

WHITE BOOK

Copyright

Printed for the  
Ukrainian Association of Victims of Russian Communist  
Terror

# **THE BLACK DEEDS OF THE KREMLIN**

## **A WHITE BOOK**

**Vol. 1**

**BOOK OF TESTIMONIES**

**UKRAINIAN ASSOCIATION OF VICTIMS OF  
RUSSIAN COMMUNIST TERROR**

**Toronto**

**1953**

**Canada**

## **EDITORIAL BOARD**

**Prof. I. I. Sandul, Prof. A. P. Stepovy**

**S. O. Pidhainy — Editor-in-chief**

**Translated by Alexander Oreletsky and Olga Prychodko**

**with an introduction by  
Professor G. W. Simpson**

**CHAPTER**

**V.**

**GRAVES OF MASS MURDER VICTIMS**

**Prof. I. Roz'hin, D. Sc.**

### **THE CRIME AT VYNNYTSYA**

Vynnytsya is an old Ukrainian city known as far back as the 14th century. It is famous for its association with outstanding Ukrainian names.

Now Vynnytsya is a symbol of brutalities and mass murders unequalled in history. These did not take place in times of war or revolution but during the "peaceful building of the Soviet Socialist State". Vynnytsya endured four onslaughts of Russian mass murders.

1. In the period 1921-22; when the armies of the Ukrainian People's Republic were defeated by the Russian communists more than 10,000 officers, soldiers and leading Ukrainians were killed for their participation in the war of liberation.

2. When the Russian communists discovered the "Union for the Liberation of Ukraine", a secret Ukrainian organization, over 8,000 Ukrainians were killed or exiled in Vynnytsya alone. Exile to Siberia meant just as certain death as murder on the spot.

3. During 1930-31, when Ukrainian farmers resisted the Soviet Russian Government's effort to expropriate their farms by turning them into state owned collectives, about 20,000 of them paid with their lives.

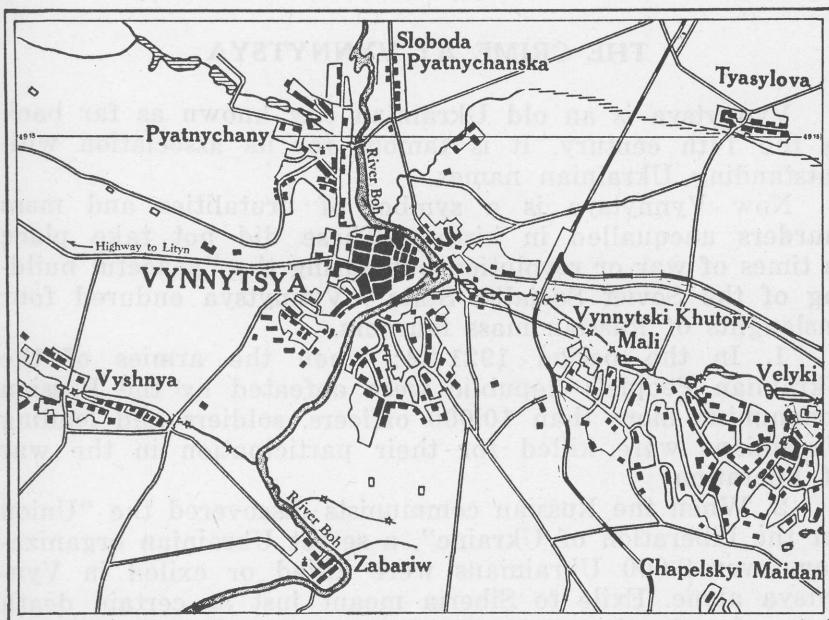
4. In 1935 when one of Stalin's henchmen, Kirov, was assassinated in Moscow, a wave of mass murders spread over the whole Ukraine. Over 2,000 persons were killed by Russian police in the Vynnytsya district.

5. During the rule of the infamous Yezhov, the head of the Russian secret police in 1937-38, about 15,000 Ukrainians were murdered in Vynnytsya and the surrounding area.

6. During the artificial famine in Ukraine in 1932-33 over 150,000 died of starvation in the district around Vynnytsya.

It staggers the imagination to think how many innocent men, women and children were destroyed by the Russian communists in all Ukraine, when so many were murdered in Vynnytsya alone.

In 1943, at the request of the citizens of the city of Vynnytsya an International Commission, composed of well



### City of Vynnytsya

known and prominent men from different countries in Europe, opened the mass graves in which recent victims of the Soviet Russian police had been buried.

The commission was made up of such men as Prof. Soenen of Belgium, Prof. Pesonen of Finland, Prof. Duvoir of France, Prof. Kazzaniga of Italy, Prof. Gegquist of Sweden, Prof. Poorten of Holland, Dr. Wagner, Prof. Shradler and Dr. Konti of Germany.

This commission opened three mass graves in different locations, and also investigated all documents and materials found on the bodies and in the graves. The commission

established that Vynnytsya had three prisons during the Russian communist regime. Before the revolution there was only one prison. The old prison was built for only 2,000 inmates but the Russian communists kept about 18,000 prisoners in it. From 1937-38 the three prisons housed about 30,000 people.

The documents showed that Ukrainian victims of the Russian communists were killed in a garage which had a special sewer for the disposal of human blood. In the main prison the basement was used for mass murders and the Russian police used dry peat to absorb the blood.

The commission investigated mass graves in three different places. In a fruit garden 34 graves with 5,644 bodies were found. In a cemetery 40 mass graves were uncovered



Vynnytsya. Bodies of victims. Photo by P. Pavlovych.

and 2,405 bodies found. In the city park of Vynnytsya 13 mass graves were found containing 1,583 bodies. Altogether 9,432 brutally murdered men and women were found in the graves of Vynnytsya.

Medical investigation of the exhumed bodies showed that some had been tortured with red hot irons. Some of the bodies showed evidence that they were used for research

as the corpses had been incised according to the rules of pathological and anatomical technique. There was no doubt that after experiments had been made on the prisoners, they were operated on to check the results of the experiments.

On the basis of documents found on the bodies it was established that 60% of the victims were farmers. The rest were factory workers and the intelligentsia. The majority of the murdered men were from 20-40 years of age. All of them were killed by a revolver shot in the back of the head.

Such brutal murders of Ukrainians by the Soviet Russian Government were repeated in every Ukrainian village, town and city.

The Vynnytsya murders are a reminder to the free world of the risk it runs by continuing to deal with these insane and fanatical Kremlin murderers in the same way as it does with other civilized and humane governments or political parties.

**Stepan Fedoriwsky**

## **THE PEAR ORCHARD AND THE GORKY PARK OF CULTURE IN VYNNYTSYA**

The Ukrainian press has often raised the question of the Vynnytsya graves, and several times Ukrainian organizations have made an attempt to bring the matter before the UN and the American government, but all seem to have turned a deaf ear to these pleas.

What happened in the Pear Orchard and the Gorky Park of Culture in the Ukrainian town of Vynnytsya is no extraordinary Russian-Communist event. In 1938, according to the Vynnytsya Town Council ruling, the old cemetery was converted into the Gorky Park of Culture and Rest. In a day the monuments vanished, graves were levelled, paths were made among the trees, flower-beds were raised, swings were erected, benches and stages were constructed. The band played merry tunes and young people sought recreation there.

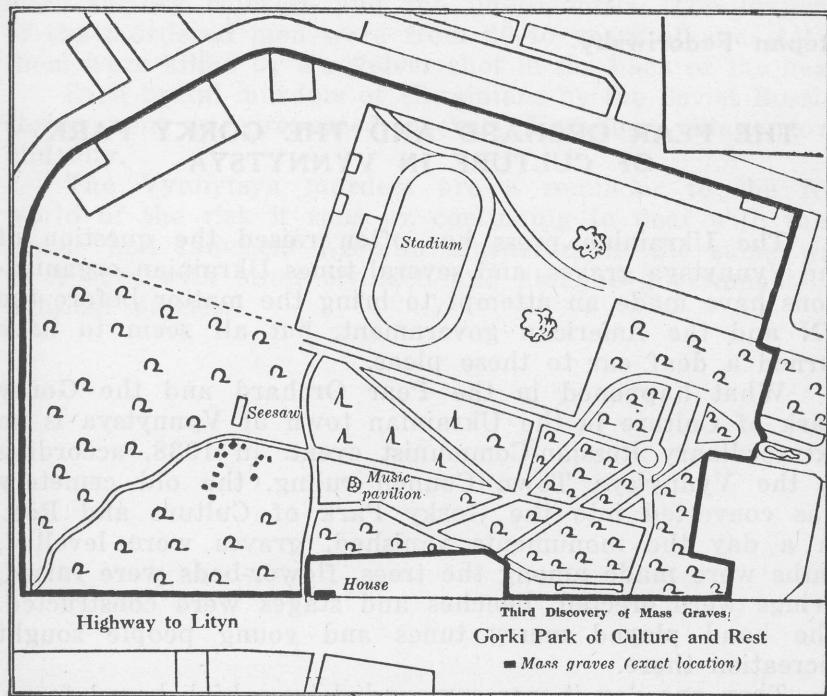
Then one day it was surrounded by a high board fence, and a brick sentry-box, with an NKVD guard, appeared beside the gate that looked out on Polovy Street.

In 1941 war broke out, the guards vanished and the people of Vynnytsya approached the German military administration for permission to probe into the mystery of the park which had later become "warlike". But the Germans were so overwhelmed with their quick victories on the front that they ignored it.

In 1943 the Germans were already being defeated. Their immense military machine rolled back from Stalingrad. In the confusion of retreat the Germans started digging up Gorky Park. All Ukrainians now know what was exhumed from the graves. Most of the world knows, because the

investigating commission included representatives from several European countries and clergy. I was also an eye-witness of the exhumed graves as were hundreds of other Ukrainians, many of whom now live on this continent.

In March, 1944, the Soviet armies re-occupied Vynnytsya, and on the following day Rapoport was made chief of the NKVD District administration. He ordered all Vyn-



Vynnytsya. Plan of the mass graves of the victims of the NKVD in the "Gorky Park of Culture and Rest."

nytsya residents to gather at the site of the graves and announced:

"Here lie buried traitors to the Soviet fatherland and enemies of the people. Those who are their relatives or friends come forward." Naturally no one dared to go forward. The mob of people, surrounded by the NKVD, stood transfixed. In an hour the executioner, Rapoport, returned with a long list of names. These would become the new victims. He read over 170 names of those who were in some way related to those he had murdered earlier. They were

owers off to the left crooked small bushes and  
abundant dense bushes thickets of hawthorn and roseaceous  
families. A single bush grows unusually stately and wide.



Vynnytsya. Graves in the orchard on Pidlisna street.

machine-gunned there before the rest of the crowd.

For some reason the world is silent about such incidents. The Katyn story is discussed again and again. A special U. S. A. Congress Commission is probing into it. The policy-makers of the world must realize that events in this atomic age are leading in a frantic tempo to a clash between two worlds: a world of truth and a world of lies, a world of light and a world of darkness, slavery and savage terror. The Kremlin knows that one of these worlds must fall, and in a planned, furtive way is preparing to dominate the world. Parks of Culture and Rest, like the one in Vynnytsya, will then appear in Paris, London, Washington.

WE DEMAND that the Russian Communist crime in Vynnytsya be probed, and there are many more such graves of murdered victims in other cities and towns of Ukraine. We demand this because it is our right and duty, as a great conquered nation, to arouse the conscience of the peace-loving world.

"We know about the mass graves in Vynnytsya..." wrote Frank E. MacKeaney, head of the National Committee of the Democratic Party, in a letter to the Manifestation Committee in New York. The story about these graves should be known not only to a few individuals in the West, but to all the people in the democratic countries. They should know about such cases and draw the proper conclusions.

## **Bishop Sylvester**

### **THE VYNNYTSYA TRAGEDY**

#### **Testimony of an eye-witness**

In the summer of 1943, I happened to be in Vynnytsya on business about some Church matters and agreed to hold funeral rites over the opened graves. A service was conducted in several spots among them. I listened to numerous official accounts and saw the half-decayed corpses in the wet clay and, in the display window, clothes and household articles.

How can one comprehend the tragedy of a simple school-teacher who fell into the NKVD claws and into the mass grave, together with his notebooks? This indicates that there had not been time to indict and try the arrested. They were given a bullet in the nape of the neck immediately upon being seized. Some of them had clay in their mouths, showing that they were still breathing when buried.

The wet clay transformed the corpses into virtual mummies. It prevented them from decaying or becoming odorous and made them recognizable.

In company with the mayor I was making a tour of two "Parks of Culture and Rest" and the "Old Cemetery". Scarcely one-third of the graves were re-opened and already 5,669 corpses had been interred before my visit, the mayor informed me. The fifteenth funeral took place in my presence. These funerals were witnessed by representatives from fifteen countries. From Roumania Metropolitan Vis-sarion and Professor Popesky; from Bulgaria, the Dean of a Seminary with several archimandrites; from Greece, Bishop Kalinikos; from Serbia, several representatives of the clergy. They all saw the horror of the opened graves

## **Bishop Sylvester**

### **THE VYNNYTSYA TRAGEDY**

#### **Testimony of an eye-witness**

In the summer of 1943, I happened to be in Vynnytsya on business about some Church matters and agreed to hold funeral rites over the opened graves. A service was conducted in several spots among them. I listened to numerous official accounts and saw the half-decayed corpses in the wet clay and, in the display window, clothes and household articles.

How can one comprehend the tragedy of a simple school-teacher who fell into the NKVD claws and into the mass grave, together with his notebooks? This indicates that there had not been time to indict and try the arrested. They were given a bullet in the nape of the neck immediately upon being seized. Some of them had clay in their mouths, showing that they were still breathing when buried.

The wet clay transformed the corpses into virtual mummies. It prevented them from decaying or becoming odorous and made them recognizable.

In company with the mayor I was making a tour of two "Parks of Culture and Rest" and the "Old Cemetery". Scarcely one-third of the graves were re-opened and already 5,669 corpses had been interred before my visit, the mayor informed me. The fifteenth funeral took place in my presence. These funerals were witnessed by representatives from fifteen countries. From Roumania Metropolitan Vis-sarion and Professor Popesky; from Bulgaria, the Dean of a Seminary with several archimandrites; from Greece, Bishop Kalinikos; from Serbia, several representatives of the clergy. They all saw the horror of the opened graves

and heard countless first hand accounts of sadistic communist practices.

Before the NKVD began filling the mass graves with corpses the site was first surrounded by a high board fence, the entrances and exits guarded by NKVD. Where the whole area was pitted the surface was carefully levelled and packed, the board fence replaced with a picket one, and so a "Park of Culture and Rest" came into being.

People were buried in huge groups. The first layer was placed very deep, and covered with a thin layer of earth; on top of that the blood-soaked articles which had belonged to the dead, their clothing and food, and then another thin layer of earth. On this layer lay the two or three men who buried the others, to cover up all evidence, and the pit was filled to the top. Some of the victims had merely lost consciousness when buried. When they revived they breathed and filled their mouths with earth.

The whole operation was conducted hastily and rapidly. The executioners were not concerned with the state of the victims when buried, as long as they were silent.

Such sadistic acts could be committed only by one bereft of all God's Spirit, surpassing even the most savage beast. They could be committed only by one creature — the Godless communist.

**Archbishop Hryhoriy  
— witness of the discovery of the graves at Vynnytsya.**



**P. Pavlovich, K. Sybirsky**

### **TESTIMONY ON THE CRIME IN VYNNYTSYA**

Correspondent: Would your Excellency tell the listeners what you related during your appearance on television and at the Ukrainian Manifestation.

Archbishop Hryhoriy: I told them I was the Archbishop of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church which had been brutally and utterly destroyed by the Soviet regime in Ukraine. The communists liquidated 35 Ukrainian bishops, over two thousand priests and an incalculable number of followers. I myself was persecuted by the communists and I consider it my obligation before God and humanity to reveal here in the free world the horror of the inhuman terror raised by the communists in my native Ukraine.

One such horrible crime was the murder of peaceful residents of the Ukrainian town of Vynnytsya where, in 1943, mass graves were revealed. Some 9,439 corpses of NKVD victims shot between 1937 and 1940 were exhumed. I was the administrative bishop of Vynnytsya and participated in the special commission which uncovered and in-

vestigated this crime. I have told the free American citizens about it."

Correspondent: "Did you tell how these graves were uncovered?"

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

Correspondent: "You spoke about how the excavations were carried out and how the bodies were recognized?"

Archbishop Hryhoriy: "Naturally. I related that the excavations took six months, that in the pear orchard 39 graves were uncovered and 5,644 bodies were exhumed.

When the people read about this in the newspapers a pilgrimage to the uncovered graves began. Those whose relatives had been arrested in the period of 1937 to 1940 identified them by the remnants of clothing or papers and other articles. I know of 682 cases of such identification."

Correspondent: "How many bodies altogether were unearthed in Vynnytsya?"

Archbishop Hryhoriy: "Altogether there were 9,439 bodies dug up out of 95 graves.

Later these victims of communist terror were interred according to Christian tradition. With the participation of huge multitudes of people from all over Ukraine I escorted them on their last journey..."

Correspondent: "Thank you kindly, Your Excellency, for your information. Mr. Pavlovich, tell us what you said



Bishop Yevlohiy and Archbishop Hryhoriy witness the opening of the graves in Vynnytsya in 1943. Photo by Yanushhevich.

during your television appearance at the Ukrainian Manifestation about the uncovered graves in Vynnytsya."

Petro Pavlovich: "I was a member of the Ukrainian Commission which was elected by the Ukrainian people to investigate the crimes in Vynnytsya. I gave a detailed account of the investigation by the Commission and what it discovered.

I spoke about the papers found on the bodies; search warrants, tribunal verdicts, receipt documents for the prisoners' goods and money and other documents which were conclusive evidence that these were victims of communist terror arrested between 1937 and 1940."

Correspondent: "Did you show these documents on television?"

Petro Pavlovich: "Yes. I have here with me the original document, a search warrant of December 23, 1937, of one of the victims. He was my wife's father. I have saved this document as a sacred memento of a departed relative. He was a farmer and left behind a wife and six children, whose photograph I also showed on television. Besides this paper my mother-in-law found his footwear and an initialed handkerchief."

Correspondent: "What did you say about the investigations of the bodies?"

Petro Pavlovich: "Our Ukrainian doctors, who conducted autopsies, concluded that the bodies had been buried from three to five years.

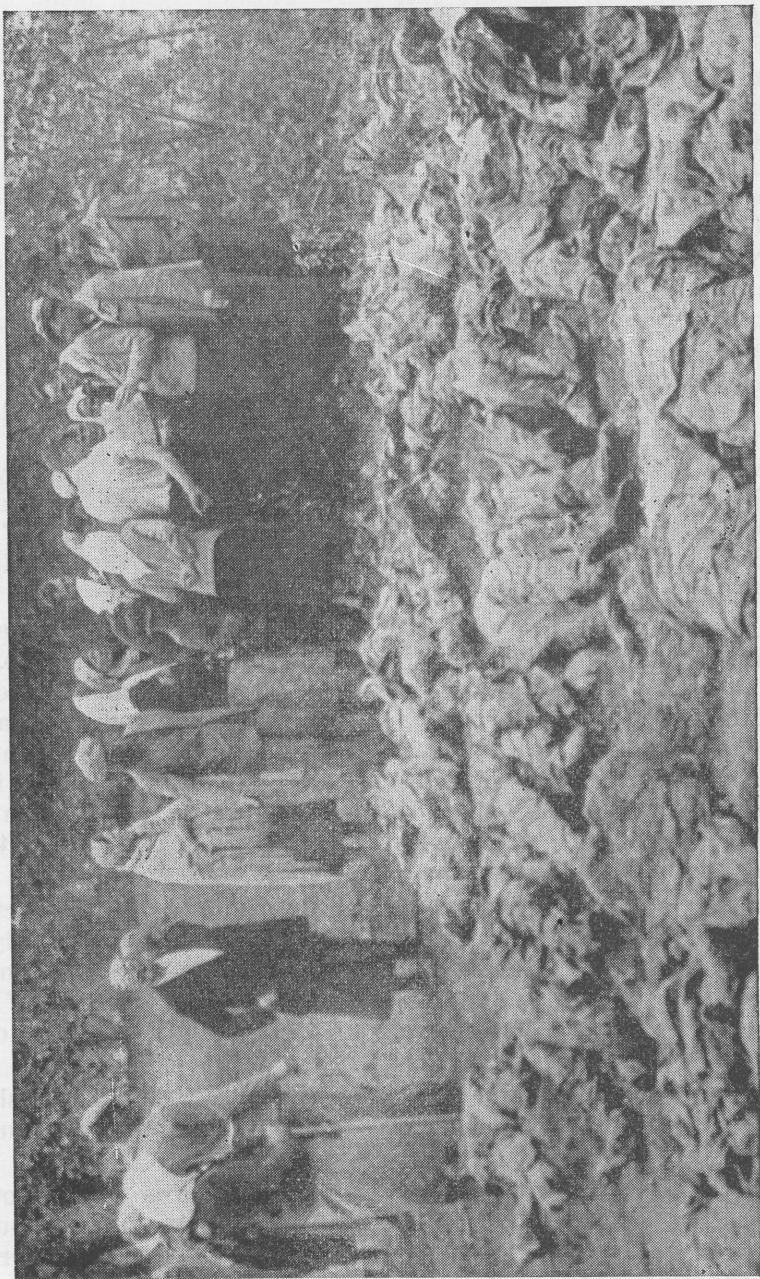
The published protocol stated the following deductions:

1. Death resulted from shots from small fire-arms.
2. Every corpse had a bullet hole in the nape of the neck and the bullets remained lodged in the brain.
3. The bullet hole was blackened with gun-powder, as usually happens when a shot is made at close range.

4. Slant of the bullets' travel showed that at the time of the shooting the prisoners were on their knees with their heads bent low and their hands tied behind their backs.

These facts, with details, were later corroborated by the International Commission made up of representatives from eleven European countries.

The Commission also declared that many prisoners had been buried alive because earth was found in their throats and stomachs."



P. Pavlovich reads to the peasants the NKVD search report which he found on the body of a victim. Photo by Yanushevich.

Correspondent: "What other details of the Commission's investigation did you mention?"

Petro Pavlovich: "I told them that on the basis of the documents discovered and the bodies identified by relatives it was established that most of the executed victims were farmers and laborers; for instance out of the five hundred identified in my presence 212 were farmers, 82 laborers, 77 professional and office workers, 16 army men and 4 priests.

Not one of the families questioned could tell us what offense their relative was charged with when arrested. But my countryman, Kost Sybirsky, who was arrested and imprisoned in Vynnytsya prison at that time will be able to tell you more."

Correspondent: "Mr. Sybirsky, you also testified on television and at the Ukrainian manifestation."

Kost Sybirsky: "Yes, I told of the terror in Vynnytsya in 1937 when every night the gloomy closed cars scoured the deserted streets carrying arrested victims to NKVD quarters which then occupied the whole of Dzerzhinsky Street.

One of these cars came to my home and they arrested me in spite of the rights promised me in the Constitution, and without any grounds. In searching my premises they found a book, "Ten Days which Shook the World", by an American author, John Reed. This book depicted the events of the October Revolution and in his time Lenin stated in the foreword that it was a "mirror of the Revolution". Later, the facts as stated in the book did not coincide with Stalin's version of history and the book was prohibited.

In the small Vynnytsya prison built for 3,000 convicts there were 18,000 of us. The NKVD worked feverishly. People were tried by the Military Tribunal, a Special Commission, and mainly by the "Special Council of the NKVD College". The latter considered the case in the absence of the defendant."

Correspondent: "Being arrested in 1937 you obviously knew many who were shot and whose bodies were found in the mass graves."

Kost Sybirsky: "Yes. Many of my cell-mates were shot. Every night at 2:30 A. M., 12 to 30 men were called out from each cell to the cellar under the NKVD garage where mass shooting took place. To deafen the gun reports two

or three large motors were left running, but even through the din of running motors we could hear the shots and screams.

I had been sentenced to Siblag concentration camp from which I managed to escape and return to Vynnytsya in 1943. I tried to locate the graves of my friends who had been arrested in 1937, and soon found them in three large burial grounds on Pidlisna Street, in the park and in the cemetery.

I also told of a fact well-known to me. When the communists returned to Vynnytsya in 1944, Rapoport, the last NKVD chief, announced that all those who had remained during the German occupation were required to appear. From these they picked out the ones who had identified their relatives dug up from the mass graves. Thus, they collected two hundred people, shot them and threw them into the open pits.

I finished with these words: terror is an integral part of the communist system and can be curbed only by the destruction of bolshevism."

Correspondent: "Thank you all for your information and best wishes for success in your future activities."

P. Pavlovich, the chief witness of the mass murder at Vynnytsya.



#### A Few Corrections of the Main Facts on the Uncovering of the Mass Graves in Vynnytsya.

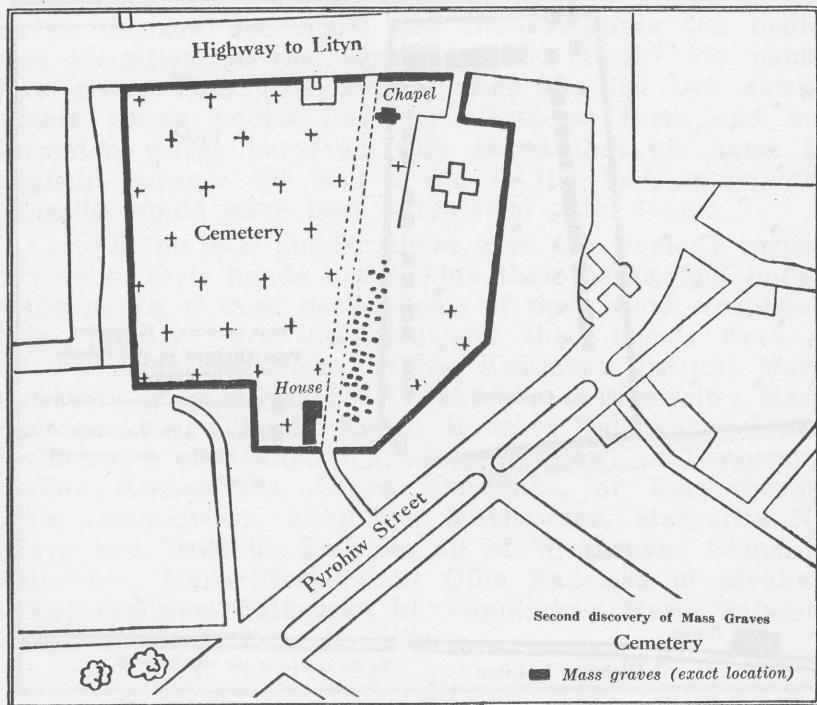
1. With permission from the local German occupation administration a group of Ukrainians began digging up the mass graves in the pear orchard on Pidlisna Street. This was on May 24, 1943, and the group consisted of Dr. S. Doroshenko and Dr. O. Klunk, both medical men; professors Savostianov and Dr. I. Malivin; and the editor A. Trembovetsky. In the presence of Bishop Evlohiy they conducted an autopsy on the 102 bodies dug up from the first grave and issued the following findings:

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

showed that small firearms were used in these instances, presumably pistols.

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

On June 29, 1943, the reopening of graves in the Orthodox Cemetery began. On June 30th, digging started on the graves in the "Gorky Park of Culture and Rest". The whole



#### Vynnytsya. Graves of the executed in the Orthodox cemetery.

process of uncovering these graves in the three places lasted from May 24 to October 3, 1943. The 19th and last funeral was held on that day.

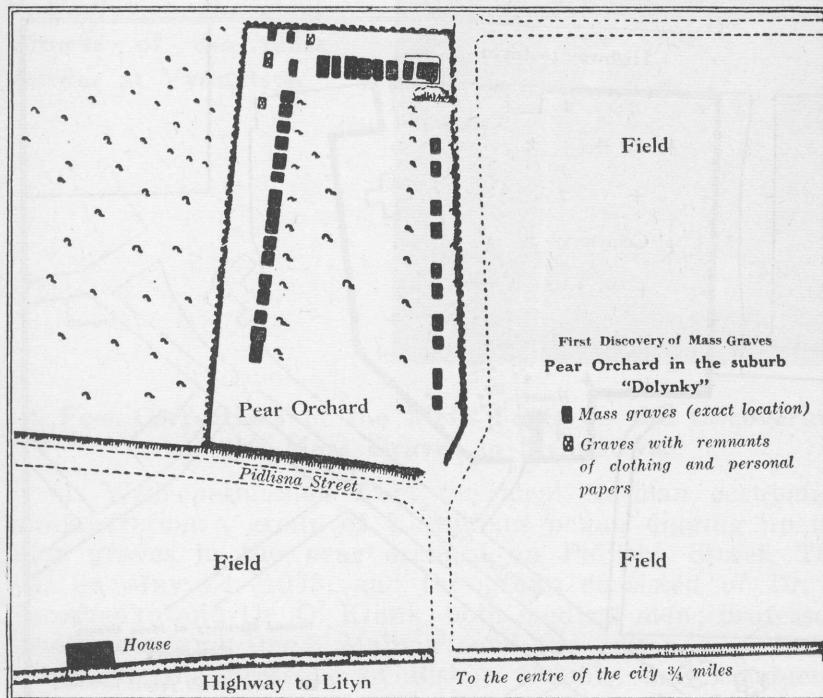
6. The number of uncovered victims was 9,439 and not 9,432 as was announced by the German Commission. I do not know the reason for not counting the seven bodies uncovered from grave No. 14 in the "Park of Culture and Rest" as was done by the Ukrainian Commission. The Commission was not in charge of the bodies found in Vynnytsya prison after the communist retreat in 1941 nor of the Red

Army men who were found shot at the Railroad Station, tied in several groups with barbed wire. The Germans made an official announcement about this in 1941. The large grave in "Kozytsky Park" was not re-opened. It covered the Cheka and GPU victims of 1923.

7. Altogether there were 95 graves:

Pidlisna Street — 39 graves — 5,644 bodies.

Orthodox Cemetery — 42 graves — 2,405 bodies.



• **Plan of graves on Pidlisna street.**

Gorky Park — 14 graves — 1,390 bodies.

In the protocol prepared by the International Commission, of all 11 European nations, 37 graves were recorded for the first site and 24 in the Park. The protocol was signed on July 15, 1943 but subsequently two more graves were re-opened at No. 1 Pidlisna Street. The number in the Park remained 14, the extra 10 mentioned by the International Commission were old pits, relics of the old Polish Cemetery.

8. During the excavation period 19 public funerals of

the exhumed bodies were held in true Christian tradition. All the bodies were laid in rows in 24 fraternal graves with their heads to the east. A careful count was made before interment and this was later published in the press. The graves were about 80 yards in length. 9,436 bodies were buried in the fraternal graves. Two were buried separately and one in the village at the family's request. Altogether 9,439 bodies were interred.

9. With the help of different articles found in the graves, through documents and close relatives 682 bodies were identified. In the German "White Book" 679 names were given. They had omitted from the list two Jewish doctors whose bodies had documents on them and one Ukrainian whose bereaved wife asked that his name be withheld because she had a son in the Red Army, who naturally would have been threatened with danger.

10. Of the total number there were 169 women's corpses uncovered, their hands tied behind their backs, and bullets in the napes of their necks. Some of them were completely nude. Twenty were identified and their names were as follows: Anna Benkovska, of the Kostianov district; Maria Burkatska of Sobolivka; W. Vakhovska of Nemyriw; Maria Vashnewska of Olhopil; Ksenia Hoba of Kulchynka; Sophia Hryhorowich of Vynnytsya; Sophia Davidowa of Vynnytsya; Paulina Kwasnevska, Olena Kornienko, of Kordyshevka; Lydia Lisniakiwska, Mikhaliina Makhowska, Margarita Novikova and Yadvyha Rolinska all of Vynnytsya; Franciska Malkevich; Maria Nosalevska; Olha Radetska of Mykhayliwka; Philipina Sulkovska of Vapniarka; Maria Salenska of Hnivan; and Olena Shuman.

**A. Vasylchenko**

### **ANOTHER "VYNNYTSYA"**

About 12 miles from Kiev on the road to Chernyhiw there is a place called Bykownya. Construction work of a mysterious nature was carried on near there, in a forest, in the spring of 1937 and finished by June of the same



**Mass graves of prisoners shot in 1941 before the German onslaught against Ukraine.**

year. Later, every day in the early morning or late at night a number of trucks, strongly guarded, were seen taking unknown loads into the enclosure built there. No one was able to learn the nature of the loads on the trucks. Police

dogs guarded the surrounding area, and no one was allowed to come nearer than 300 feet under penalty of being shot. The heavily loaded trucks took loads to this enclosure every day for four years, till 1941. When the Russian army retreated under German pressure, the local population was able to find out what kind of "work" had been carried on in the enclosure.

A fence about 10 feet high surrounded an area of about four acres. In one corner stood a building filled with empty preserving cans and liquor bottles. The surface of the ground was covered with scattered under-clothing, shoes, women's dresses, uniforms, etc.

When people began to dig the ground they found that the whole enclosure was one great mass grave, and was filled with bodies of murdered men and women. It is impossible to calculate the number of Ukrainian victims of the Russian police in that place. Thousands of men and women were tortured and buried there during the four years.

...now, saw and on the same afternoon our forces were  
joined joined to Ukraine which had 100,000 members of  
the communists and of about 100,000 people given up  
by their families and now 1,000,000, they had not yet  
been organized local and privately managed robbery banks  
no better no bad "hand" to him to the body of rich  
people in order to obtain information about the whereabouts of  
money.

### **M. Kowal**

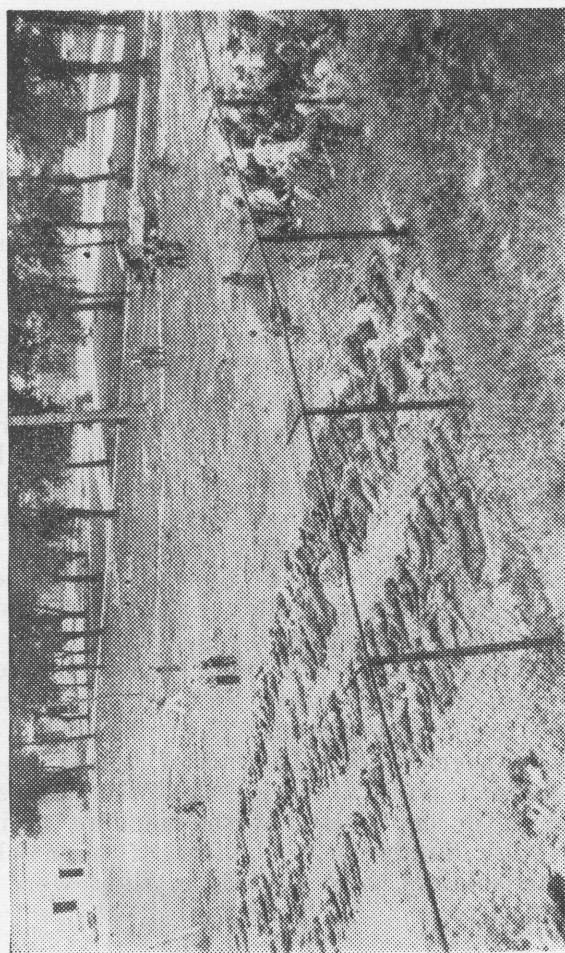
### **BOLSHEVIK MURDERS**

I am Michael Kowal, from the town of Kaminka Strumylova in the Lviw Region in Ukraine. During the communist occupation of Western Ukraine I personally witnessed three arrests in my native town on June 22, 1941, those of Bohdan Mulkevich, and Michael Mulkevich who lived on Zamok Street, and Michael Mulkevich's blacksmith apprentice, presumably from the village of Rymaniw in the same Region. They were suspected of disloyalty to the communist regime.

After the communist retreat from Kaminka-Strumylova they were found in the town prison with 33 other victims, murdered in a horribly sadistic manner. All the corpses were tied together with barbed wire and all bore signs of terrible beatings. Some had nails driven into their skulls. None of them had been shot to death. Their bodies, nude and badly mauled, were practically unrecognizable to their relatives.

Bohdan Mulkevich's wife recognized her husband but, trying to verify her identification by his gold teeth, found them missing.\* All the bodies were taken away for interment.

That same day 19 other bodies were discovered near the village of Todan about 9 or 10 kilometers from Kaminka-Strumylova. They were tied to trees and their chests were pierced with bayonets. These were all indentified by relatives and taken away for burial.



Exhumation of those executed during 1937-38 in Zolochiw, near Kharkiw.

**Andriy Vodopyan**

### **A RAVINE FILLED WITH THE BODIES OF CHILDREN**

I was serving in the Soviet Russian Army. Our artillery unit was retreating before the Germans in the direction of Yeletsk. On September 18, 1941, our unit came to a wide ravine situated about 14 miles from Chartsysk station, and about 60 miles from the city of Staline. The ravine stretched from the station of Chartsysk to the station of Snizhy. When we approached the ravine we were taken aback by a horrible sight. The whole ravine was filled with the bodies of children. They were lying in different positions. Most of them were from 14 to 16 years of age. They were dressed in black, and we recognized them as students of the F. S. U., a well-known trade and craft school. We counted 370 bodies altogether. All of them had been killed by machine gun fire.

This group of children was being evacuated from Staline when the Germans neared the city. The children had marched 60 miles, and, exhausted and unable to continue walking, asked for transportation. The officers in charge promised to send them trucks. Instead of trucks, a detachment of the Russian political police (NKVD) arrived, and shot the children in cold blood with machine guns. This ravine, filled with hundreds of bodies of slain children, moved even the soldiers, accustomed as they were to the sight of death.