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**Honoured Scientist**

**Prof. M. N. GERNET**

**CRIMES OF THE HITLERITES  
AGAINST HUMANITY**

**Edited by  
N. M. RYCHKOVA**

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НАУЧНО-ИССЛЕДОВАТЕЛЬСКИЙ ЮРИДИЧЕСКИЙ НАУК  
ИНСТИТУТ СССР

Докладный материал  
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**ПРЕСТУПЛЕНИЯ ГИТЛЕРОВЦЕВ  
ПРОТИВ ЧЕЛОВЕЧНОСТИ**

Под редакцией  
**И. И. РЫКОВА**

НАУЧНО-ИССЛЕДОВАТЕЛЬСКИЙ ЮРИДИЧЕСКИЙ  
ИНСТИТУТ СССР

Москва — 1946

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## **THE SCOPE OF THE CONCEPTS OF HITLER'S CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY**

On August 8, 1945, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United States of America, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and the Provisional Government of the French Republic established the International Military Tribunal to try the major war criminals of Nazi Germany.

The Tribunal is currently judging in Nuremberg—the former den of German fascism—the Nazi criminals who drenched the world in human blood, committing the most monstrous atrocities in the name of their criminal plans. The International Military Tribunal is the court of nations whose conscience demands deserved punishment for all criminals who brazenly violated the laws of humanity.

“Only vile people and scoundrels, devoid of honour and reduced to the level of animals, can allow themselves such outrages against innocent, unarmed people... They have covered Europe with gallows and concentration camps... They have turned Europe into a prison of nations. And this is what they call the ‘new order’ in Europe... Let these executioners know that they will not escape responsibility for their crimes and will not escape the punishing hand of the tortured peoples. “<sup>1</sup>

The indictment contains detailed information about all the crimes committed by the Nazi executioners. Significantly, an entire section is devoted to crimes against humanity.

What crimes are considered “crimes against humanity” according to the Charter of the International Military Tribunal?

According to the Charter, the crimes within the jurisdiction of the International Military Tribunal are listed in

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<sup>1</sup> J. Stalin, On the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union, Gospolitizdat, Moscow, 1946, pp. 68-69.

Article 6. Paragraph “a” of Article 6 lists “crimes against peace,” paragraph “b” lists “war crimes,” and paragraph “c” lists “crimes against humanity.” “Crimes against peace” include: planning, preparation, initiation, or waging of an aggressive war, and a number of other acts related to such an aggressive war.

War crimes, i.e. violations of the laws or customs of war, are listed in paragraph “b” of Article 6. These violations include: murder, torture, deportation into slavery or for other purposes of the civilian population of occupied territories, murder or torture of prisoners of war or persons at sea; killing of hostages; plunder of public or private property; wanton destruction of cities and villages; devastation not justified by military necessity and other crimes.

Paragraph (c) provides a brief list of “crimes against humanity”: murder, extermination, enslavement, deportation and other cruelties committed against civilians before or during the war; persecutions on political, racial or religious grounds, in execution of or in connection with any crime within the jurisdiction of the Tribunal, whether or not these acts constituted a violation of the law domestic to the country where they were committed.

The list of “crimes against humanity” in the Charter of the International Military Tribunal is not exhaustive, because these crimes are so varied and numerous that it is almost impossible to list them.

Clause “c” lists crimes directed against a person’s personality.

What is important is the indication in paragraph “c” of Article 6 of the jurisdiction of the International Military Tribunal for the crimes listed in this paragraph, “regardless of whether these acts constituted a violation of the internal law of the country where they were committed or not.”

The most brutal war crimes against civilians, prisoners of war and hostages, the terrible, world-famous violations of

the basic demands of justice, are an outrage upon humanity, shameless and brazen acts of cruelty of fascist tyranny.

All the senseless atrocities of the German fascists violate the demands of humanity.

The senseless destruction of towns and villages, accompanied by the loss of numerous populations and cultural monuments, deeply outraged the sense of justice of every honest person. The destruction of people, cultural monuments, works of art, and scientific collections, along with their plunder, caused irreparable harm and damage to humanity.

The crimes of the Nazis, who destroyed and plundered national monuments of science, art and culture in the broadest sense of the word, are also the most serious crimes against humanity.

The indictment at the Nuremberg Trials against the major German war criminals gave in its various sections a detailed list of the crimes specified in the three above-mentioned paragraphs of Article 6 of the Charter of the International Military Tribunal.

Comrade Rudenko, the USSR's Chief Prosecutor, rightly noted in his opening speech that "the Nazis' very rise to power was marked by numerous provocations that served as a pretext for committing grave crimes against humanity."<sup>1</sup> The Nazis' extrajudicial reprisals against anyone who was against them or not were particularly widespread. Pre-trial detention in prisons and concentration camps without trial or due process, detention in prisons and camps under the most unsanitary and inhumane conditions, violating all the requirements of humanity, mass murder, which culminated in the wholesale extermination of people based on race and political motives—all of this is included within the meaning of the term "extermination."

The indictment states of the defendants: “They carried out the deliberate and systematic extermination of peoples, i.e., the mass extermination of people belonging to certain racial and national groups, the killing of the civilian population of the occupied territories in order to destroy individual races and strata of the population, as well as national, racial and religious groups.”

It should also be emphasized that the indictment, by highlighting a specific section—“crimes against humanity”—characterises various types of war crimes as inhumane. Thus, individual war crimes are, as it were, fused with “crimes against humanity.”

Crimes against humanity are the law of the fascist monsters. “We National Socialists consciously oppose false gentleness and false humanity,” preached one of the leaders of this criminal gang, Göring. Humanity has spent millennia creating its own culture. Immeasurable were its gains in progress, accomplished under the banner of the struggle for humanity, for humaneness. And all the more terrible were the blows of the Nazis, the more horrific were all their vile crimes.

The starting point for the war crimes was determined in the indictment to be September 1, 1939, and the ending point to May 8, 1945. As for the crimes against humanity, the indictment did not determine the exact date of the beginning of the period of their atrocities within Germany itself, and outside of it the period was determined to be from September 1, 1939, i.e. from the time of the Nazi aggression.

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Comrade Stalin teaches that: **“The Hitlerite party is the party of imperialists, and, moreover, of the most predatory and predatory imperialists among all imperialists**

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<sup>1</sup> "Pravda" February 10, 1946

in the world.”<sup>1</sup> Not being nationalists, the Hitlerites had no right to call themselves socialists. They wore this name only as a mask to cover up their reactionary nature in words. Comrade Stalin said on this matter: “Can the Nazis be considered **socialists** ? No, they cannot. In reality, the Nazis are the sworn enemies of socialism... And if these rabid imperialists and worst reactionaries still continue to dress up in the guise of ‘nationalists’ and ‘socialists’, they do so in order to deceive the people, fool the simpletons, and cover up their predatory imperialist essence with the flag of ‘nationalism’ and ‘socialism’ . “<sup>2</sup>

Hitler formally took power and began his criminal, so-called “government” activities on January 30, 1933. However, the seizure of power was prepared by the events of a number of previous years.

The seizure of power ushered in the Nazi dictatorship and a wave of all manner of crimes. As early as February 4, 1933, Hitler issued an emergency decree: “In Defense of the German People.” This “decree” granted the administration sweeping powers over the people and their rights. The authorities could prohibit open-air assemblies. The police had to be notified of any political gathering 48 hours in advance. Any gathering could be banned if the police deemed it dangerous to public order. If the police found language used at a gathering offensive to senior government officials, the gathering was closed.

On February 17, 1933, Göring issued a police order calling on the police not to hesitate to use weapons to protect members of the “Steel Helmet” and stormtroopers. This was a shameless encouragement of violence and murder. The order stated verbatim: “I will protect police officials who, in the performance of their duties, use weapons,

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid., pp. 25-26.

<sup>1</sup> Stalin I.V., On the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union, Gospolitizdat, Moscow, 1946, p. 25.

regardless of the consequences of their use. Conversely, anyone who displays false leniency must expect disciplinary action. Every official must always remember that failure to take action is a greater offense than an error in carrying it out.”

Thus, from the very first month of their seizure of power, the Nazis made murder a system of their “government activities.” On February 22, 1933, Göring issued an order to create auxiliary police units armed with revolvers and rubber truncheons. In Prussia alone, 50,000 Nazis, prepared to commit all manner of atrocities, were included in these units. It was an army of rapists, robbers, and murderers.

On February 27, the Nazis announced the Reichstag Fire to the world, blaming it on the Communists. The arson, committed by the Nazis, was one of their greatest crimes. They used it to intensify their reign of terror.

Thus, amidst the flames of provocative conflagration and the bloodshed of murder within Germany itself, the Hitler Party raged. On February 28, with the decree “In Defence of the People and the State,” it abolished freedom of speech, press, and assembly. Many were either killed or imprisoned. Horrific concentration camps were opened. No anti-people movement within Germany swept so many human lives and national property from the face of the earth as the Nazis.

They completely ignored the demands of humanity and justice and openly took pride in this. On March 3, 1933, Göring declared in a speech: “My task is not to administer justice, but to destroy and eradicate. This will be a fight against chaos, and in this fight I will use more than just police force. The fist I bring down on the back of the head of these criminals is the brown-shirts.”

## RACIAL THEORY

The foundation of all the Nazi crimes lay in the “racial theory” they created. This misanthropic doctrine was intended to justify the commission of all crimes, including, above all, aggressive war. The racial theory of the primacy of Germans was intended to justify all means, whatever they might be, that would transform Aryans into the masters of the world and all other nationalities into their slaves. In the most cynical form, the fascists declared a social system based on violence and despotism, exploitation and inequality, to be the ideal. Racial theory utterly disdainfully rejected all the lofty ideals of humanity for which the best people of all nations had fought and for which science had strived throughout the world. The fascists brazenly declared their racial theory to be the latest scientific achievement.

At the 17th Party Congress (1934), Comrade Stalin emphasised: “The racial theory of fascism is as far from science as heaven is from earth.”<sup>1</sup> Eleven years passed between those words and the overthrow of fascist rule. During this time, the Nazis, with their racial theory, demonstrated that it was not science, but a bandit ideology, that guided them in their entire domestic and foreign policy, and in their approach to progress.

From their “racial theory,” the fascists arrived at two practical conclusions. First, Germans were to be masters. Second, all non-Germans, non-Aryans, were to be condemned to slavery and extermination. Hitler said: “I will never recognise the equality of other peoples with the German people. Our mission is to subjugate other peoples. The German people is called upon to give the world a new class of masters.” In words, Hitler explained: “We are faced with the task of reducing the alien population, as well as methodically promoting the growth of the German

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<sup>1</sup> J. Stalin, Questions of Leninism, 10th edition, p. 546.

population.” But he began his “experiments” in extermination with the German people. “... Who can dispute my right to exterminate millions of people of an inferior race who reproduce like insects... Twenty million people must be exterminated .”

Hitler far exceeded his estimated figure. However, he did not foresee that his “right to destroy” human lives would be annihilated by the heroic Red Army and the armies of freedom-loving countries, and that fascism would answer for all its crimes before the judgment of humanity.

On July 14, 1933, six months after seizing power, the fascists issued their vile law “On the Prevention of Hereditarily Diseased Offspring.” This sterilization law was aimed squarely at the propertyless class and political opponents of fascism.

Comrade Dimitrov quite rightly said at the 7th Congress of the Comintern: “Sterilization has been transformed into a means of political struggle .”<sup>3</sup> The fascists used this means as widely as they wished. In 1934-1935 alone, 580,000 people were sterilized in Germany.

Filled with the greatest hatred of Jews, the Nazis passed the Law for the Protection of German Blood and German Honour on September 15, 1935. Every article of this law dealt a severe blow to the Jewish population of Germany and was a disgrace to the German people.

The first article of the “law” prohibited any Jew from marrying a person of German blood. This introduced a new crime, equivalent in its severity to a special kind of treason, namely, “racial treason.” All marriages concluded, even abroad, in violation of this law were declared invalid. For

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<sup>2</sup> Goldstein I., Racial Policy of German Fascism, Journal of World Economy and World Politics, 1942, No. 11-12, pp. 36-37.

<sup>3</sup> Trakhterev V., Castration and sterilization, Journal of Socialist Legality, 1937, No. 2, p. 83.

such a crime, a fascist court could even sentence a person to hard labor for up to 15 years.

Extramarital relations between a Jew and persons of Aryan blood were also declared a crime.

At the Nuremberg Trials, the prosecution presented a series of Hitler's decrees directed against the Jews, turning them into outcasts, deprived of the right to life. Among the numerous laws presented that trampled on the most basic human rights were such "laws" as the decree of November 12, 1938, on the elimination of Jews from Germany's economic life, and the order issued as early as January 8, 1937, prohibiting Germans from using the services of Jewish doctors, lawyers, and so on. All these decrees and instructions were merely a prelude to the Nazi actions that Hitler called the "final solution of the Jewish question"—that is, the wholesale extermination of Jews not only in Germany but in all occupied countries. Concentration camps and ghettos established in various cities became the sites of the martyrdom of millions of Jews and all enslaved peoples.

Truly, since the Nazis seized power, Germany has become a gloomy grave and a huge torture chamber.

### **Murders, Tortures and Other Crimes of the Nazis Against the Individual 1**

The Nazis' monstrous atrocities include their crimes against humanity, as specified in paragraph "c" of Article 6 of the Charter of the International Military Tribunal, aimed at depriving a person of life, liberty, and suffering. The

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<sup>1</sup> On the atrocities of the fascists, see all the notes of Comrade V. M. Molotov, *Gospolitizdat*, also the "Message of the Extraordinary State Commission," of the same publication, and the issues of the Main Political Directorate of the Red Army, "Atrocities of the German-Fascist Invaders," published in 1942-1945.

fascists, having begun these crimes in Germany immediately after seizing power, simultaneously prepared criminal plans for an aggressive war aimed at the extermination and enslavement of other peoples, with deliberate violations of all international treaties and their own obligations. Italian fascists and Japanese imperialists rushed to their aid. Their program of action included the commission of the most heinous crimes, provocative murders, deceptions, and all crimes against the human person.

The conspirators against humanity were confident that their bombers, armored cannons, machine guns, and automatic weapons would lead them to victory, that their “Tiger” and “Panther” tanks would tear apart non-Aryans. The cannibals of the 20th century plotted to murder millions of people, hoping to quench their insatiable thirst with their blood. They successively drank the blood of Austria, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Norway, Holland, Belgium and Luxembourg, France, Yugoslavia, and Greece, the blood of the peoples of our Union and other countries.

On June 22, 1941, Hitler’s hordes treacherously crossed the borders of the USSR. Fascism began a treacherous, criminal war against the Soviet Union, but the valiant Red Army and the Soviet people, led by the Bolshevik Party and Comrade Stalin, ended it victoriously, raising the red flag over the German Reichstag in Berlin. By the armed forces of the United Nations, humanity was liberated, its civilization saved from the mortal danger that had threatened it.

From the very beginning of the war in Europe, the public around the world was informed of the incredible atrocities committed by the Germans along every route they advanced through the countries they temporarily occupied. These reports were so horrific that they seemed unbelievable. But the Nazi trials, including those at Nuremberg, and the work of various commissions investigating German atrocities showed that the public was unaware of the full horrors of the Nazi violations of the laws of humanity.

I would like to emphasise here that my scholarly interests have always been closely related to the study of mass crime as a social phenomenon, to the study of criminals themselves, and to the study of criminal repression in the distant past and recent times. But in my half-century of scholarly work, I have never encountered, even in the distant past, such a monstrous violation of humanity, such cruelty, as was committed by the Nazis during World War II. I recall the books and articles on the history of punishment and crime I have read over these half-century, in various languages. The horrors of medieval torture and executions are brought to mind, images of judge-executioners and various servants of the Inquisition arise, and I recall the famous criminals whose names are etched into the history of crime.

By a remarkable coincidence, the 17th-century German judge Benedikt Karpzow holds the record for cruelty . He boasted of having signed 20,000 death sentences and added that God himself would determine who among those sentenced to torture was guilty and who was right. The descendants of this “illustrious” Saxon far surpassed him in the 20th century, simply ordering the executions of millions of people without investigation or trial. God won’t have to judge their guilt: they were all innocent, having died simply because they were Jews or Slavs, because they were declared political enemies of fascism, because they were prisoners of war, or because they were relatives of partisans.

Another German, Dempe, should also be given first place among the criminals of the 20th century, between the First and Second World Wars. This native of German Silesia killed 31 people for cannibalistic purposes . A search of his person revealed roasted, boiled, and salted human flesh, suspenders and belts made from human skin, and a notebook noting the slaughter weight of each person he killed. He was a forerunner of Hitler’s cannibals and bloodsuckers, who

preached murder as a legitimate means of domination and made lampshades from tattooed human skin.

A vast literature has been devoted to the history of punishment and torture in the Middle Ages, during the Inquisition. It's significant that in Nuremberg, where the main perpetrators of the war and monstrous atrocities are currently being tried, and where parades and fascist rallies once took place, the world's only criminological museum is located. It houses collections of all manner of torture and execution instruments. Life-size models depict horrific scenes of these tortures and executions. The so-called "iron maiden" has also been preserved intact. It is a life-size metal figure of a woman. This figure, shaped like a cabinet or case with folding doors, was equipped with daggers of varying lengths. The condemned man was placed inside the "iron maiden," the doors were slowly closed mechanically, and the daggers were pierced, gradually penetrating all parts of the body. The final blow of the dagger to the victim's head was called by these executioners "the kiss of the iron maiden."

Did this criminological museum serve as a kind of school where Nazi executioners practiced torture and execution? But the students of the Nuremberg museum far surpassed their teachers in the use of the most brutal executions and torture. This is evidenced by the films shown at the Nuremberg Trials and the documents presented. Among these "improved" methods of execution are gas chambers and gas vans. Gas chambers were an accessory to various concentration camps. Gas vans were, so to speak, mobile scaffolds. At the Nuremberg Trials, it was revealed that, beginning in the spring of 1942, this method of execution was particularly widely used, on Hitler's orders, against women and children. A gas van could hold 10-40 doomed people. The sight of victims dying in gas chambers was so horrific that even seasoned Nazi executioners, accustomed to all sorts of "sensations," could not bear it. At Auschwitz, 1,500-1,700 people were forced into the gas chambers. Afterward,

executioners wearing gas masks threw the Zyklon poison through special hatches. The bodies of the executed were burned. Between 10,000 and 12,000 people were killed daily at this camp. This mass extermination method was a characteristic of Nazi executions of civilians and prisoners of war. The camp had five crematoria for burning the dead.

In addition to gas, electric shock was also used for executions and torture. But the greatest number of victims died by shooting. And in its use, an “innovation” never before seen was introduced. Those brought to the camp were marked on the lists with the letter “K,” the initial of the German word for “bullet.” These condemned prisoners were stripped naked, led into a bathhouse, and placed over a shower faucet. A special automatic machine gun executed them at point-blank range.

The Extraordinary State Commission reports cases of small children being used *en masse* as targets for shooting. It was common for those condemned to be shot to dig their own graves. Those condemned to death were placed at the edge of a prepared grave or kneeling facing the grave.

In a camp near Smolensk, the Nazis forced those sentenced to death to lie face down, one next to the other, at the bottom of a prepared ditch and shot them in the back of the head with machine guns. New victims were forced onto the corpses of the dead and killed in the same manner. The executions continued until the ditch was full<sup>1</sup>.

In Kloga, Estonia, Nazi executioners executed the condemned after laying them on the planks of a prepared pyre. More planks were laid on top of these corpses, and a new row of victims was shot. Thus, a huge pyre of layers of planks and human bodies was prepared. The Nazis hoped that

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<sup>1</sup> Pravda, February 20, 1946, Speech by the representative of the Soviet prosecution at the Nuremberg Trials, Comrade Smirnov.

the fire would conceal the traces of their crimes better than the earth. But the Soviet prosecution at the Nuremberg Trials exposed these atrocities committed by the German occupiers<sup>2</sup>.

We have already seen from our previous account how the German executioners diversified the shooting—this seemingly simple method of execution. However, their sophistication in this regard knew no bounds. Various methods were devised to make the last moments of life before execution particularly painful. For example, at the evening session of the Nuremberg Trials on February 18, 1946, a representative of the Soviet prosecution presented a document about the mass executions of women and children. A dozen trucks delivered a “live load” of 300 women and children to a prepared ditch. The executioners grabbed the children by the legs and threw them into the ditch. Desperate mothers ran after their children to the pit, while the Nazis’ bullets flew in pursuit, striking the backs of these unfortunate women. The ditch filled with the corpses of mothers and children thrown into it alive. One can easily imagine the full horror of this bloody massacre.

In another case, trucks were intended to transport “dead weight”—the corpses of those executed. Before the executions, which were carried out gradually in groups of five, the Nazis forced those sentenced to death to load the bodies of those already executed onto the truck, and then executed them themselves. This was done methodically, revealing the sadism of the German executioners.

At the Minsk trial (January 1946), the police chief, one of the main defendants, testified that he always personally initiated executions by killing several people, to demonstrate

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<sup>2</sup> Pravda, February 21, 1946, Speech by the representative of the Soviet prosecution at the Nuremberg Trials, Comrade Smirnov.

“how a Gestapo man should act.” There were frequent cases where it was not the executed men who were buried, but only the wounded.

At the Nuremberg trial, a witness testified that 50 Soviet officers were executed at the Mauthausen camp in September 1944. They were shot in the back of the head, one after another, lined up in a line. The Nazis widely reinstated the medieval method of execution by burning alive. They burned victims at the stake, alone. The mass burning of victims locked in huts, barns, large houses, and churches was especially common. They burned people alive in crematoria, and created flaming torches of living people, who were first set alight after being doused with gasoline or smeared with tar.

To intimidate the civilian population, the Nazis resorted to hanging. The corpses of the executed hung for long periods on gallows, bearing slogans such as “I hid a partisan,” “I am against the new order,” “I disobeyed the orders of the German authorities,” and so on. They also devised a method of hanging the condemned by a hook attached to the jaw. Even the dark Middle Ages had never seen such a torturous execution. The Nazis hung their victims upside down to delay death, and they threw women, children, the elderly, and prisoners from heights into ravines 30-40 meters deep, cynicism-leadenly calling such doomed victims “parachutists.” At a trial in Kyiv on January 26, 1945, it was established that 75 thousand people were thrown into shaft No. 4-bis by the Germans, and then the shaft was blown up and flooded, becoming a massive mass grave, the likes of which the world had never seen before.

The Nazis also used water for executions. They doused their victims in freezing temperatures, turning them into ice statues. At the Nuremberg Trials, it was proven that 400 prisoners at the Mauthausen camp were stripped naked and exposed to temperatures of  $-18^{\circ}\text{C}$  ( $-32^{\circ}\text{F}$ ). Those dying of the cold were repeatedly subjected to icy showers. Death from

this excruciating method of execution occurred after prolonged, unbearable suffering. The few who showed signs of life were finished off with an axe. Another agonizing method of execution was introduced in concentration camps: thirst torture. Those dying of thirst were tauntingly offered urine instead of water.

In addition to burning by fire, another method was introduced: burning from within by injecting hydrochloric acid into the stomach. Execution by poisoning with a poisonous drink and by injection into the heart was also used. At the Nuremberg Trials, an eyewitness recounted the agonizing execution of 47 French, British, and Dutch airmen. For two days, barefoot and clad in only their underwear, they were forced to carry heavy stones out of a quarry on their backs, under the blows of the executioners. Their path was covered in blood, and all of them died within 48 hours. Death occurred from exhaustion and merciless beatings with stones, until they collapsed, completely exhausted, unable even to rise.

The methods listed above did not exhaust all the ways in which innocent people were murdered. The murderers were guided by the order of Keitel, now in the dock: "Efficiency can only be achieved through the death penalty." The cannibals carried out these executions in disguise, condemning millions of people in occupied countries, including our own in the captured regions of the Soviet Union, to starvation. Among the Nazis' greatest crimes against humanity and morality were the starvation siege of Leningrad, the Danzig soap factory made from human corpses, and the production of fertilizer from the innocent victims of fascism. They placed wounded soldiers with open wounds on manure to infect them with gangrene. The Nazis conducted monstrous experiments, so-called "medical" ones, in concentration camps and prisons. Here, the distinction between doctor and executioner was blurred. They infected their victims with various diseases, shot prisoners with

poisoned bullets, and conducted freezing experiments at various temperatures. They took people without appropriate apparatus to fly into the stratosphere, where they perished in the thin air. They performed all manner of experimental, excruciating operations, with fatal outcomes. For the Nazi executioner-doctors, concentration camp prisoners were cheaper experimental material than rabbits, mice, and rats. Millions of prisoners in concentration camps were left without medical care and almost all died there. German doctors were no different from specially trained vicious dogs, to whom the fiends of Nazi Germany handed over men, women, children, wounded, and sick prisoners of war.

The Nazis revived the horrific practices of the Inquisition, using technological advances. They tortured with fire and electric shock, broke joints, cut off fingers, toes, hands, ears, lips, and tongues, gouged out eyes, flayed skin, and collected tattooed skins to make exhibits. They drove needles and nails under fingernails, cut belts from the skin of their victims, and burned the five-pointed star, so hated by them, into the bodies of our soldiers. They combined all manner of torture methods in ways unheard of even by the Inquisition.

The extermination of innocent people for political, religious, and racial reasons was carried out on a grand scale. The horrific names of death and extermination camps are forever etched into the dark pages of human history: Buchenwald, Dachau, Majdanek, Auschwitz, Mauthausen, the camps near Kiev (195,000 people died at Babi Yar), Minsk, Riga, and many others<sup>1</sup>.

There was a veritable competition among all members of the fascist gang to claim first place in the number of executions carried out and the horror of torture. The

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<sup>1</sup> See **Simonov K.**, Extermination Camp, Voenizdat, Leningrad, 1944.

commandant of the Mauthausen camp told the prisoners: “You will leave the camp only with smoke coming out of the crematorium chimney.” Not only prisoners of war were sent here, but also millions of non-Aryans—French, Danish, Norwegian, Jewish, and Slavic. Films of these camps were shown before the Nuremberg trials. Those who saw them will never forget them; those who read and heard about them will forever remember the descriptions of senseless, inhumane cruelty.

Of course, some time will pass before the final accounts of the bloody fascist atrocities are tallied. But even now, we know from the report of the Extraordinary State Commission of the monstrous crimes at Auschwitz, where more than four million people were murdered. Even in the small Baltic states, the victims of German atrocities number in the hundreds of thousands. For example, at a trial in Riga (January 26, 1946), it was established that in the Latvian SSR, the occupiers exterminated over 600,000 Soviet civilians and prisoners of war and deported over 280,000 into slavery in Germany. In the Lithuanian SSR, they exterminated approximately 700,000 Soviet civilians and prisoners of war and deported 36,000 Soviet citizens into slavery. The number of murders in the Estonian SSR was also enormous. Millions more were killed in Belarus, Ukraine, and other parts of our great Motherland. Our land is saturated with the blood of these victims.

At the Nuremberg Trials on December 20, 1945, a top secret German document was presented stating that just one group of exterminators killed 136,421 Jews in Lithuania, 41,828 in Belarus, 35,238 in Latvia, etc.

A disguised form of extermination was the deportation of the population into slavery in Germany. More than two million were deported from the Ukrainian SSR alone. At the Nuremberg Trials, the minutes of a meeting with Himmler were read out, citing the decision to deport 500,000 women aged 15 to 35 from the eastern regions to Germany for

domestic labor. The most gruelling labour, not only in factories but also on farms and in the homes of housewives, was the lot of these unfortunate victims of Hitler's cannibals, who starved their victims and brutally beat them. The recruitment of labor and the deportation of people into slavery, as American prosecutor Dodd noted at the Nuremberg Trials, was nothing less than a merciless and savage human hunt. Nothing stopped the fascists from the criminal execution of their misanthropic plans.

In violation of all international laws, the Nazis used the criminal method of hostage-taking on a widespread basis. At the Nuremberg Trials, the words of Comrade Smirnov, the representative of the Soviet prosecution, resounded with particular force regarding the brutal extermination of hostages in Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Greece, Poland, and other countries.

"In violation of Article 50 of the Hague Regulations," says Comrade Smirnov, "the Germans systematically punished the innocent, strictly adhering to the principle that the entire population must bear responsibility for actions committed by individuals... The Germans pursued a policy of repression, including the taking and killing of hostages, mass murder, devastation, and emptying of villages as a countermeasure for actions committed by unknown persons in the vicinity of these villages... In the endless series of atrocities of German fascism, there are some that will remain in the memory of mankind for a long time, perhaps forever... Among such crimes is the destruction of the Czechoslovak village of Lidice by the Nazis and the brutal reprisals against the population of this village <sup>1</sup>. These atrocities were carried out with the aim of: 1) the physical extermination of all those capable of resistance, 2) to implement a misanthropic racial "theory", 3) allegedly to fight the partisans.

“I accuse them of the fact,” the Chief Prosecutor from the USSR, Comrade R. Denko, emphasized at the meeting of the International Military Tribunal in Nuremberg, “ that, having unleashed world war, in violation of the fundamental principles of international law and other concluded agreements, they turned war into a weapon of mass extermination of civilians, into a weapon of robbery, violence and banditry.

I accuse them of having declared themselves to be the representatives of a race of masters which they had invented, and of having created, wherever their power penetrated, a regime of arbitrariness and tyranny, a regime based on the trampling of the elementary foundations of humanity”<sup>1</sup>.

### **CRIMES AGAINST THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF HUMAN CULTURE**

The Nazis’ crimes against humanity must also include all their crimes against cultural achievements. The modern civilization of cultured humanity is the result of millennia of progress and its victory over barbarism. The enemies of culture, interested in its stagnation and reaction, have always waged a struggle against it. However, throughout human history, civilization has never suffered a more powerful blow than that inflicted upon it by the fascists—those 20th-century barbarians, led by Hitler. The greatest material treasures of science and art, the creations of the geniuses of the human mind, have been destroyed. Much has been completely destroyed by these barbarians. Restoring much of what has been destroyed will require many years of

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<sup>1</sup> Izvestia, February 19, 1946

<sup>1</sup> Pravda, Opening Speech (End) by the Chief Prosecutor of the USSR, Comrade Rudenko, February 10, 1946

persistent and arduous labor. Even millennia will not erase from history the memory of these losses suffered by civilisation.

The Nazis' guilt in this regard before generations of those countries, not excluding Germany itself, where they marched with fire and sword, is immeasurable. These crimes of theirs rank among the gravest atrocities against humanity. The main instigator of these atrocities against humanity was Hitler himself. He openly called on Germans to return to barbarism. With astonishing cynicism, he said: "Culture, civilization, humaneness, etc.—these are expressions of a mixture of stupidity, cowardice, and conceit. They call me a fool, a barbarian... Well, yes, we are barbarians, and we want to be barbarians. It is an honourable title. The modern world is coming to an end. Our only task is to destroy this world."

On the ruins of a destroyed world, Hitler planned to build concentration camps and slave colonies. He wanted to extinguish every torch of knowledge and plunge the masses into the impenetrable darkness of ignorance. This monster told his accomplices: "A poorly educated but physically healthy person is more useful to society than an intellectually developed person... We must guard against thought, consciousness, and must obey only our instincts. Once and for all, we must put an end to what is called universal education. Universal education is poison. Complete freedom of education is the privilege of the elite and those they admit into their midst. By being consistent... we grant the vast mass of the lower classes the benefit of illiteracy. The lower the cultural level of the working class and the entire people, the greater our chances of retaining power..."

<sup>1</sup>. Such were the views of all Hitlerites on civilization, science, and education. For example, Hitler's Minister of Public Education proclaimed: "Blind obedience is the highest virtue of the average person. The more intelligent he becomes, the less obedient he becomes."<sup>2</sup> Likewise, Hitler's

henchman Goebbels declared: “Humanism, culture, international law—for us, they are empty words.”

In *Mein Kampf*, Hitler wrote: “We must have the courage to return to consistent ignorance and paganism. Culture and knowledge pose a certain danger to the master class. But free access to culture is even more dangerous for the preservation of the slave class. The ideal of a culture accessible to all has long since become obsolete. Knowledge and science must acquire the character of a secret culture, accessible only to the privileged.”

Trampling culture, Hitler said that education, like conscience, cripples a person. He declared it his privilege to be uninhibited by any theoretical or moral considerations.

Having seized power in Germany, the Nazis immediately directed their first attacks against those who had served progress in word and deed, who had fought for humanity, who had held science in high esteem, who had demanded the equality and brotherhood of man, who had moved humanity along the path of progress, whose immortal names were inscribed in the history of civilization. Many of them were no longer alive, and they lived on in humanity through their brilliant works. Hitler targeted the works of these geniuses. He organized a nationwide burning of the published works of the friends of humanity, which fascism hated.

In the Middle Ages, the Inquisition held solemn ceremonies of burning at the stake those it declared enemies of the Church. Hitler organized, on the same day, public burnings of the works of those he considered servants of culture throughout Germany.

The lists of books condemned to be burned included numerous titles by scholars and writers from various

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<sup>2</sup> Rubinstein M., German fascists are the worst enemies of science and culture, OGIZ, Gospolizdat, 1941, p. 4.

<sup>1</sup> “Atrocities of the German fascists”, OGIZ, Gospolizdat, 1941, p. 4.

countries. Even being among the great scholars and writers of Germany itself did not save one from the stake. If a book spoke of truth and love, brotherhood and equality, if it fought against the exploitation of the working class, its fate was sealed: the flames of the stake would consume it.

On May 10, 1933, in the main squares of Berlin, Dresden, Leipzig, Munich, and other German cities where heretics had been burned alive in the Middle Ages, enormous bonfires blazed, where the Nazis burned the immortal works of brilliant thinkers, poets, and writers. Trucks delivered thousands of books, confiscated from public and private libraries. The works of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, Liebknecht, Bebel, Mehring, Byron, Victor Hugo, Maxim Gorky, Heine, Börne, Zola, Romain Rolland, Stefan Zweig, and many others were burned. The Nazi fanatics were especially hateful of those finest representatives of human progress whose names are inscribed in history as great humanists, whose scholarly work served the interests of the working people, and who fought against exploitation and disenfranchisement.

Hitler was especially fierce in destroying Marxist literature, thinking that he would thereby destroy Marxism as well.

At the 17th Party Congress, Comrade Stalin spoke about these senseless attempts to destroy Marxism: “Marxism is the scientific expression of the fundamental interests of the working class. To destroy Marxism, one must destroy the working class. And it is impossible to destroy the working class.”<sup>1</sup>

Bestial malice and boundless stupidity - these are the words that should characterize these attempts by the Nazis to destroy human thought.

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<sup>1</sup> Stalin, I. V. Questions of Leninism, 11th ed., p. 484.

In the first days, 10,000 quintals of books and magazines were confiscated for book fires in Berlin. Ten thousand private libraries were seized.

The destruction of scientific works and literature in Germany itself was a rehearsal for the similar destruction of scientific and artistic works in the temporarily occupied countries. The Nazis' reprisals against German scientists were a prelude to the reprisals against scientists and writers in the occupied countries. Scientists perished in prisons and concentration camps. Among those imprisoned in the Paris prison were the renowned physiologist and Nobel laureate Lapicque, the physicist Langevin, and the mathematician Borel. Professor Bartel, a mathematician and honorary member of several academies of sciences, was executed in Lvov.

In a collective letter to Comrade Rudenko, the USSR's representative for the prosecution at the Nuremberg Trials, in addition to Professor Bartel, who was executed in Lviv, Lviv scientists named seven other scientists, their compatriots, who were murdered by the Germans. These were Professors Grek, Progulsky, Renetsky, Pilat, Academician Solovia, Boy-Zhelensky, and the deputy director of the library of the Lviv branch of the Academy of Sciences, Vislotsky. The authors of the letter pointed out that these scientists perished solely because they were Slavs, adding: "Let the terrible sacrifices of scientific Lviv serve as a formidable indictment at the international trial of Hitlerism<sup>1</sup>.

A large number of Krakow University professors perished in concentration camps. The international community is still unaware of the vast, bloody toll of names of scientists, writers, and artists who perished as martyrs at the hands of the Nazis in the countries they occupied. Violent and

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<sup>1</sup> Pravda, December 21, 1945.

premature deaths snatched them from humanity in almost every European country. They were exterminated individually and en masse. For example, in Czechoslovakia, after the assassination attempt on the Nazi executioner Heydrich, many thousands of intellectuals were exterminated in the space of just one month.

The number of intellectuals who perished is incalculable. In their executioner-like work of exterminating the intelligentsia, the Nazis used the motto of Roseberg, who was sitting in the dock: “Pity is a contagion that comes from the Jew Christ, the Russian Tolstoy, the Englishman Dickens, and the Frenchman Victor Hugo.”<sup>2</sup>

The leaders of Hitlerism infected the members of their criminal organization, their army, and the German people with this vile “doctrine”.

On January 17, 1946, at the morning session of the International Military Tribunal, Chief Prosecutor de Menthon of France gave a general characterization of the Nazis’ crimes against humanity: “Here I wish to mention a doctrine that denies all rational, moral, and spiritual values with which nations have striven for millennia to improve human existence. The goal of this doctrine is to plunge humanity into a state of barbarism... The doctrine of National Socialism, which elevated inhumanity to a principle, truly created the doctrine of the destruction of modern society.”

Hitlerism aimed to wipe out national culture in the occupied countries. It was especially loathsome to the truly universal, profoundly humane culture of our socialist country. It was terrified by the unprecedentedly rapid development of this culture after the Great October Socialist Revolution. It was terrified by the gains this culture would make under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party and its leaders and teachers, Lenin and Stalin. This is why Hitlerism declared a crusade against Bolshevism, the highest

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<sup>2</sup> Tarle E., *Hitlerism—the Strangler of the Intelligentsia*, 1942, p. 2.

achievement of human culture. It had drawn up a pre-planned program for the destruction of all the USSR's cultural, economic, and political achievements.

The Nazi crimes against humanity committed in our country are truly horrific, and it's impossible to list them all. Every Soviet institution, be it a small village school or a national research institute, university, or academy, with its library collections, was a cultural centre that, in the Nazis' opinion, must be destroyed. In 1945, the Extraordinary State Commission for the Establishment and Investigation of the Crimes of the Nazi Invaders published its final findings on the material damage inflicted on our country. From public libraries alone, the Nazis plundered and destroyed over 100 million volumes <sup>1</sup>.

By 1941, there were 82,000 primary and secondary schools in the part of our Union that was temporarily occupied. These secondary schools had libraries, each containing between 2,000 and 25,000 books. These primary and secondary schools, along with all their libraries, property, and equipment, were destroyed. Libraries, laboratories, and unique manuscript collections of the Belarusian Academy of Sciences and Kyiv University were completely destroyed. 334 higher education institutions were partially or completely destroyed.

One hundred and thirty-seven pedagogical and teacher training institutes and 605 research institutes were destroyed and looted <sup>2</sup>. Among the destroyed scientific institutions was the Pulkovo Astronomical Observatory near Leningrad, with

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<sup>1</sup> Report of the Extraordinary State Commission for the Establishment and Investigation of the Atrocities of the Nazi Invaders on the material damage caused by the Nazi invaders to state enterprises and institutions, collective farms, public organisations and citizens of the USSR, 1945, pp. 18-19.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

its rare instruments and remarkable solar telescope. The Simeiz Observatory in Crimea suffered a similar fate. Its equipment and 9,000 negatives containing photographs of the sky and star spectra were taken to Germany.

In addition to libraries, schools, universities, research institutes, and laboratories, valuable collections of archival and manuscript materials were destroyed and looted. The destruction in Kyiv was a particularly devastating cultural loss. Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, the oldest centre of Ukrainian culture, was blown up. The fire destroyed 1,200,000 books from the university library, rare manuscripts, collections of ancient documents, and the zoological museum, which contained over 2 million exhibits. Museums including 300 anatomical, anatomical, botanical, general biology, mineralogy, palaeontology, and petrography museums were also destroyed. Twenty laboratories and 18 specialised offices and workshops were destroyed. The damage to the Kyiv Medical Institute, from which rare instruments, scientific materials, and books were sent to Berlin, is estimated at tens of millions of rubles. The total number of books destroyed and removed from Kyiv scientific institutions is estimated at around 4 million.

The Academy of Sciences of the Ukrainian SSR lost rare and unique publications, and the destruction of collections of newspapers, playbills, posters, and sheet music was an irreparable loss. Remarkable card catalogues were burned. Archival records were used to wrap sausages and herring. Rare Chinese, Persian, and Abyssinian manuscripts, as well as first editions of books published by the pioneer printer Ivan Fedorov, were stolen.

The People's Commissariat of Education building, converted into barracks, was heated by books from the library of the Institute of Literature, History, Linguistics, and other institutions. Precious books on philosophy and history

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perished here. A significant number of books were thrown into the open courtyard, where they perished in the mud and rain. Not only the People's Commissariat of Education building, but numerous educational institutions were converted into German barracks and even stables. Of the 150 secondary primary schools, 77 were used as barracks, and 8 as stables.

Comrade Dubina, author of "German Crimes in Kiev,"<sup>1</sup> described them in great detail, focusing in particular on the Nazis' looting of works of art and the destruction of museums. Kiev, for example, illustrates the devastation inflicted on Soviet art by the German predators.

Many artistic treasures were removed from the Kyiv Pechersk Lavra. The Lavra, including the famous Dormition Cathedral, was blown up. Paintings by Makovsky, Kuindzhi, and Kiselev, Flavitsky's "Princess Tarakanova," and many others were taken from museums. In the Museum of Ukrainian Art, only 1,900 items remained in the folk art department out of a total of 41,000. Almost all collections of embroidery, textiles, ceramics, and wood carvings were lost. Collections of weapons, porcelain, furniture, and other items were also removed. This information pertains only to Kyiv. The Extraordinary Commission summarized the damage inflicted on museums throughout the German-occupied territory. According to its calculations, the Nazis destroyed 427 museums. The richest museums of Smolensk, Novgorod, Stalingrad, and many other cities were destroyed.

The scale of the destruction can be judged, for example, by such facts as the destruction of 150,000 objects and collections in the Chersonesos Museum, illuminating the history of the peoples of the Black Sea region. All the art museums in Crimea suffered, including the Bakhchisarai Palace Museum. The panorama "Storming Perekop" was

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<sup>1</sup> Dubin A. K., German atrocities in Kyiv, Gospolizdat, 1945, p. 29.

destroyed, and the world-famous panorama “Defence of Sevastopol” by Academician Roubaud was severely damaged. In every city temporarily captured by the Nazis, they carried out senseless and vicious destruction of the greatest works of Russian architecture. Destruction and plunder were the motto of their banditry. They attacked the palace museums in Pushkin, Pavlovsk, Peterhof, and Gatchina with particular ferocity. Artistic furniture, porcelain, paintings, and valuable books from the palace libraries were removed from these palaces. Torchbearers set fire to magnificent works by the greatest masters of art, setting fire to what they couldn’t carry. The Nazis viewed the looting and destruction as the eradication of Russian “Asiatic” influence on European culture. An order from Field Marshal Reichenau (February 13, 1941), approved by Hitler, ordered the extermination of partisans and “female degenerates,” declaring that “providing food to local residents and prisoners of war is an unnecessary act of humanity.”

The order contained the following words regarding the destruction of cultural treasures: “The troops are interested in extinguishing fires only in those buildings that are to be used as military encampments. Anything else that is a symbol of the former Bolshevik rule, including buildings, must be destroyed. No historical treasures are of any significance in the East <sup>1</sup> .

Trials in Nuremberg, Kyiv, Smolensk, Nikolaev, Leningrad, Minsk, and the Latvian and Lithuanian SSRs showed how precisely this order was carried out by fascist generals, officers, and soldiers.

The historical treasures associated with the names of our great writers, dear to every Russian and every cultured person, were not spared from destruction. The Nazis

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<sup>1</sup> “Documents Accuse”—A collection of documents on the monstrous atrocities of the German authorities, Gospolitzdat, 1943, p. 92.

criminally destroyed the estate where the brilliant writer Lev Nikolayevich Tolstoy was born, lived, and worked; they also plundered the estate in the village of Mikhailovskoye, where the Russian genius A.S. Pushkin lived and worked; and they plundered the museums of Tchaikovsky, Lermontov, Rimsky-Korsakov, the poet Nikitin, Mitskevich, Drozhzhin, and the scientist Tsiolkovsky.

In Yasnaya Polyana, the Nazis erected gallows. In Pyatigorsk, they committed a similar outrage against the memory of the great Russian poet Mikhail Lermontov. The place where Lermontov was killed in a duel was converted into a scaffold for the execution of Soviet citizens. After the painful deaths of those executed here, this place, where the poet's blood and the blood of the victims of fascism were spilled, became even more immortalized in the memory of posterity.

The German invaders remained in Yasnaya Polyana for a month and a half. A Special Commission of the USSR Academy of Sciences compiled a report on the museum's condition. During their retreat from Yasnaya Polyana, the Germans attempted to burn down Leo Tolstoy's house by lighting fires and dousing them with fuel. The fire was extinguished after the arsonists hastily fled. The commission found that, despite the presence of firewood, the Germans who occupied the house burned all the partitions, benches, a bookshelf from Tolstoy's study, a sideboard, and stylish antique picture and portrait frames. Museum exhibits and paintings were destroyed or looted. In 1945, the Extraordinary Commission published information in its report on Nazi atrocities about the destruction of rare manuscripts and books at Yasnaya Polyana.

Having occupied the museum's home for use as a hospital, the Nazis used master keys to force open all the locked tables and cabinets. Among the stolen items were garments belonging to Yasnaya Polyana peasants from various

eras. The German officers divided these ethnographic collections among themselves.

As is well known, Leo Tolstoy's grave is located a kilometre from his home. This grave is one of the greatest shrines of the entire Russian people. It is a place of pilgrimage, where people from all over the world came to venerate him. Here, all visitors reverently uncovered their heads. The Nazis desecrated this sacred place as well. At Leo Tolstoy's grave, they established a cemetery for fascists, surrounding the writer's grave with 75 mounds bearing crosses adorned with the Nazi swastika and inscriptions in German <sup>1</sup>. While in the Leningrad cemetery, the graves of those great writers who were united in life by a shared commitment to the ideals of humanity are placed close to one another on "literary bridges," in Yasnaya Polyana, the grave of the world's greatest humanist was surrounded by the sworn enemies of humanity. The construction of a common cemetery for fascists around the grave of the great writer was an outward expression of insult and humiliation to the memory of the great writer.

The Nazis' presence in Yasnaya Polyana was in itself an insult to the memory of the great humanist and fighter against all violence. Their presence was nothing but continuous violence in its most varied forms.

They tortured the residents of Yasnaya Polyana, raped women, hanged two residents, and left their bodies hanging for three days. As they retreated, they set fire to the outpatient clinic and all its buildings, as well as the ten-year school building. This conflagration served as a kind of illumination of the fascist atrocities committed in Yasnaya Polyana.

Remaining faithful to the policy of destroying Russian cultural monuments, the Nazis were especially vicious in

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<sup>1</sup> The above-mentioned work "Documents Accuse", pp. 95-106.

their destruction of everything associated with the name of A.S. Pushkin. How much terrible bitterness, yet also righteous indignation, is contained in the following brief words of the Extraordinary Commission's reports: "They desecrated the Pushkin Reserve and the estate in Mikhailovskoye, where the great poet wrote 'Eugene Onegin,' 'Gypsies,' and 'Boris Godunov,' burned the house-museum and destroyed A.S. Pushkin's grave in the Svyatogorsk Monastery, and cut down centuries-old trees in the park." The poet's furniture, household items, and library were taken to Germany." Behind every line of this protocol, with its dry list of everything destroyed by the German barbarians, lies a true tragedy for the history of Russian literature. A similar fate befell another Pushkin museum in the village of Yaropolets in the Moscow region, on the former estate of the parents of Pushkin's wife, N. Goncharova. The museum was converted into stables. It housed a library, paintings, the Goncharovs' diaries, sculpture, carved gilded furniture, carpets, and much more. After the Germans retreated, bare walls and horse droppings on the floor remained.

The Nazis remained in Klin for three weeks. On December 14, 1941, the Red Army launched a powerful attack, driving them out of the city before they could complete their vandalism. But in that short time, they had dealt a devastating blow to Russian culture, destroying many monuments in the museum-house of the world-famous composer Pyotr Tchaikovsky. This house had been carefully guarded since 1893, after the composer's death. The Soviet government established a state museum there. The invaders employed their usual tactics at the Tchaikovsky Museum, throwing furniture, books, sheet music, and sculptures out into the snow. The rooms of the house were converted into a garage for motorcycles. A commission found impenetrable filth: wine bottles, tin cans, lice-infested mattresses, and so on. One of the rooms was soiled with excrement.

Hitler's vandals stoked the stoves with sheet music, books, and engravings. Museum property stored in packed crates was dumped on the floor by these barbarians, torn to pieces, and trampled with dirty boots. A bust of the composer, previously defaced, was thrown into the courtyard. Some of the property, including tapestries torn from the walls, was carried off by these bandits. Only the rapid arrival of the Red Army saved the Tchaikovsky House Museum from complete destruction<sup>1</sup>.

We won't dwell on the details of the German destruction of the house-museum of another Russian composer, Rimsky-Korsakov, in the city of Tikhvin; the poet Nikitin in Voronezh; the Polish poet Adam Mickiewicz in Navahrudak, Byelorussian SSR; the peasant poet Drozhin in the village of Davidovo; the world-renowned aeronautical scientist, K. E. Tsiolkovsky; and others. The usual scene of destruction was everywhere. For example, in Tsiolkovsky's house, the Germans destroyed models, blueprints, and equipment. They turned one room into a chicken coop and shot at Tsiolkovsky's portrait.

Deep grief fills the heart of every Soviet citizen, every cultured person in any part of the world, who learns of this senseless, barbaric destruction of the achievements of universal human culture.

The Nazis inflicted irreparable losses on religious worship. They reduced centuries-old church monuments to rubble. Among the 1,670 churches destroyed or damaged in the occupied territory were monuments of Russian architecture dating back to the 11th century. The Dormition Church of the Kiev Pechersk Lavra, built in 1073, was blown up. Irreparable losses include the destruction of the Euphrosyne Monastery Cathedral in Polotsk, built in 1160, the early 12th-century Borisogleb Cathedral in Chernigov, and buildings from the 14th and 15th centuries, including the

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<sup>1</sup> The above-mentioned "Documents Accuse", pp. 107-108.

Church of St. Andrew Stratelates, the Church of the Intercession, and the bell tower of St. Sophia Cathedral in Novgorod. The Extraordinary Commission established that the religious feelings of believers were mocked when horses and dogs were kept in churches, icons were used as bunks, and so on.

From the reports of the Nuremberg Trials, we know of the Nazis' similar attitude toward the greatest treasures of science, technology, and culture in all the countries enslaved by these bandits. In its official report, the Extraordinary Commission for the Investigation of the Crimes of the Nazi Invaders estimated the number of theatres, clubs, and public spaces destroyed at 44,000. Using explosive grenades and arson, the Nazis ravaged with incredible ferocity everything from small "public spaces" in remote villages to veritable palace-theatres in Kyiv, Odessa, Minsk, and other cities. 33,000 clinics, dispensaries, and outpatient clinics, 6,000 hospitals, 976 sanatoriums, and 656 rest homes were destroyed and looted.

Retreating under the powerful blows of the Red Army, the Nazis had a direct order from the fascist government and military command—to turn our country into a desert.

Having set themselves this goal, the Nazis, as Soviet prosecutor Comrade Raginsky stated at the Nuremberg Trials (morning session of February 22, 1946), completely or partially destroyed 1,710 cities and more than 70,000 villages and hamlets. They burned over 6 million buildings and left approximately 25 million people homeless.

The Nazi invaders destroyed 31,850 industrial enterprises, employing approximately 4 million workers. During their retreat and occupation, the Nazis destroyed 479 port and wharf facilities, 89 shipyards, 36,000 postal and

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<sup>2</sup> Note of the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs V. M. Molotov on the monstrous violence of the German invaders, April 27, 1942, p. 22.

telegraph offices, telephone exchanges, and other communications facilities. They also blew up 91,000 kilometres of highways.

The Extraordinary Commission established the destruction wrought by the Nazis across various industries. For example, over 3,000 wells, producing 5 million tons of oil annually, were destroyed in the oil fields of Grozny and Krasnodar Krai.

Specialised track-breaking machines destroyed 65,000 kilometres of railway track, blew up 13,000 railway bridges, and destroyed 500,000 kilometres of automatic block wiring and railway communication lines. In the Moscow and Donets Basins, the Nazi invaders destroyed 1,135 mines, which employed 337,000 workers and produced over 100 million tons of coal annually.

The Nazis blew up 61 major power plants and a large number of smaller ones with a total capacity of about 5 million kilowatts, and destroyed dozens of ferrous and non-ferrous metallurgy plants, including, for example, the Mariupol plant, which employed 26 thousand workers.

When we learn from official documents these colossal figures of the Nazis' crimes against humanity, against the achievements of our material culture, and against technological advances, we bow to the Soviet people, who, despite all these losses, despite all these heavy blows, emerged victorious in this difficult struggle, under the leadership of the great Stalin. The Soviet people, under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party, are unleashing their might in the peaceful rebuilding of tens of thousands of settlements, villages, and towns destroyed by the treacherous enemy, razed to the ground. It is not surprising that the Nazis needed little time to accomplish all this destruction. But what is astonishing is the speed with which devastated towns and villages, with their factories, plants, and cultural centers, are rising from the ashes and rubble. Our Motherland is developing new construction in place of

the destroyed, meeting all technological and scientific requirements, providing for the citizens of the world's first proletarian state in every way.

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The Nuremberg Trials, along with trials in Smolensk, Minsk, Kharkov, Kyiv, Orel, and other cities, exposed the monstrous atrocities committed by the Nazis. Thousands of documents detailing these atrocities have been presented, and hundreds of eyewitnesses and surviving victims of German fascism have testified. The millions of these victims, who perished in all occupied countries and in German concentration camps, are forever silenced. However, their shadows haunt the courtrooms of the tribunals. These tortured men, women, children, and the elderly, who perished in horrific agony, stand before us as if alive. They demand justice. All progressive humanity is filled with righteous indignation. Every thinking, honest person in every country in the world awaits just punishment for the Nazis, waiting for them to receive the punishment they richly deserve for all their crimes against peace, against the laws and customs of war, against humanity.

The Soviet people, the Red Army, the Bolshevik Party, and the great Stalin played immeasurably great roles in the victory over fascism. The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics achieved victory. The Russian people demonstrated their supreme heroism to the world.

At a pre-election meeting of voters in the Stalin electoral district of Moscow on February 9, 1946, the great leader, Comrade Stalin, noted: "There is one main result, from which all other results arose. This result is that by the end of the war, the enemy was defeated, and we, together with our allies, emerged victorious. We ended the war with complete victory over the enemy—that is the main result of the war."

We achieved victory over fascism under the banner of Lenin and Stalin. Our Motherland performed miracles on the battlefield. It will perform these miracles in the renewed peaceful construction.