September 3, 1956 KGB chief Shelepin wrote a letter to Nikita Khrushchev indicating that out of approximately 25,700 people the troika had decided to liquidate 14,552 POWs and 7,305 prisoners, a total of 21,856.[58] Beria's figure

excluded privates as well as non-commissioned officers who were employed in the camps. The numbers provided by Beria and Shelepin do not vary greatly from the Polish numbers but it is difficult to determine exact figures since they were constantly changing. Some prisoners were placed in prison, some died and others were exchanged with the Germans. However there is a discrepancy with regard to the number of those who remained alive. If we examine Beria's and Shelepin's figures they indicate that only 184 people out of the three camps survived. The US-based Polish historian Zawodny claims that there were 448 survivors. Siemiaszko suspects that there is a discrepancy between the Polish and Soviet figures because Polish figures tended to include the camp staff, which was also comprised of POWs, privates, etc.[59] It is difficult to fix an exact number for those who were killed because we do not have access to the original lists of the prisoners placed on the transports and we also know that at times prisoners were moved to other camps.

These documents that revealed the decision to eliminate the prisoners finally provided incontrovertible evidence that the decision to liquidate the Poles was not the result of a mistake or misunderstanding, but was a Party decision, just like any other decisions that were made at the time. There had been some unconvincing arguments from the Soviet authorities that when Stalin issued the order to liquidate the camps, his subordinates mistakenly thought he had ordered the prisoners to be shot. Yet the orders were clear: the documents indicate exactly what the intention was and how it was to be carried out.

Most of the initiatives to ascertain more information regarding the prisoners and their fates have come not from the Polish government but from the families

themselves. In 1990 the first officially recognized organizations of Katyn families were formed, and currently there are branches in most major Polish cities. If it were not for them our knowledge today would not permit an in-depth discussion of the massacres. Bozena Lojek, who is head of the Federation of Katyn Families, claims that prior to 1990 it was very difficult to organize the families and that when they did begin to organize they received very little support for their efforts.[60] It is not surprising that the families of those killed should today take such an active role in the remembrance and commemoration of their loved ones. During Communist rule in Poland they were persecuted and not allowed to delve into such matters. After the war the family of Zofia Szuchatowicz-Woloszyn left Lviv and came to the People's Republic of Poland. The family did not suffer from direct persecution but she claims that life was always more difficult for people who had unclear backgrounds. She never mentioned the fact that her father had been a prisoner in Starobelsk but only that he had been killed during the war. For several years her mother wrote inquiries to the Red Cross and Polish army asking about her husband, but though she provided his name and rank she never received any information.[61]

None of the sources indicate the precise reasons for Stalin's order to murder the Poles. However, many possible reasons have been presented. One theory states that Stalin wanted revenge on the Poles for the defeat of the Soviet Union during the Polish-Soviet war of 1920. The war may have been a factor, but it is unlikely that such a momentous decision was made solely on these grounds. In the autumn of 1939 the Soviet Union had interned tens of thousands of Polish citizens and as a result had to decide what to do with them. The vast majority were very patriotic, and the Soviet authorities attempted to convert the prisoners in the three camps to communism,

however, their efforts failed. The prisoners could not be interned in camps indefinitely and handing them over to the west or to neutral countries was not an option that the Soviets wished to pursue. Possibly financial considerations played a role in the decision, to a limited degree. The three camps at Kozelsk, Ostashkov and Starobelsk were not labour camps and as a result would have been a financial burden on the Soviet authorities. Although the costs of maintaining prisoners are unlikely to have been the main reason for the extermination of the Poles, they likely played some kind of role. It is evident that Stalin greatly distrusted the Poles, even those who felt an affinity for communism. This is demonstrated by the fact that in July of 1938 Stalin dissolved the Communist Party of Poland. He also invited the leaders of the Party to Moscow and subsequently ordered their execution.

The Soviet war with Finland had begun on November 30, 1939 and the Soviet leadership anticipated that space would be needed to house the prisoners of war who would be interned over the course of this campaign. Nine camps in which Poles were currently being housed were set aside for this purpose. It was evident that space would need to be set aside for these Finnish prisoners of war. Wojciech Materski focuses on one document from the beginning of February, which gives the impression that the prisoners were to be sent to labour camps in the north.[62] This is a letter written by Grigorii Koritov, who was head of the Special Division at the Ostashkov camp and among other things he mentions that 600 of the camp prisoners had been sentenced to 3, 5, or 8 years in Kamchatka. However the Narkom had ordered that all further sentencing be stopped for the moment.[63] At this time, the war with Finland was already going badly and in the end there were only 1,000 Finnish prisoners of war. Therefore, there would have been less urgency to make room for these

anticipated prisoners. Nonetheless, a decision still had to be made as to what to do with the Polish prisoners. Perhaps initially the camp authorities anticipated that they would be sentenced to work in labour camps but the higher authorities decided that it was preferable to simply exterminate them. What is somewhat difficult to understand is why the Soviets put so much effort into learning all the details about the prisoners' lives if their extermination was being planned. The prisoners were asked to fill out questionnaires, and undergo many interviews. Perhaps, initially the Soviet authorities thought that more of these men could be converted to communism and therefore wanted to know everything about their backgrounds, but once they realized that the majority could not be converted, they decided that it would be best to eliminate them. Alternatively they may have simply wanted to know with whom they were dealing. There is no clear answer to this question sixty years after the massacre.

At the time when the Soviet authorities were making plans to murder the Poles it is unlikely that the Soviet Union foresaw that Britain and France would become its ally and that its former ally Germany would turn on it and invade Soviet territory a year later. The situation changed initially with the incorporation of the Baltic republics in 1940. A few thousand Poles had escaped to Latvia and Lithuania after the Soviet invasion in 1939 and had been interned there since that time. When the Soviet Union annexed Lithuania and the other Baltic republics in July 1940 these men were then interned in the USSR, and imprisoned in Gryazovets, Pavlishevsky Bor and the Kozelsk camp, which became known as Kozelsk II. These men were not executed en masse but they were not treated leniently either. Approximately 4,000 were sent to labour camps in the harsh Soviet northern territories in March 1941. They were sent to the Murmansk region to build an airport in the region of Ponoi.[64] Despite the fact

that these men were not executed en masse, it is not true that none of the men were murdered: groups of people were placed under arrest even when they were already in the camps. Several men who were accused of leading counterevolutionary organizations in Kozelsk were arrested and imprisoned. Many of the men who were interned in Kozelsk II could later be found in Moszynski's Katyn lists. Even though these men had not been from the original camp and had not been killed in Katyn, many of them died in NKVD prisons. Therefore, indirectly, they do belong on the Katyn list.[65]

Polish author Andrzej Friszke raised the question: if the international situation had changed earlier, would Stalin not have liquidated the Poles who had been interned in September 1939?[66] However, it seems likely that the Soviets had planned the extermination of the Poles beforehand and even though the men from Latvia and Lithuania who were interned later were not disposed of in the same manner, they were treated quite harshly. It is manifest that if the Soviets had been planning to take these men into custody, then they could not have kept such a large number of men imprisoned for an indefinite period of time. The supposition that the men were to be kept in custody for the duration of the war makes little sense technically since the Poles and Soviets were not enemies. The Poles, at least in theory, would have fought against the Germans alongside the Russians and they did not constitute a military threat to the Soviets.

It was evident that the men who were interned constituted the most patriotic and elite element of the Polish nation, and therefore as noted above it is unlikely that they could be converted to communism. Thus it would be illogical to release them

even after the war when the Soviet Union wanted to make Poland into a puppet state, since these men were potential leaders in a capitalist postwar Polish society. When the men were taken into custody they did not remain in the Polish territories but were taken into the Soviet Union. None of the camps were situated in territories that had been Polish prior to the war: the Soviets wanted to maintain secrecy and had these men been killed on former Polish territory the Poles living there would undoubtedly have learned of this. Perhaps if the Soviets had anticipated the German invasion, they would have been more careful about concealing the crime and have deposited the bodies further east.

One of the mysteries that remains unsolved is the question of what criteria were used to decide which prisoners should survive. One can speculate that perhaps these were the men that the Soviet authorities thought that they could convert to communism, but this theory is rather weak given the fact that the majority that survived was as strongly patriotic as those who had perished. Could the Soviet authorities have spared the men on the grounds that they could divulge some useful information? Lebedeva claims that out of the almost 400 people who found themselves in the Gryazovets camp, one quarter were NKVD collaborators. The documents do not list the names of the agents, as pseudonyms were used, but General Zygmunt Berling admitted to having cooperated with the NKVD.[67] Some of the men that had been left alive had remained so at the request of the German embassy, 91 others survived because Merkulov supposedly still wanted to investigate them, and 161 were unaccounted for. Lebedeva believes that these were the likely agents.[68] It is, however, unlikely that if these men had some kind of information that the Soviet authorities wanted, the NKVD would utilize such complicated means to acquire it.

Generally the NKVD used more direct and also more painful methods in order to obtain the necessary information. Natalia Lebedeva claims that there is a document that lists the criteria, which were to be used in deciding who was to be spared. According to Lebedeva, the first group comprised those in whom the V Division (intelligence) of the GUGB was interested, the second group constituted those officers who demonstrated an interest in fighting alongside the Red Army during the anticipated German invasion, the third group was comprised of Germans who were saved as a result of the intervention of the German embassy or Lithuanian mission, and the final group consisted of those who appeared to be susceptible to indoctrination. There were also the group of NKVD collaborators previously mentioned and whose names we will likely never learn as they used pseudonyms.[69]

Another matter to be clarified is how the lists of the prisoners to be transported were relayed to the camps. Many of the sources as well as personal recollections, such as those of Stanislaw Swianiewicz, who was a prisoner of Kozelsk but was not murdered at Katyn,[70] indicate that each day the camp authorities would receive a telephone call from Moscow which dictated the lists of prisoners to be included in the next transport.[71] Natalia Lebedeva disagrees with this account of official procedure, claiming that these lists were sent directly to the camp authorities. Until April 14, 1940, these lists were signed by Soprunenko the head of the UPW. After this date he left Moscow to take part in the commission involved in the exchange of prisoners with Finland, and the lists were signed thereafter by his deputy Khokhlov. These lists were brought to the camps in envelopes labelled "confidential," the camp commendant would sign and stamp the lists, and then return the empty envelopes to the UPW. Very often between three and seven lists would be sent at one time. The

copies of the same lists, signed by Merkulov, would be sent to the heads of the NKVD of the districts of Smolensk, Kharkiv, and Kalinin, to Captain J.I. Kupryanov, Major P.S. Safonov and Major Tokaryev. These included the orders to execute prisoners.

Lebedeva believes that because of the highly secretive nature of the operation, as well as the fact that dictating over the telephone the names of tens of thousands of Poles, many of which would sound quite similar, may have produced many errors, and that the lists must have been sent in written form.[72] The documents do not mention anything about lists being dictated over the telephone. Many of the letters of officials and others reveal information about the orders. One example is the report written by A.Berezkov, who was the commandant of the Starobelsk camp, to Soprunenko regarding April and May transports. This report reveals two things. First, there had to have been written lists sent to the camp since Berezkov, for instance, mentions that "in the list from 3.IV.1940 under number 75 and on the list from 27.IV.1940 Number 053/2 under Number 56 the name of Krzyzanowski Stanislaw is written twice." The statement also suggests that the Soviets were very meticulous about errors, and therefore one can concur with Lebedeva's assessment that the lists could not have been dictated solely over the telephone because of the unreliability of such a method. Many sources however do mention that some kinds of lists were dictated over the telephone. Perhaps after receiving these written lists, Moscow telephoned the camps to confirm that the names on the list were correct?[73]

Irrespective of how they were delivered, the lists were issued and the orders to execute prisoners were carried out. The lists were signed by Soprunenko or his deputy Khokhlov beginning April 1, 1940, but some sample groups were removed

earlier. The first group to be removed was that of the priests who had been taken from Kozelsk on Christmas of 1939. Their exact fate is still unknown, but we can assume that they met the same fate as their fellow prisoners would meet several months later. On March 8, 1940 there was also a small group that was removed from Kozelsk. First these victims spent two days in an NKVD prison in Smolensk, then they were possibly brought to the NKVD vacation resort at Kosogory and shot, though this is uncertain.[74]

In the first half of March the camp leadership was ordered to make lists of the prisoners along with the addresses of their families. These lists were not arranged according to alphabetical order, which would have been logical if the authorities were trying to establish the addresses to where the officers and police officers should be sent back. Rather they were listed according to the districts and provinces in which their families were residing.[75] The reasoning behind this was that the Soviet authorities were planning to deport the families of the prisoners to Kazakstan. The Directive written by People's Commissar for Internal Affairs of the USSR Lavrentii Beria to the People's Commissar of Internal Affairs of the Ukrainian SSR Serov and of the Belarusian SSR Kanava stated that "On the 15th of April the families of the officers of the Polish army, police and high government officials of the former Polish government, etc.... are to be deported to the Kazakh SSR for a period of ten years." In preparation for the deportation Beria ordered that by March 30, 1940 lists of the families should be formulated. To enhance the smooth progression of the deportations, operational troikas consisting of the head of the UNKVD, a representative of the USSR NKVD as well as a representative of a member of the Ukrainian SSR NKVD or Belarusian SSR NKVD were to be created as well as

regional troikas which were to work out the specifics of the deportations.[76] In April, 1940 59,416 people were deported. Lists of families were required not only for those families residing in Soviet occupied territories, but also in the territories that were occupied by the Germans. This fact is specifically mentioned by Beria in his letter to Soprunenko,[77] and it is evident that these orders were carried out, as on March 13 A. Berezkov, commandant of the Starobelsk camp wrote to Soprunenko attaching a list of those families living in the German-occupied territories.[78] These lists must have been formulated with the help of the Germans, though some documents have revealed that the Germans also received information from the Soviets regarding prisoners in Soviet occupied territories.[79]

There has been some speculation as to whether the Germans and Soviets cooperated in their efforts to exterminate the Polish intelligentsia. It is well known that at the same time the Germans were conducting their own liquidation of Polish government and intellectual elites through their Action AB (*Ausserordentliche Befriedungsaktion*). Is this merely a coincidence? There were several meetings which took place between the Soviets and the Germans. The first took place in Lviv in October 1939. The second took place in Krakow in January 1940 and lasted several weeks. Immediately afterward, the first mass deportation of Poles from eastern Poland took place. In March 1940, at the time when plans for the deportations of the families of the men interned in the three camps were being made and the liquidations of the camps and prisons were soon to begin, a meeting took place in Zakopane between high functionaries of the NKVD and the RSHA. It is plausible that they could have discussed their respective methods for liquidating the Poles. Natalia Lebedeva and Wojciech Materski claim that this information will not be made

available as it is likely that the documents relating to these meetings are hidden away in the archives of the Federal Security Services of the Russian Federation, formerly the KGB. They could also be in the Presidential archives, which are accessible to a very limited degree--these are the archives in which the documents that were given to the Polish government in 1992 were found. The authors believe that these documents will not see the light of day for the following reasons: that the only reason the other documents were released was due to the political game which was being played at the time, that the purpose of releasing the documents was to discredit the Party as well as its successors. The authors also believe that evidence of cooperation between the Gestapo and NKVD would tarnish the image of the entire nation and not only the Party, and as a result it is unlikely that documents demonstrating such cooperation will be revealed.[80] This is not to say that the Germans knew the specifics about Soviet plans to exterminate the vast majority of people interned in their camps. It is likely though that there was at least some kind of cooperation between the Soviet Union and Germany between September 1939 and June 1941, that was based upon the exchange of information.

The family of Mrs. Szuchatowicz-Woloszyn was able to avoid being deported. Its survival may have been due partially to luck and partially to circumstances. In one letter that her father sent, he advised the family not to write down their new address. She also said that during the period when the deportations were taking place they did not spend the night at home but at her grandmothers'. She said that it was possible to know when the NKVD were going to arrest people because the night before these arrests were to take place, large trucks would be parked outside of the NKVD building on Pelczynska street beforehand. People would watch for their arrival and

they could anticipate if arrests were going to occur that night. Another key point was the fact that the family did not live in its former apartment at the time of the arrests. They had been forced to vacate their apartment and so they were living with some relatives. The registration book where their names had been written under the old address had been destroyed. During the deportations the family spent the night at the grandmother's. In order to ensure that it was safe to go back to the apartment of their relatives, where they were staying, they established a system whereby if the relatives placed nothing on the windowsill, then it was safe to return. If it was not safe then there would be some kind of object placed on the sill. Since the family was not registered as living at this address, the only way the NKVD could have obtained this address would have been from the letters that the father had written. The NKVD never looked for them at the grandmother's house, likely because letters were never sent there.[81]

There is still some uncertainty as to where exactly the prisoners from Kozelsk were killed, although we have a clearer picture of the process that preceded the execution. The Kozelsk prisoners were taken to the train station in trucks and then transported by train to the station at Gnezdovo, 18 km from Smolensk. The only exception to this pattern was the transport that was sent on April 26 and the final transport on May 12. The first transports of prisoners were taken to Smolensk where they were killed in the city prison; their bodies were also deposited at Katyn. The final transport was comprised of the prisoners who were to be sent to Pavlishevsky Bor rather than being executed at Katyn. The majority of sources state that the prisoners were killed right in the Katyn forest, which was situated approximately 3 km from Gnezdovo station, and here they were executed. However, there are some

sources which claim that the prisoners were not killed directly in the forest. Mikke, for example, claims that there is still some uncertainty whether the men were shot in the forest or at another location, such as the NKVD villa that existed there during the war.[82]

Dr. Wodzinski, who was head of the Polish Red Cross investigation which conducted exhumations in the Katyn forest in 1943, at the same time as the German commission, wrote that he believed the prisoners had been shot in the forest. He based this claim on the fact that a large number of shells were found in the close vicinity of the death trenches, but he did not mention the precise number of shells. Shells were also found at Mednoe, even though the executions took place at another location. It is possible that the NKVD brought the corpses to the forest and shot them to ensure that there were no prisoners who remained alive. Dr. Wodzinski also found that some bullets were embedded 1.5-2 m above the ground in trees that were situated along the side of death trench 1.[83] A possible explanation for this is that the prisoners from the first transports were killed directly in the forest. The L-shaped death trench 1 was filled with prisoners from the first transports, and the evidence does not indicate that bullets were found in trees in the vicinity of the other trenches. The NKVD may have realized that killing the prisoners directly in the forest was too risky--perhaps someone had tried to escape. The NKVD could have then decided that it would be better to conduct the executions at another location, such as the NKVD dacha.

There is strong evidence to support the theory that the men, or at least the majority, were executed at the NKVD dacha. The caretaker Klimov testified that the men had been shot in the forest, but one of the drivers, Titkov, claims that executions

took place in the dacha.[84] In an interview, Dmitri Stepanovich Tokaryev, chief of the Division of the NKVD in the Obvod of Kalinin in 1940, provided a very detailed account of the executions of the prisoners from Ostashkov. He maintains that he personally took no part in them, but heard that some executions had been conducted "in a stupid way" somewhere around Smolensk. He claims that they were conducted right at the sites of the trenches where people could hear what was going on and one time someone had tried to escape, making a great deal of noise in the process. He did not mention Katyn specifically, but it is evident that it was Katyn to which he was referring. His comments help to corroborate the theory that initially the executions were conducted in the forest, but once the NKVD realized that rather than having to take precautions to ensure that prisoners did not make noise or try to escape, it would be easier to control the prisoners indoors, rather than in a wide open space.[85] The prisoners from Starobelsk and Ostashkov were killed in the basements of NKVD buildings in Kharkiv and Kalinin (Tver), therefore why could this not have been the case with Katyn? It is known that prior to being executed, those who were killed in the basements of NKVD buildings in Kalinin and Kharkiv were asked to state their names, in order to ensure that the correct person was being executed. This would have been difficult to do if the prisoners were lined up before a trench, fully aware of what fate awaited them. According to witnesses, the cars returned to Gnezdovo train station at thirty-minute intervals. The NKVD dacha was located closer to the train station than was the forest itself, hence the men could have been transported to the dacha, have been killed there and then deposited in the death trenches. While the bodies were being transported to the trenches, the car would have had sufficient time to return to Gnezdovo station and transport the next shipment of prisoners.

There were some prisoners who had their hands tied. The most precautions were taken with the prisoners who were buried in death trench number 5, who all had their hands bound and their heads covered with their coats, which would both prevent them from seeing and prevent their shouts from being heard. Although there were other trenches in which the prisoners had their hands bound, only in number 5 were both their hands bound and their heads covered. This was one of the first transports, and several theories as to why this particular group was treated differently can be presented. Since this was one of the first groups then perhaps the NKVD was more careful about taking precautions and later realized that it was unnecessary to be so diligent. Another possibility is that this group tried to offer some kind of resistance, which may have taken place in one train wagon as the trench did not contain all prisoners from that particular transport.[86] There were other prisoners who had their hands bound, but in a less complicated manner. However, Siromyatnikov stated during his interview that prisoners from Starobelsk often had their hands bound, despite the fact that they were executed in the NKVD basement.

The most important piece of evidence, which supports the theory that the executions were conducted in the dacha, is the diary of Major Solski, who was killed at Katyn. He wrote about the journey, ending his account with a description of how one final search took place in an area which he described as being like a holiday resort. It is difficult to imagine Major Solski writing about a search taking place in the forest among the death trenches. The only possible explanation is that the search took place at the dacha. Major Solski still had time to write about it. Another factor which supports the theory that the prisoners were taken to the dacha was the story related by Stanislaw Swianiewicz, who had been a prisoner at Kozelsk and had been

included in the transport that had been taken to Gnezdovo and was then separated from the group that was executed. He was placed in an empty wagon where he observed what was taking place. Swianiewicz wrote that he observed prisoners being taken away not in "black ravens"[87] but in buses with windows that were smeared so that it was impossible to see through them.[88] It is unlikely that prisoners would be taken to the execution site in such buses, as the black ravens would have been much more expedient for this kind of transport since they ensured the isolation of the prisoners.[89] The dacha must have played some kind of significant role in the course of events and cannot be disregarded, as the above evidence seems to indicate. It is logical that the prisoners were killed at the dacha since taking them to the dacha in order to search them and then transporting them yet again to an execution site in the forest would have taken an excessive amount of time.

There is another argument which supports the supposition that the men were killed in the dacha. The NKVD was very meticulous about maintaining secrecy. It would be much easier to maintain this secrecy if the executions took place in the basement of a building rather than in a forest that was relatively close to the highway, approximately 300m, and where it would be much easier for the local population to hear the shots. The Gnezdovo railway station is fairly close to the execution site, and it is possible to hear the sound of trains from the spot (I was able to hear these trains when visiting there); therefore, it is theoretically plausible that at the train station it would also be possible to hear the shots of the pistols. Not only would there be the threat of the local population hearing the shots but the other prisoners waiting at Gnezdovo station might have heard them too.

The fact that the shots were fired with such precision is also an argument in favour of the execution taking place in the dacha. If the men were herded into a small room, they could be taken by surprise more easily. The prisoner could be led into the room and a skilled executioner could quickly stand behind him and fire the shot. This procedure occurred at Tver and Kharkiv. It would be much more difficult to fire so precisely if the prisoner was placed before a death trench. There would be no element of surprise here since the prisoner would know exactly what kind of fate awaited him and would be more likely to pose a struggle, which would automatically hinder precision. The fact that the bodies were arranged neatly only in trenches 1, 2, and 4, is also supportive of the theory that many were executed at another location. In the remaining trenches, the bodies were placed in a haphazard manner. It would be useful to know the order in which the various transports were buried, as it would then be easier to determine a kind of pattern. However, it is possible only to speculate. We have access to the transport lists, but when the Germans conducted the exhumations in 1943, they numbered the corpses in the order in which they were removed from trenches. The problem is that they did not remove the corpses in a systematic manner, and the list of names listed in *Amtliches Materiales zum Massenmord von Katyn* does not state which corpses were removed from which trench.

The Kozelsk prisoners were murdered by members of the special division of the Smolensk NKVD aided by functionaries of the Minsk NKVD.[90] Ivan Krivozertsev, who had been a resident of Gnezdovo and who was one of the first to tell the Germans what had transpired, claimed that he heard from Yakim Razuvayev, who was a driver for the Smolensk NKVD, that the Smolensk NKVD handled the transport of the prisoners from Smolensk to Gnezdovo and from Kosogory to Katyn

and that the executions themselves were performed by the Minsk NKVD. The latter was likely used because the local people generally knew the members of the Smolensk NKVD, whereas they would not have been acquainted with members of the Minsk NKVD. It was also likely that the Minsk NKVD was delegated the task in order to help maintain secrecy. Since different people were assigned different duties, they could not know the entire truth about what was happening, and would have had difficulty piecing together the whole sequence of events.[91]

The Starobelsk prisoners were taken by train to the Kharkiv south train station, and then transported by "black ravens" to the NKVD prison in Kharkiv. The executions took place here, at night, in a special cell in the basement. All the prisoners were killed with one shot to the back of the head, one at a time, after which their bodies were loaded onto trucks and taken to the VI quarter of the forest, near Pyatikhatki. This land belonged to the NKVD and was used as a vacation resort for its functionaries. The area was enclosed by barbed wire and was closely guarded. Some of the prisoners were killed on site, in the forest, as well.

The prisoners from Ostashkov walked to the Soroga station, were loaded into trains, and taken through Bologoye to Kalinin (Tver) and then brought to the Regional NKVD headquarters in Kalinin (Tver). The executions also took place at night: the bodies were removed through a back door, loaded into trucks and transported 26 km to the recreation centre of the NKVD in Mednoe. None of the men were killed at the site of the graves and the bodies were deposited in a haphazard way into graves that had already been prepared. The executions were completed by May 16, 1940.[92]

The interview with Dmitrii Tokaryev who was the head of the NKVD division for the Kalinin district shed a great deal of light both on the course of events leading to the killing of the prisoners from Ostashkov and regarding the decision to liquidate the men from the three camps. For instance, he informs us of the meeting he attended that took place in March 1940 at which the heads of the three camps, as well as the chiefs of the Kalinin, Kharkiv, and Smolensk NKVD, and others, were called together to Moscow where Beria and Merkulov's deputy, Kobulov informed them of the decision. He also mentions the names of those who had been sent from Moscow to conduct the executions, that is, Blokhin, Sinyegubov and Krivyenko.[93] He was able to describe all the preparations made for the prisoners, though he claims to have played no role in the executions themselves and in fact he was not on the list of those who were to receive money for having taken part in the executions.[94]

One secret that has been revealed thanks to new information, even though there had been some suspicions to this effect, was the location of the graves of those killed from Ostashkov and Starobelsk. In Pyatikhatki wartime events had destroyed the fence around the NKVD recreation facilities and people already in the 1950s were finding parts of uniforms and bones in the forest. However, at this time, this information would not have been made public. In several documents some locations were consistently mentioned, such as Kharkiv, Derkachi, etc. At the end of June of 1990 *Literaturnaya Gazeta* also mentioned the name "Suchy Vavoz" by Lugansk (previously Voroshilovgrad) where in January of that same year some bodies, likely a further example of victims of Stalinist repressions, were found, though these were not in fact the Polish officers. Investigators believed that the Starobelsk prisoners would be found in the vicinity of Kharkiv. The precise location used to be outside of the city

limits when the crime was committed, but is today under the administration of the city of Kharkiv. The author of this article writes that before the exhumations actually occurred and the bodies were officially found, he had speculated correctly on what had happened.[95]

The mass graves at Mednoe and Pyatikhatki do not appear to have been tampered with and there seems to be less mystery surrounding these places. The graves of the police officers from Ostashkov at Mednoe are situated 30 km from Tver at the edge of the forest of the recreational area of the Kalinin NKVD. The exhumations conducted between July 25 and August 1991 revealed 243 bodies buried in a common ditch in the forest of the Mednoe region. The bodies were arranged in a haphazard way, and it was obvious that they had been dumped at the site. During these exhumations the team also deduced that the terrain must have been levelled at some point in order to conceal the bodies since such a large number of bodies would have caused the earth to swell in certain areas. It is not known however, when this was done.[96] In 1994 further mass graves were localized and it was also learned that only Polish police officers were buried there. The graves of the officers from Starobelsk at Kharkiv are situated in the VI quarter of the forest area surrounding the city, very close to the district of Pyatikhatki. In 1991 the exhumations revealed fragments of at least 167 individuals, who were buried in a mass grave. Exhumations also revealed the graves of Ukrainians murdered by the NKVD. In 1994 exhumations were again conducted and they revealed the existence of eleven mass graves, six of which contained Poles and were located in the vicinity of the "black road." Exhumations at Kharkiv continue and thus far they have revealed the existence of 46 mass graves of various sizes containing both Poles as well as other nationalities.[97]

The exhumations at Katyn conducted in the 1990s have shed light on some mysteries, but others still remain unclarified. The Katyn graves are situated 3 km from Gnezdovo station in a forest, 18 km west of Smolensk. Prior to these exhumations there had been some fear that after the investigation of the Burdenko Commission, these bodies had been removed. In 1991, during the exhumations at Mednoe and Kharkiv, the commission also reinvestigated Katyn. As suspected, there were no graves where the large granite Soviet "Memorial" had been placed, but, the investigation discovered body parts and bones.[98] During the Polish Red Cross exhumations in 1943 the bodies of Generals Smorawinski and Bohaterewicz had been placed in coffins and reburied separately. In 1995 the Polish commission reburied them and held an official funeral for them. In 1944 during the investigation of the Burdenko Commission these graves had not been touched, but they had become overgrown and had to be located again. Aside from the reburial of the two generals the purpose of the 1995 exhumation was to find grave number 1 in which, in 1943, had been placed the bodies of the Polish officers taken out of the death trenches. The other purpose was to open grave number 6 and to examine death trenches 1 to 7, as well as to check death trench number 8, situated a bit further from the others. In death trenches 1-6 the commission found body parts, such as arms, legs, skulls, as well as mementoes such as medals and other insignia. It appears that the 1943 exhumations were not very thorough as at the end of the exhumations the Polish Red Cross had reburied the bodies in six graves. In death trench number 6 the commission also found some bodies that had not been touched in 1943 and the graves that were searched revealed the bodies of Polish officers. Trench number 8 is shrouded in mystery. It contained approximately 200 Polish officers who had not been placed in

the common grave. The bodies should have been there in 1995, but the Commission only uncovered bones. Evidently someone tried clumsily to eliminate traces of its existence. One theory that exists is that the bodies were grouped together with those bodies in the Polish Red Cross cemetery, though this would be impossible to determine.[99]

Stanislaw Mikke, who was in Katyn, Kharkiv and Mednoe on several occasions, describes some of the problems that continue to exist regarding the issue of Katyn. He claims that among the Russian authorities the attitude prevailed that if things were made difficult for the Polish Commission, then it would have to abandon its work. He claims that the equipment that had been promised was not made available to the Commission in 1995 and he feels that this was not a result of lack of organization but done purposely. Mikke comments that the Smolensk authorities in particular, and specifically governor Glushenkov, made it a point to attempt to sabotage the project, although the local authorities were somewhat more cooperative. At every step there appeared to be efforts to hinder the work: the team encountered a blockade of women from the children's sanatorium situated close to the exhumation site, who, as the committee found out, had been informed by the governor Anatolii Novikov that during the course of the exhumations 100 hectares would be dug up (in reality only two hectares were to be overturned) and that the sanatorium would be closed down and the children forced to leave. The Commission also had difficulties at the hotel where they were staying because the telephone operator had orders not to allow them to contact Warsaw or the Polish ambassador in Moscow. This was only cleared up after the intervention of the Polish ambassador.[100] The author also lists several other examples of the Russian authorities attempting to make things difficult,

such as the funeral of the generals on September 7, 1995. A government delegation with members of the families of the generals was to arrive, but they were denied permission to land. The Polish authorities are also partially to blame for this confusion because there is a rule stating that all military planes must obtain permission to land ten days in advance and they had not requested this permission within that time. Despite this fact though, the Russian side knew that this was the case and rather than informing the Polish side of the situation the Russian authorities waited till the last minute. The passengers were obliged to wait in Warsaw, anticipating that this permission would be granted.

The author also relates some discussions that he had with Russians. He describes one incident in which a group of Russians was visiting the site and how several of them continued to argue that the NKVD was not responsible for the massacre and that they had no faith in the documents because they had been provided by then Russian president Yeltsin who was an alcoholic and traitor. The author, however, is also critical of some Polish actions. He claims that many of the other reporters who were there during the exhumations acted in a very unprofessional manner and did not demonstrate the proper respect. He also describes a situation where during one of the masses at the Katyn site, some representatives of the Polish embassy did not appear interested in what was happening and did not even talk to the Commission before or after the mass.[101]

One issue that has been neglected by much of the historiography but which requires closer examination is the question of over 18,000 men who were held in prisons throughout western Belarus and Ukraine, 7,305 of whom were killed. The

troika was given the files of 11,000 of them. These were men who were arrested on the basis of Order number 001353, issued on October 5, 1939, and signed by Merkulov, which ordered the arrest of enemy elements residing in the territories of western Ukraine and Belarus.[102] It is uncertain why only 11,000 out of the over 18,000 were included in this directive. On September 28, 1939 Beria signed the order stating that the prisoners of the camps were to be registered and were to fill out questionnaires provided by the NKVD.[103] Although a great many "class enemies" had already been imprisoned in the various camps, some were still free, and thus the order was given to place them under arrest. On the same day that order 001353 was signed, October 5, 1940, Beria also issued order 001186 calling for the formation of three groups: one operative, the second to collect evidence, and the third an investigative group whose responsibility was to collect materials regarding Polish Intelligence. The sentences were to be decided by the same troika, which was to make its decision on the basis of files sent to them from the Ukrainian and Belarusian governments.[104]

The fate of these prisoners is not entirely a mystery, since it is now known that they, like their compatriots who were interned in the camps, were killed. However, it is not known where their graves are located. Increased interest in these individuals was aroused when the Polish authorities revealed the content of the documents that the Soviet Union gave to the Polish president in October 1992. The section that caused the most interest was the March 5, 1940 order to execute the Poles and this note listed those who were potentially to be executed, including those who were in the various prisons.[105] Prior to the release of these documents a substantial amount of information was known about the prisoners from the three camps, but next to nothing was known about the fates of these forgotten prisoners. The next step was to compile

a list of these prisoners,which was aided by the fact that in May 1994 the Ukrainian Security services gave the Polish prosecutor Stefan Sniezko a list of files of 3,435 Polish citizens who had been arrested. However, the list will remain incomplete until it is possible to receive the names of those who were held in Belarusian prisons, and under the current regime of President Alyaksandr Lukashenka, this seems unlikely to occur.

The Ukrainian list was published three months later in the book *Ukrainski Slad Katynia*. In this book, author Zuzanna Gajowniczek makes an appeal to all those who might have some information regarding the names listed. This appeal was also published twice in the Polish daily *Gazeta Wyborcza*.[106] As a result of these appeals and further research the author was able to identify 2,000 people from the list. The number has now risen to 2,800, therefore 80% of those named on the list have been identified. Sources regarding these prisoners are quite difficult to obtain, particularly since all of their personal files were sent to Moscow on the orders of the NKVD. Many of these files were purported to have been destroyed in 1956, though some of the surveillance files have been maintained, and contain a substantial amount of important information. Some fragments of the evidence files have also been preserved, which provide us with some personal information as well as dates of transports and destination. The most important items of information, however, are the dates when certain prisoners' cases were to be handed over to the *Kollegium Spetsial* (Special Committee) of the NKVD of the USSR or to the so called "k-k" (this is likely the kryptonym of the "troika" of the USSR comprised of Merkulov, Kabulov, and Bashtakov which would indicate that these prisoners were to be executed).[107]

The information provided by the Ukrainian Security Services reveals that the system of numbering the prisoners coincided with the system used in the three camps. This is an important factor because it indicated that this list was a continuation of the other lists and that the same body, i.e., the "troika," also decided the fate of these prisoners, in a centrally organized and coordinated effort. The only difference that existed between the system used for the three camps and that for the prisoners was that in the case of the former the order was executed with the participation of the division of the NKVD that dealt with prisoners of war, whereas in the latter case it was sent to the Special Division of the Moscow Central NKVD for the Belorussian and Ukrainian SSRs. It was not difficult for the NKVD to find and arrest the men. Quite often the Soviet authorities did not even have to search for them as many came to register themselves, as requested, at various registration centres, and were then arrested. Members of Jewish and Ukrainian political parties, for instance the UNDO or OUN, were also arrested, but the vast majority of those taken into custody were Poles. Close to 20,000 men of various nationalities, but mostly Poles, were arrested but the verdict that decided their fate was only reached on March 5, 1940.[108]

It is not known where these prisoners were executed and thus far the only clue appeared during the exhumations of a grave in Bykovnia, near Kiev. At this time there was found a license for operating mechanical vehicles issued to Franciszek Paszkiel, who appears on the list, as well as some Polish coins.[109] Bykovnia is a site where many executions of Ukrainians took place between 1936 and 1941. There is a possibilty that Poles who were murdered from the prison in Kiev could have been buried here as well. More recently, in 1997 some evidence of Polish graves was also found in Volodymyr-Volynsky where the remains of approximately 100 people were

found. The majority appeared to be Polish since pieces of uniforms could be found. There are two theories that offer explanations for who these people could be. One theory is that these were officers who were held in a temporary camp in Volodymyr-Volynski in the period between October and November 1939 and whose fate is unknown. The second theory claims that these could be Polish prisoners who were killed during the executions of prisoners just prior to the German invasion in June 1941. The first theory appears to be more tenable since firstly, the men were wearing army uniforms and also in the second scenario, the men would not have been killed in such an organized manner, as there was little time. Only full scale exhumations can reveal more details. Other than these findings, there are no further clues that help to reveal the location of these murdered prisoners from Ukraine and Belarus. Even if some of these people could be found at Bykovnia and Volodymyr-Volynsky, these places do not contain all 7,000. What happened to these people?[110]

Based on the transport records, it is known that Polish prisoners were taken from various prisons in Ukraine to Kiev, Kharkiv and Kherson, where it is assumed that they were killed. At this point it is also important to mention the cooperation of the Ukrainian government with regard to revealing information about Poles murdered in Ukraine. Of the three countries, Russia, Ukraine and Belarus, Ukraine has been the most cooperative and has been very willing to share information with the Polish authorities. The Ukrainian government gave its Polish counterpart a list of the Polish prisoners who had been imprisoned in Ukraine and as a result, the identities of many of these people are now known. Although the exact locations of their graves is still a mystery, the Ukrainians have been very helpful. One cannot say the same for the Russians, and especially the Belarusians who must also have a list of Polish prisoners

who were imprisoned in Belarus, but claim that this list was sent to Moscow where it was destroyed. Sources reveal that approximately 3,000 prisoners were transported to Minsk after March 22, 1940 from Brest, Hrodna, Vileyka, Pinsk and Baranovichi. It is likely that they were executed in the city NKVD prisons and buried at Kuropaty or they were simply killed at Kuropaty. To date, however, this information is unavailable.[111]

This lack of cooperation has also been evident with regard to the opening of the Polish Military Cemeteries at Kharkiv, Mednoe, and Katyn. The first to be officially opened was the Polish Military Cemetery in Kharkiv, Ukraine, which was opened in June 2000. The other two sites are located in Russia. The cemetery at Katyn was opened on July 28, 2000, though there was a great deal of confusion regarding the date of the opening. Originally the cemetery was to open on July 1, 2000. This date was subsequently changed and then it was anticipated that it would be opened sometime in the fall. The Russian government announced the date of the official opening only a week and a half before the actual event, which caused some problems as there were many preparations that needed to be made. It was particurlarly inconvenient for those who had to travel a great distance in order to attend the ceremony. In March 1995 the Russian authorities stated that two cemeteries would be constructed, one Polish and one Russian, though the Russians were constantly changing their mind as to whether or not they would construct the latter. Construction of the Polish cemetery began in May 1999 and was completed in June, 2000. The Russians did not have a plan for their cemetery and when they finally began work, there was no money available for its construction. In the end, the Polish company Energotechnika, the company that was constructing the Polish

cemetery, provided credit so that the Russian cemetery could be built and for which it had not received any money at the time of writing.[112] The Russian cemetery is comprised of a few mass graves and it has no memorial plaques, there are no dates listed for when the victims were murdered or even a sign indicating who was responsible for the murders. Since no exhumations of this area were undertaken, it is difficult to estimate the number of Russians who are buried there. The opening ceremony of the Polish Military Cemetery was attended by Polish Prime Minister Jerzy Buzek and Russian Deputy Prime Minister Viktor Kristyenko. This was considered to be rather insulting to the Polish side. Since Poland sent its Prime Minister to the ceremony, the Russian Prime Minister and not his deputy, should also have attended. The Polish Military Cemetery at Mednoe was opened on September 2, 2000.

Prior to the discovery of the graves of the prisoners from Ostashkov and Starobelsk there had been a great deal of speculation as to where these prisoners were buried. Some suspected that the prisoners from Ostashkov were buried somewhere in the region of Bologoye, situated to the north of Tver and that the Starobelsk prisoners were buried somewhere around Derkachi, in the vicinity of Kharkiv. Their graves were eventually found: the prisoners from Starobelsk were found at Pyatikhatki near Kharkiv and the prisoners from Ostashkov were found in Mednoe, not far from Tver (then known as Kalinin). However, there were also interesting rumours that had been circulating, which hinted that the men had been drowned. One version stated that they had drowned in the White Sea. A group of prisoners from Lithuania and Latvia who had been handed over to the NKVD in June of 1940 were interned on the Kola peninsula where they heard stories from other prisoners about a transport of Polish

prisoners being drowned. Yet there were no witness statements to corroborate these reports. The second version was spread by platoon leader A.W., who arrived in Gryazovets in June 1940 and was informed by several of the guards that other prisoners had drowned. The third version was a signed statement by K.Gaszciecka confirming the second version. She had been arrested and was being transported by ship, along with 4,000 others to a work camp in Arkhangelsk. She heard from a Russian working on the ship that 7,000 Polish officers and police functionaries had been drowned in the White Sea and that this had been confirmed by another Russian working on the ship. There were also some other versions that were less concrete.[113] It has been proven that with regard to the prisoners from the Ostashkov and Starobelsk camps these rumours were untrue, but is it possible that there were some Polish prisoners who were killed in such a way? The prisoners from the Kozelsk, Starobelsk and Ostashkov camps were killed and buried close to where they had been interned. It would have been a difficult and lengthy process to transport them so far to the north, and therefore, it would seem logical that these men from the prisons would have been disposed of in a similar manner. If that is the case, then what could be the source of these rumours regarding Polish men being drowned in the northern seas?

The documents reveal nothing about the large number of lower-ranking men that disappeared. It is likely that they too were killed, and possibly they were disposed of by being drowned. The rumours always stated that the officers had been drowned, but we now know this to be untrue. Perhaps because Polish uniforms were very elegant compared to their Soviet counterparts Polish soldiers of lower rank could have been perceived as officers. When the three special camps of Kozelsk, Ostashkov

and Starobelsk were established for the officers, police and others, the lower ranking individuals were supposed to be released, but in reality this did not always occur. We do know that some were sent to forced labour camps, or to mines such as the Kryvyi Rih Iron Ore Basin and companies falling under the jurisdiction of the USSR People's Commissariat of Ironworks. On September 23, 1939, this resort employed 10,377 Polish prisoners of war and in 1940 these same prisoners were employed in the camps at Krivyi Rih, Zaporizhzhya, Yelenovka and Karakubsk. Some were also sent to other camps, such as the Rivne camp where they were to be engaged in road construction.[114] After the liquidation of the three camps, many of the men who were working in the mines were sent to the northern and eastern parts of the USSR. Those sent to the north were often engaged in rail construction (Sievzeldorlag)

The exact number of prisoners is unknown, but in total there were approximately 242,000 prisoners of all ranks captured. including the 12,000 who had been interned in Lithuania and Latvia as prisoners of war. Out of these 242,000 approximately 46,000 were released or handed over to the Germans, and approximately 15,000 were killed from the three camps. This number would be further reduced by 46,000 when one takes into consideration other factors such as illness, etc. When taking all of these factors into consideration during the amnesty of August 1941 there still should have been 135,000 men, whereas only 25,000 reported to General Anders, leaving approximately 110,000 men who were missing. Even if the POW figures were inflated, there is still a large discrepancy in numbers.[115] It is likely, however, that the graves of these prisoners lay somewhere in central Ukraine as most of these men had been imprisoned in the western parts of the UkrSSR and BSSR and orders were given to transport 3,000 prisoners to prisons in central

Ukraine.[116] if this was the case, then the likely reason for the transports was so that the men could be executed in greater secrecy than would have been possible in western Ukraine or Belarus.

Another much neglected issue has been the evacuation of Poles from Soviet prisons in June 1941, at the time of the German invasion. Unfortunately, we have no access to documents that include this order though the issue has been featured regularly in diaspora publications about the final days of Soviet rule in western Ukraine. Approximately 140,000 people were imprisoned, aside from those mentioned previously, and approximately 270 prisons were evacuated. However, the evacuation did not in all cases result in the relocation of these prisoners as many were simply murdered during the Russian retreat: political prisoners in particular were summarily executed. Very often the prisoners were killed on the spot, some prisoners were even sealed inside the prisons, buried alive so to speak, while others were forced to undergo marches in which they died from sheer exhaustion or were shot during the march.[117]

Chapter 4 POLISH NEGLIGENCE OVER KATYN

The attitude and role of the Polish government, both during the war as well as today is very important. Although it appears that the Polish government was actively engaged in trying to learn what happened to the missing men, in reality it did not utilize all the means available to it, likely because of the pressure being exerted by its western allies. Even prior to the German announcement of the discovery of the graves in 1943, the Polish government must have realized that a large number of Polish military was being interned in the Soviet Union. So, why did the Polish government not demand contact with the camps and the prisoners? Once contact with the prisoners in the camps had ceased, it is surprising that Polish intelligence had no information regarding the missing men, particularly since it appears that numerous people knew something about what had occurred. Already as early as 1940 Edward Kozlinski had seen the open graves and had relayed his report to his son Zbigniew, who had delivered the report to Polish intelligence in Hrodna and in Warsaw. Was this report not relayed to Polish intelligence?

Later in 1941 Zbigniew Kozlinski had been in the Katyn forest, as had Mieczyslaw Lisiecki in 1940, and the Polish workers from the Todt organization in 1942. In addition, the majority of local residents had some idea what had happened and there were various rumours circulating in the area. Zbigniew Kozlinski believes the reports were delivered to the Polish government -in-exile in London and that they must be somewhere in the archives though in fact, they were not. If these reports were delivered, then why were they not acted upon? Why was nothing more heard about them? Did the information seem so outrageous that the Polish government

assumed it was false and therefore not worth investigating? Yet even if the information appeared to be beyond comprehension, it was still the responsiblity of the Polish government and Polish intelligence to verify this. At the time the first report was made, the Soviet Union had not yet joined the Allied camp, therefore the Allies would not have put any pressure on the Polish government.

Even if these reports had been received but the Polish government doubted their accuracy, there were other factors, which Jacek Trznadel mentions, that should have enabled the Polish government to suspect what had happened and take certain actions. Stanislaw Swianiewicz, who had been separated from his transport in Gnezdovo in April 1941, had made a report to the office of General Anders in June 1942, after being released. While interned in camps he had heard rumours, many of which were untrue. However, the fact that he was the only prisoner from Kozelsk who got as far as Gnezdovo and remained alive makes him a very important witness. He described what he saw at the last point where the Kozelsk prisoners had been seen alive. Why was this account not investigated further by Polish intelligence? In his book, *W Cieniu Katynia*, Swianiewicz claims that he reported that the prisoners had been transported west of Smolensk and not towards the east, as had been assumed. He writes that it should have been the responsibility of the Polish government to send Polish intelligence agents to speak with railway workers and locals in order to find out where these transports were taken afterwards, but this was not done.[118] Another example is that of Michal Romm who was removed from the convoy of those about to be executed in Kalinin, and immediately prior to his execution was placed in the Gryazovets camp: why was he not asked to give a report? It was generally believed that the last place that the prisoners from Ostashkov had been seen alive was

Bologoye, and yet here was a witness who had been in Kalinin, where in fact the men from Ostashkov had been shot! It is odd the Polish government did not take advantage of the opportunity to speak to such credible witnesses and to learn all that it could about the fate of the missing men. Polish Intelligence was able successfully to penetrate Germany, including Peenemunde, the most heavily guarded centre in that country, and thus it is naive to think that it could not penetrate Belarus, Ukraine, and Russia. In fact, there was no search for these men, despite the fact that the Polish government was clearly aware of their fate prior to the announcement by the Germans in the spring of 1943.[119]

This legacy of indifference regarding those who were murdered at Katyn, Mednoe and Pyatikhatki, as well as those whose fate remains unknown, continues today. In 1990 the Polish and Russian State Prosecutors made a commitment to carry out an investigation to learn the details of the crime and (theoretically at least) to prosecute those who were accountable and who were still alive. Documents were gathered and the exhumations at the three sites of Katyn, Mednoe and Pyatikhatki were conducted. This was also a part of the investigative process. Since the mid-1990s, this process has come almost to a complete halt, to the point that it is very likely that legal proceedings will be discontinued on the basis that those responsible are no longer alive. This eagerness to close the issue cannot be blamed solely on the Russian government because the Polish government, in its turn, has not pursued the issue with sufficient vigour. The Polish government has exhibited a nonchalant and indifferent attitude to Katyn from the outset. When the Russian communique first came out in 1990, it was the responsibility of the Polish government to ensure that Russia took legal responsibility for the crime in addition to simply acknowledging

that the NKVD and communist authorities had been responsible. This is a very important consideration since it encompasses issues such as compensation for the families and the eventual prosecution of criminals. Why has the Polish government been so neglectful of the interests of its own people?

With regard to compensation, it must be taken into consideration though that very often these men who were killed were the only bread winners in the family and as a result of their murder, their families had to suffer a great deal of hardship. It would seem appropriate that their families receive some kind of compensation and that the sums received should not emanate from the Polish taxpayer when the crime was committed by a foreign power? If Russia does not accept legal responsibility for this crime then there is no way that the Polish government can expect any kind of compensation or even a trial of war criminals. This legal responsibility is something that could have been demanded right from the very beginning. Now, ten years later it is unlikely that this will change. The murder of tens of thousands of prisoners of war is a very serious crime, and one that has been acknowledged by the international community since the treatment of prisoners of war is governed by international conventions which the Soviet Union blatantly contravened.

The issue of paying compensation to the families of the victims is one of the utmost importance, perhaps even more so than the prosecution of the criminals responsible for it, since the majority are either dead or very advanced in age. The investigation should continue until all the facts are known, all documents released and the fate of those who disappeared, discovered, especially since there may be victims who are still alive. This may appear to be a monumental task, but the Polish

government could pursue it and thereby ensure that the issue continues to be of primary importance. During the opening of the Polish Military Cemetery at Katyn, Polish Prime Minister Jerzy Buzek stressed that it was necessary to continue the investigation until all the facts are known. Thus far the Polish government has not backed up these words with requisite actions.

The Polish government has demonstrated a lack of interest in funding Katyn-related publications and translations of important documents. The latter task was undertaken by a group from the periodical *Wojskowy Przeglad Historyczny*, rather than by professional translators and the Polish government has sponsored very few books. If it were not for the efforts of people concerned about the issue, little of the information that has become available would have been taken advantage of. There are also other areas in which the Polish government has been remiss. The Polish government has never attempted to define the legal repercussions of the murder of tens of thousands of Polish citizens with the Soviet and Russian governments in any way. A serious crime was committed and yet the documents released were not treated with much interest by the Polish government.[120] There was no concerted, government-sponsored effort to translate and analyze these documents in great detail.

There is also the important issue of those whose fate continues to be unknown. Jacek Trznadel mentions a document which specifies that a certain number of men who did not join Anders' army were being held in a camp at Aktiubinsk (after the Sikorski-Maysky agreement). The Polish government never made an effort to try to locate them. The majority would likely be dead, but the families have a right to know what happened to them. Trznadel believes that there are some officers who were

never released and who may possibly still be alive. He bases his theory on his discussion with astronomer Aleksei Pamyatnich, who heard various rumours to that effect. There were also statements made by an employee of the KGB who claimed in a Polish television documentary about Katyn that some officers who were employed in intelligence and counter-intelligence were never released. The author is therefore very critical of the Polish government for not being more active in trying to find out the fate of these people.[121] The previously mentioned exhumations, which were conducted by the Poles and Russians, also indicate the lack of interest of the Polish authorities. The exhumations at Kharkiv, Mednoe and Katyn were linked with the investigation of the Supreme Military Prosecutor of the USSR which began in the autumn of 1990, which requested that the Office of the Prosecutor General of Poland help with this investigation. Therefore it is evident that even the exhumations were a result of the initiative of the Russian rather than the Polish government![122]

The final question that remains is whether or not access to the very important documents that would help to increase our knowledge to an even greater extent will be made available. Although the Russian government has not always been very helpful, there has been a great deal of cooperation between Polish and Russian archivists. However, even the Russian archivists are limited as to what they can and cannot examine. For years they have unsuccessfully attempted to gain access to the archives of the Federal Security Services of the Russian Federation (formerly the KGB). The Russians claim that many of the documents that the Poles have requested have been destroyed. If that is truly the case then why has access to these archives continuously been denied? P.K. Soprunenko claimed during the interview that was conducted with him in the 1990s that he had ordered the destruction of the files of the

prisoners from Starobelsk. He had the permission of the NKVD to do so as he would not have been able to make such a decision himself. He claims that the files of the prisoners from the other two camps were sent to the First Special Division of the NKVD USSR.[123] However, it is rumoured that even these were later destroyed as there is a letter written by KGB chief A. Shelepin to Nikita Khrushchev in 1959, which suggests that the personal files of the prisoners from the three camps, and those interned in prisons in Belarus and Ukraine, as well as the decisions of the troika, were to be destroyed. However, there is no written confirmation which states that this was in fact carried out.[124] In an interview conducted in 1994 Shelepin stated that these orders were carried out as Khrushchev gave the order verbally. This is somewhat difficult to believe since the decision to destroy such important materials would require a written confirmation with three signatures. No evidence of such a document has ever been found. The only possible explanation for this might be that Khrushchev destroyed this confirmation because he did not want anyone to know that he gave the order to have these files destroyed. After all, he was head of the party in Ukraine during that period and could not have been ignorant about what was happening, though this is a weak argument.

The Belarusians also claim that the documents that the Poles have requested were sent to Moscow and destroyed there. No documentary proof of this has been made available. The Ukrainians were able to provide lists of prisoners who had been interned in Ukraine, therefore these arguments are not entirely convincing.[125] We have access to some of the transport lists for Ostashkov and Kozelsk, but the lists from Starobelsk were also reported to have been destroyed.

CONCLUSION

The history of Polish-Russian relations is steeped in bitterness and tragedy. Despite the vast amount of information that has been collected regarding Katyn, certain details remain unclear. We still do not have access to the protocols of the "troika" signed by Merkulov, Kabulov and Bashtakov, which would also have been useful to help determine which criteria were used to decide why those few chosen to survive were allowed to remain alive. We also do not have the personal files of the prisoners from the three camps and from the prisons. These would help us to learn what happened to those who were not on the transport lists. We also have no documents which state what was to be done with the thousands of lower ranking prisoners of war. They were likely killed, but we neither know where nor what method was used to murder them. It would be useful to examine documents relating to the NKVD's efforts to eliminate the evidence linking it to the crime. These efforts were undertaken on a large scale, encompassing the "preparation" of the Katyn forest for the Burdenko commission, large scale propaganda to convince the world of German culpubility, and others. As a result, there must be some documents which described this process, but at this point they are unavailable to researchers. We also do not know where the men who were imprisoned in western Ukraine and Belarus were killed and buried. It would be useful to know whether or not Stalin had planned to exterminate the prisoners at the very beginning of the war or whether he made the decision much later when he realized that he had to do something with the large number of Poles who were interned.

Another question, one that is more difficult to answer, is whether or not Stalin would have exterminated the Poles had the international situation changed earlier. This is an important consideration given that he did not kill the Poles interned in Lithuania during the summer of 1940. Some of the actions of the Soviet authorities and NKVD also remain unclear. For instance, was the NKVD given control over the prisoners for political reasons, or was this a part of its normal duties? It is highly unusual for political police, rather than the army, to be in control of prisoners of war. Those who were taken into custody at the very beginning of the conflict were rounded up by the Red Army. Some of the men who were detained later were under the jurisdiction of the NKVD and they usually received worse treatment: some were not even taken into custody but shot on the spot. It is difficult to understand why some were disposed of immediately while others were interned only to be executed several months later.[126]

Although the exhumations that were conducted during the 1990s revealed a great deal of information, particularly about Kharkiv and Mednoe, they were not full-scale exhumations and therefore, there is still much that needs to be learned. The Commission had a very limited amount of time in which to perform these exhumations and could not freely examine all aspects as the exhumations were performed under the leadership of the Military Prosecution of the Russian Federation. As a result the Poles did not have a free hand. It is a known fact that there are still some bodies in the Katyn forest, but we do not know whether all of the over 4,000 are there or only a part. A full scale exhumation of all three sites with fewer time constaints would surely reveal a great deal more information. It is unlikely, however, that this will occur, particularly with the opening of the Polish cemeteries at Katyn,

Mednoe and Kharkiv in the summer of the year 2000. The commissions conducting the exhumations did not have access to detailed topographical maps, which would indicate the exact locations of the death pits in all three cases. In the case of Katyn, the exact location of the Polish Red Cross cemetery was also of vital importance and would have undoubtedly saved a great deal of time. Perhaps such maps are also hidden away in the archives.

Much new information has become available since some of the archives such as the CGAOR (Central Government Archives of the October Revolution), CGASA (Central Government Archives of the Red Army) and the CGOA (Central Government Special Archives) have become accessible. However, the archives of the NKVD and the NKGB continue to be closed, and until they are opened, there will still be much information that is unavailable.

The question that all Poles face today is how is this issue to be resolved? What will be the ultimate conclusion to the investigation which has been in progress since 1990? The building of the Polish cemeteries at Kharkiv, Katyn and Mednoe is a kind of symbolic closure to the issue; those that were murdered will now have a permanent resting ground, but can this be the true end to the whole inquiry? The question that still remains is what should be done with the information that we have learned? Should there be a trial before an international tribunal modelled on the Nuremburg trials (there was a mock tribunal of Soviet war criminals, for example, in Vilnius in the summer of 2000 so a precedent does exist)? Should compensation be paid to the families? And what about the thousands whose fate still remains unknown? It is necessary to continue searching until there are no more questions left,

but the Polish side cannot do this alone (assuming it would wish to continue its investigation). It requires the cooperation of Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus. Out of the three, Ukraine has been the most cooperative and willing to reveal information.

This thesis attempted to demonstrate how much we have learned about Katyn during the 1990s as well as what questions still remain unanswered. Katyn is a symbol of the suffering that the Polish nation has experienced. Although there are still many uncertainties and questions that have remained unanswered, the 1990s have revealed a great deal of information. It was generally known that the Soviet Union was responsible for the crime but finally there is official acknowledgement of this fact. The families can now openly mourn the loss of their relatives and they can search for more information about their relatives, which was impossible for many decades. The families of those who perished in Kharkiv and Tver now know the location of the final resting place of those who were murdered, as well as many of the details relating to their deaths. It is now known where they were murdered and how, there is more ambiguity regarding Katyn. Our knowledge regarding "Katyn" used as the general term to describe the fate of all three camps, has grown quite substantially. Perhaps one day the Russian archives will be opened fully and it will be possible to fill in the "blank spots" that still remain. Until that time, though, it is necessary to rely on the new information that has become available and to continue the gradual process of uncovering one of the greatest mysteries of the 20th century.

END NOTES

[1] Tarczynski, (1990), pp.46-49.

[2] Mackiewicz, pp.12-13.

[3] ibid., (1997), p.20.

[4] Tucholski, (1991), p.5.

[5] Gieysztor, Pichoja, Tom 1, (1995), Document 11, pp. 79-83.

[6] ibid., (1995), document 38, pp. 134-135.

[7] "Dowody, Zbrodnia Katynska Dwoch Radzieckich Archiwow" in Polityka, (1990), p.14.

[8] Jaczynski, pp.51.

[9] Mackiewicz, p.31.

[10] Interview with Mrs. Zofia Szuchatowicz-Woloszyn, daughter of Captain Leon Szuchatowicz who was a prisoner of Starobelsk and was murdered at Kharkiv, as well as letters written by him to the family.

[11] Jaczynski, p.15.

[12] Interview with Mrs. Zofia Szuchatowicz-Woloszyn, daughter of Captain Leon Szuchatowicz who was a prisoner of Starobelsk and was murdered at Kharkiv, as well as letters written by him to the family.

[13] ibid.,

[14] Mackiewicz, pp.39-42.

[15] Peszkowski, (1989), p.52.

[16] Mackiewicz., pp.50-52.

[17] ibid., pp.63-75.

[18] Paul, pp.203-204.

[19] Trznadel, (1994), p.188.

[20] Karwat, (1995), p.1.

[21] Trznadel, (1994), pp.151-167.

[22] Akuliczew, Pamiatnik, p.36.

[23] Chmielarz, pp.430-431.

[24] Crister, Stephen, pp. 430-431.

[25] Wojcicki, pp.38.

[26] ibid., pp.203-206.

[27] Van Vliet, p.440.

[28] Crister, Stephen, p.440.
[29] Tarczynski, (1990), p.46.

[30] Mariarski, p.2.

[31] Trznadel, (1994), p.298.

[32] Jazborowska, Jablokov, Zoria, pp.27-30.

[33] Musiol, pp.10-11.

[34] Szayna, pp.38-39.

[35] ibid., pp.40-50.

[36] "Prawo do Wlasnej Historii. Interview with Juri Afanasjew" in Polityka, (1987), p. 1&9.

[37] Kridl Valkenier, p.252.

[38] Godziemba-Maliszewski, p.109.

[39] Trznadel, (1994), pp.223 &261.

[40] Peszkowski, (1993), p.93.

[41] Mikke, (1998), p.76.

[42] ibid., (1998), p.94.

[43] Godziemba-Maliszewski, pp.61&63.

[44] ibid., pp.46-47 & 84-85.

[45] ibid., pp.9-11

[46] Trznadel, (1995) pp.116-117.

[47] "Dalsza Kolejna Lista Ofiar w Katyniu" in Goniec Krakowski, (1943), p.1.

[48] Gajowniczek, (1995), p.X.

[49] Romanowski, p.9.

[50] Jazborowska, Jablokov, Zoria, pp 91-92 & 130-131.

[51] Snopkiewicz, Zakrzewski, p.83-85.

[52] ibid., p.115.

[53] ibid., p. 125-129.

[54] Tarczynski, (1995), pp.83-84.

[55] Tucholski, (1993), p.III.

[56] Gieysztor, Pichoja, Tom 1, (1995) document 217, pp. 476-477.

[57] Snopkiewicz, Zakrzewski, pp.21-25.

[58] ibid., pp. 29-31.

[59] Siemiaszko, pp.69-70.

[60] Holubicki Marek, pp.I-II.

[61] Interview with Mrs. Zofia Szuchatowicz-Woloszyn, daughter of Captain Leon Szuchatowicz who was a prisoner of Starobelsk and was murdered at Kharkiv, as well as letters written by him to the family.

[62] Materski, pp.27-28.

[63] Gieysztor, Pichoja, Tom 1, (1995) Document 215, pp.468-469.

[64] Jaczynski, pp.41.

[65] Lebiediewa, (1998), p.243.

[66] Friszke, pp.2-7.

[67] Cierlicka, Tabor, p14.

[68] Malczyk, Popowski, pp.1&12-13.

[69] Lebiediewa, 1998, pp.168-169.

[70] Swianiewicz, p.108.

[71] Pienkowski, pp.332-333.

[72] Lebiediewa, 1998, pp.166-167.

[73] Gieysztor, Pichoja, Tom 2, (1995) Document 196, pp. 314-318.

[74] Romanowski, p.8.

[75] Lebiediewa, (1998), p.158.

[76] Gieysztor, Pichoja, Tom 2, (1995), Document 2, pp.43-47.

[77] ibid., (1995), Document 3, pp.47-48.

[78] ibid., (1995), Document 13, pp. 57-58.

[79] Lebiediewa, Materski, (1999), p.76.

[80] ibid., (1999), pp.71-72.

[81] Interview with Mrs. Zofia Szuchatowicz-Woloszyn, daughter of Captain Leon Szuchatowicz who was a prisoner of Starobelsk and was murdered at Kharkiv, as well as letters written by him to the family.

[82] Mikke, (1998), pp.89-90.

[83] Zbrodnia Katynska w Swietle Dokumentow, (1982), pp.167-168.

[84] Trznadel, (1994), pp.25.

[85] Gieysztor, Pichoja, Tom 2 (1995), p.467, Interview with Tokarev.

[86] Trznadel, (1994), p.64.

[87] Prison vans used by the NKVD: A windowless van with a narrow corridor inside and narrow individual cells that held prisoners. The capacity of these vehicles was 15 prisoners.

[88] Swianiewicz, p.113.

[89] Trznadel, (1994), pp.25-49.

[90] Jaczynski, pp.38-39.

[91] Mackiewicz., p.149, Interview with Krivozertsev.

[92] Romanowski, p.8.

[93] Gieysztor, Pichoja, Tom 2 (1995), p.433, Interview with Tokarev.

[94] ibid., (1995) Aneks I, Document 6, pp. 404-409.

[95] Siwinski, p.11.

[96] Glosek, p.18.

[97] "Polskie Cmentarze Wojenne, Katyn, Mednoe, Kharkiv" Arche 10, (1997), p. 4.

[98] Rodziewicz, p. 312.

[99] Mikke, (1995), pp.74-75.

[100] Mikke, (1998), pp.72-74.

[101] ibid., (1998), pp.79-96.

[102] Gajowniczek, Jakubowski, Tucholski, (1998), p.22.

[103] Gieysztor, Pichoja, Tom 2 (1995), Document 27, pp.113-116.

[104] Gajowniczek, (1995), pp.XVII-XVIII.

[105] Snopkiewicz, pp.21-22.

[106] Gajowniczek, (1995), p.XIV.

[107] Gajowniczek, Jakubowski, Tucholski, (1998), pp.5-8.

[108] Gajowniczek, (1995), p.IX.

[109] Gajowniczek, Jakubowski, Tucholski, (1998), p.9.

[110] Kola, pp.92-95.

[111] "Czego Nadal Nie Wiemy o Zbrodni Katynskiej? Interview with Jedrzej Tucholski vicedirector of the Central MSWiA Archives," in Biuletyn Katynski, (1999), pp.5-6.

[112] Wilczak, 2000, p79.

[113] Chlebowski, pp.84-85.

[114] Jaczynski, p.18.

[115] Siemiaszko, pp.75-76.

[116] Gajowniczek, Jakubowski, Tucholski, (1998), p.27.

[117] Kokurin, Gurjanow, Popinski, p.143.

[118] Swianiewicz, p.309.

[119] Trznadel, (1994), pp191-192.

[120] Perhaps this may be one of the reasons why the Katyn museum is situated on the very outskirts of Warsaw, rather than being more centrally located.

[121] Trznadel, 1994, pp.181-184.

[122] Peszkowski, 1993, p.10.

[123] Gieysztor, Pichoja, Tom 2 (1995), pp.427-428. Interview with Soprunenko.

[124] Snopkiewicz, pp.29-31.

[125] Woszczynski, pp.45-46.

[126] Tarczynski, (1990), p.59.

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