

Institute of National Remembrance

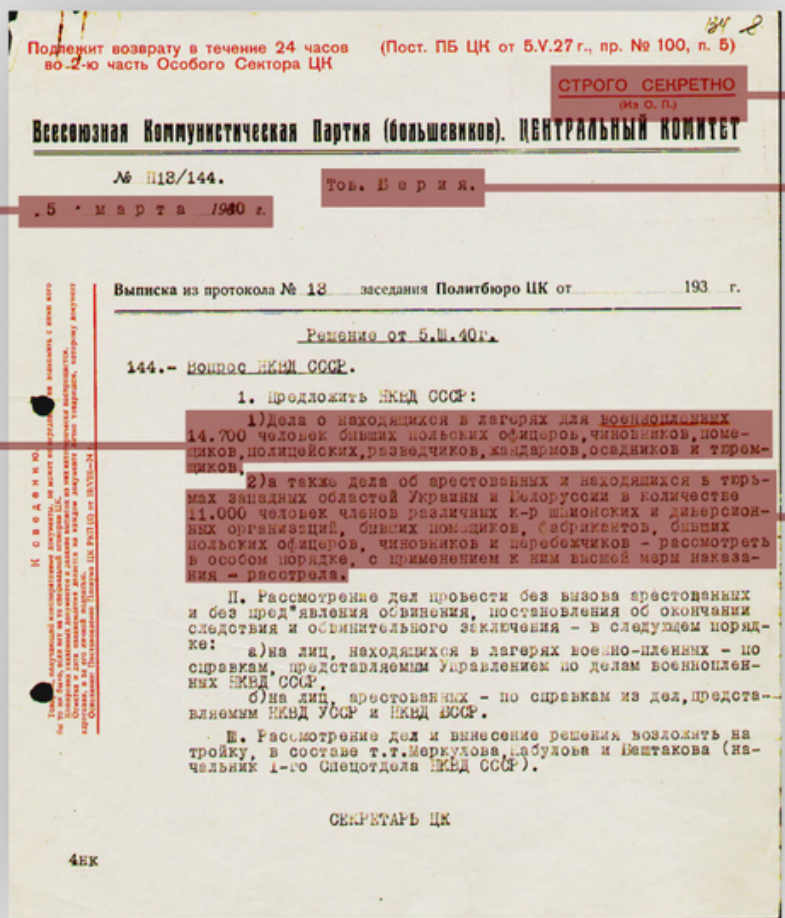
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Soviet Politburo order for the NKVD to murder Polish Pows and Detainees

SOVIET POLITBURO ORDER FOR THE NKVD TO MURDER POLISH POWS AND DETAINEES



5 MARCH 1940

СТРОГО СЕКРЕТНО
(на О. П.)
TOP SECRET

Тов. Берия
COMRADE BERIA

К СВЕДЕНИЮ:
Дело № 118/144. Подлежит возврату в течение 24 часов во 2-ю часть Особого Сектора ЦК (Пост. ПБ ЦК от 5.V.27 г., пр. № 100, п. 5)

THE CASES OF 14,700 REMAINING IN PRISONER-OF-WAR CAMPS – FORMER POLISH OFFICERS, GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, LANDOWNERS, POLICE OFFICERS, INTELLIGENCE AGENTS, MILITARY POLICEMEN, COLONISTS AND PRISON SERVICE

AS WELL AS THE CASES OF 11,000 DETAINEES AND PERSONS IMPRISONED IN WESTERN DISTRICTS OF UKRAINE AND BELARUS – MEMBERS OF VARIOUS COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY ESPIONAGE AND SUBVERSIVE RINGS, FORMER LAND- AND FACTORY OWNERS, FORMER POLISH OFFICERS, GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND FUGITIVES – ARE TO BE DECIDED UNDER SPECIAL PROCEDURE WITH CAPITAL PUNISHMENT – EXECUTION BY SHOOTING – ADMINISTERED.

80 years ago, the highest Soviet authorities approved Beria's proposal to kill Polish POWs and detainees. The approval was issued as the order no. P13/144, and set in motion the preparations for the Katyn Massacre, followed by the transfer to the execution sites.

Those who were kept in POW camps and NKVD prisons were, according to Beria "confirmed Soviet enemies ready to spread anti-Soviet agitation". In a secret memo from 2 March 1940, addressed to the highest Soviet authorities, the NKVD head proposed the death penalty for them.

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