The Molotov Note on the Abduction of Soviet Civilians into German Slavery

HITLER'S SLAVE MARKETS

With an Introduction by JESSICA SMITH

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INTRODUCTION

BY JESSICA SMITH

WITH a dignity and restraint that seem almost superhuman this note by Foreign Commissar Molotov sets forth fresh proofs of the subhuman savagery of the Hitlerites. In previous notes to the United Nations Molotov has presented documentary evidence of the fiendish atrocities visited on Soviet citizens in the Nazi-occupied areas. In this one he gives details of the manner in which millions of Soviet citizens are driven into slavery.

According to the German press, about 2,000,000 persons were driven into Germany from the occupied regions in the East in 1942 alone.

As they systematically lay waste the Russian towns and villages during occupation or retreat, the German marauders simultaneously seek to enslave or destroy all of the Soviet people who fall into their clutches. The majority of able-bodied citizens, young and old, men and women, girls and boys, are forcibly shipped into Germany. Those who resist are murdered. The rest are packed like cattle into railroad cars. Those who sicken on the awful journey are thrown out. The railroad embankments are littered with their bodies all the way.

Those who survive are placed on display in slave markets, where the German burghers pinch their muscles, subject them
to unspeakable indignities, and buy them for a few marks. They are thrown into freezing barns and barracks, fed starvation rations, forced with gun and whip to do inhuman labor until they drop dead, as many do, or pay the penalty of refusing to work. Many take their own lives, to the indignation of their masters, who rush to replace them from a new shipment. A few, a very few, escape.

This document should be read by all Americans as a war task. We must know our enemy better. We must know our Soviet ally better, and the incomparable fortitude with which she has been able to endure in her human flesh the tortures here described and still live on to gather new unity and strength and fight back with incredible valor.

These are not remote events touching another world, an alien people. They are happening today, this hour, in our own world, to a friendly, democratic people whose destinies are forever linked with our own. What tortures and weakens them affects the whole course of our own lives and our children's. Our own loved ones are dying for the same cause, yet we are spared the ultimate horrors experienced by those whose own land endures the depraved cruelty of the "master race."

As we rejoice with our Soviet ally over territory won back from the enemy we must not forget the horror that awaits the liberators as they win back each foot of their tortured land and discover what has happened to their brothers and sisters. They are our brothers and sisters too.

Add to the 6,000,000 military casualties and the 10,000,000 more civilian casualties our Soviet allies have sacrificed in our common war for human freedom these millions more nameless heroes whose slavery is part of the price of our freedom. Read these words, let them be seared into our consciousness and ignite
new fires of determination to do our full part to exterminate this enemy who would be doing the same to us were it not for the resistance of the Soviet people.

There is only one way to bring to an end the monstrous crimes here recorded. An immediate full scale invasion of the Continent of Europe to crush their perpetrators between the great weight of the Anglo-American and allied armies from the West, and that of the mighty Red Army in the East. And when the long overdue Second Front is opened, it will need all the strength of all of us to push it through swiftly to the unconditional surrender of these enslavers and murderers, and the liberation of all the peoples under the Axis yoke.
MOLOTOV'S NOTE

On the mass forcible abduction of peaceful Soviet citizens to German-fascist slavery and on the responsibility for this crime of German authorities and private persons who exploit the forced labor of Soviet citizens in Germany.

ON MAY 11 of this year V. M. Molotov, People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs, sent to all ambassadors and ministers of the countries with which the U.S.S.R. maintains diplomatic relations the following note:

On behalf of the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, I have the honor to bring to your knowledge the following:

In the past six months the military and civil authorities of the Soviet Union discovered on the territory freed by the Red Army from German occupation in the course of the winter campaign of 1942-43 fresh proofs of the countless most brutal crimes committed by German authorities against the Soviet civilian population. In accordance with the plans and instructions
of the Hitlerite government and the military command, the German fascist authorities everywhere plundered, tortured and murdered Soviet citizens, put war prisoners to death, subjected Soviet towns and villages to wholesale destruction, and abducted hundreds of thousands of Soviet citizens to German slavery.

The German-fascist brutalities, examples of which have already been brought by the Soviet Government to the knowledge of foreign governments, were perpetrated by the Hitlerites wherever they set foot and were of still more sweeping nature than could be judged before the expulsion of the Germans from the territory they occupied.

The forcible abduction to Germany and brutal exploitation and systematic extermination of enslaved peaceful Soviet citizens holds a place of its own in the long chain of base crimes of the German-fascist invaders and in the calculations of their ring-leaders. As is evident from the documentary material at the disposal of the Soviet Government, by the forcible abduction of peaceful Soviet citizens to slavery, the criminal Hitlerite gang in the first place pursues the aim of making good the acute shortage of labor power in Germany and releasing from German industry additional manpower reserves for the badly battered Hitlerite army. The German fascist authorities and many private persons of Germany's civilian population, who exploit the forced labor of Soviet citizens, subject them to outrages of all descriptions, to humiliation of their human dignity, and doom them to death through slave labor beyond their strength, and hunger and torture.

The Soviet Government deems it its duty to bring to the knowledge of all nations new documents and facts concerning the unheard-of crimes perpetrated by the Germans against peaceful Soviet citizens driven away to Germany and converted
into slaves, and also to make a declaration about the inevitable retribution for all these crimes.

1. Plans and orders of the Hitlerite authorities on the enslavement of peaceful residents of occupied Soviet districts.

Documents captured by the Red Army at the headquarters of the routed German fascist troops, as well as stories and letters of Soviet citizens, letters of German officers and men and of their relatives, prove that the enslavement of many hundreds of thousands of Soviet citizens and the purchase and exchange of them at special slave markets in Germany has been turned into a system regulated by the orders and instructions of the German Government. As evident from the documents at the disposal of the Soviet Government, as far back as November 7, 1941, a secret conference was held in Berlin at which Reichsmarshal Goering instructed his officials on the using of Soviet people for forced labor in Germany. The first instruction read: "Russian workers have proved their ability in building a colossal Russian industry. Now they are able to be used for Germany. . . . This is a task for the appropriate authorities. . . ." (Secret circular number 42.006-41 of the Economic Headquarters of the German Command in the East, dated December 4, 1941.)

The same circular (second part of the supplement) lays down that the enslaved Soviet citizens “are to be used chiefly for road construction, construction of railways and in harvesting, for the clearing of mine fields and for building aerodromes.

"German construction battalions should be disbanded (for instance those of the military air force). Skilled German workers must work in war industry; they should not dig earth and break stones, for these purposes exists the Russian.”
"The Russian," instructed Goering in the same secret document (Part 4, Article 4-A), "must be used in the first place on the following jobs: mining, road construction, munitions industry (tanks, guns, aircraft equipment), agriculture, building work, big shops (footwear shops), and for special squads in urgent unforeseen tasks."

**Maltreatment of Civilians**

In the above-mentioned document Goering confirmed by the following words that the Hitlerite clique brazenly tramples upon elementary international standards and regulations applied to the civilian population of occupied territories: "Use of the Russian civilian workers," says Part B of the secret instructions, "and their treatment practically should not differ in any respect from the use of war prisoners and their treatment." The inhuman nature of the regime instituted by the German fascists for Soviet war prisoners is universally known.

Finally, in the same document Goering gave a bloodthirsty order not to spare Soviet people driven to Germany and to dispose of them in the most cruel manner under any pretext. This order, contained in Part 4, Article A-7 of the mentioned document, reads: "When applying measures for the maintenance of order, the decisive consideration should be swiftness and severity. Only the following varieties of punishment should be applied, without intermediate grades: deprivation of food and the death penalty by decision of court martial."

To carry into life the monstrous program of enslavement, a tremendous official machinery was set up. By the order of March 21, 1942, Hitler appointed Gauleiter Fritz Sauckel to
the post of "Chief Commissioner for the Utilization of Labor Power."

On April 20, 1942, the latter in a strictly confidential order, circulated to the government and military institutions his "Program of the Chief Commissioner for the Utilization of Labor Power." This document says: "It is most necessary to make full use of available manpower reserves in occupied Soviet regions. If voluntary recruitment of required labor power fails, it is necessary to proceed at once to the mobilization or to the compulsory signing of personal obligations. Along with war prisoners already available in the occupied regions it is chiefly necessary to mobilize in Soviet regions skilled civilian workers, men and women above 15 years of age, and to utilize them for work in Germany."

In the same "program" (Division of "Tasks," Article 4), Fritz Sauckel stated: "In order to alleviate noticeably the work of the extremely occupied German peasant woman, the Fuehrer charged me with the task of delivering to Germany 400,000 to 500,000 picked sound and strong girls from the Eastern regions."

Sauckel's agents proceeded to the registration of all the able-bodied population in the occupied districts of the U.S.S.R. The citizens thus registered were offered to leave "voluntarily" for work in Germany. But as practically no volunteers were forthcoming, the Germans ordered that violence be applied. As far back as January 26, 1942, the "Economic Headquarters of the German Command in the East" demanded in secret instructions No. B-R 98510-42: "If the number of volunteers fails to come up to expectations, then in accordance with the order the severest measures are to be applied during recruitment."

Urging on his subordinates, Fritz Sauckel wires them on March 31, 1942, the following order: No. FA 5780.28—729:
"The recruitment for which you are responsible should be accelerated by all possible measures, including strict application of compulsory labor principles."

"Recruiting" for the Slave Dealers

Slave-dealer Sauckel's "recruiters" outdid themselves in bringing the various measures of pressure to bear on Soviet citizens in order to induce them to go to German-fascist slavery. Those who failed to report when summoned by the occupation authorities were deprived of all means of existence. The starving people were lured to the railway stations on the pretext of distribution of bread and then cordoned off by soldiers and on pain of shooting put aboard trains. But even these measures were of no avail. Then the German authorities began to fix quotas for the towns and rural districts, and every town and district was obliged to send a definite number of people to be dispatched to Germany.

Thus the following order of the German commandant's office was circulated in the districts of the occupied part of the Leningrad Region, in particular in Pozherevitsy District: "To county burgomasters: . . . Inasmuch as up to the present time very few people have reported for work in Germany, every county burgomaster together with the village headman is to supply additionally fifteen or more persons from each county for work in Germany, and to supply strong people from fifteen to fifty years of age. These people are to be sent to Pozherevitsy without fail by June 4, 1942. Signed, Commandant of Pozherevitsy."

The Soviet Government has at its disposal the complete text of a report made by the chief of the political police and safety service under an S.S. leader in Kharkov. "On the situation in the city of Kharkov from July 23 to September 9, 1942." "The re-
crui	ment of labor power,” this document says, “causes anxiety to institutions concerned, since an extremely negative attitude toward work in Germany is observed among the population. The present situation is such that everyone strives to evade recruitment by every possible means (feigns illness, flees to the forests, bribes officials, etc.). Voluntary dispatch to Germany has long been out of the question.”

Thus it is clear from official German documents that the mass abduction of Soviet citizens to German slavery with the same status as war prisoners was a task placed in advance before the German-fascist occupation authorities by the Hitlerite ring-leaders and that in carrying out this task the occupationists did not stop at any violence against the Soviet civilian population.

2. The forcible abduction of Soviet people to German-fascist slavery.

In pursuance of the Hitlerite government’s criminal plans, the German authorities organized mass abduction of the peaceful Soviet population from the entire occupied Soviet territory to German captivity, no longer attempting even to observe the appearance of any “free will.”

There is literally not a single town, not a single village, not a single populated place on Soviet territory that has been seized by the Germans from which the German-fascist bandits did not drive a considerable part of the population to slavery. In some large towns this amounted to tens of thousands of men, women, adolescents and children. Thus the Germans forcibly carried away over 20,000 persons from Krivoi Rog, 29,381 persons from Kursk and the adjoining nine districts; over 32,000 persons, according to official German data before August, 1942, from Khar-
kov, 60,000 from Mariupol. One hundred and one trainloads of people were dispatched to forced labor in Germany from Stalino before July, 1942. The Hitlerites drove 820 men, women and children to German slavery from the village of Malinovka, Kharkov Region, alone.

In the village of Soldatskoe of Voronezh Region the Hitlerites gathered from the surrounding villages 11,000 persons, including many women, adolescents and children; the German authorities starved them, would not let them out anywhere and then drove them away to Germany. In Vorontsovo-Alexandrovskoe, of the Stavropol territory, on the eve of their retreat the Hitlerites herded together eighty Soviet citizens in order to dispatch them forcibly to Germany, and only the timely arrival of Red Army troops saved these peaceful citizens from a horrible fate.

In all the towns and villages liberated from the invaders the Red Army troops discover numerous instances of masses of the civilian population having been driven to German slavery. Admissions of the Hitlerite ringleaders are available which give some idea of the gigantic scale of the imprisonment and enslavement of the millions of peaceful citizens, without parallel in history of civilized nations. Thus according to the assertion of the Hitlerite satrap, the "Reichskommissar of the Ukraine," published in the newspaper Deutsche Ukraine Zeitung in January, 1943, "Seven hundred thousand Ukrainians have been sent to Germany."

According to the statement issued by the "Administration for the Utilization of Labor Power" headed by Sauckel and published in the newspaper Minske Zeitung on January 14 of this year, "In 1942 about 2,000,000 persons were dispatched to Germany from the occupied regions in the East."

As evident from documentary material and testimonies of
residents of the districts freed by the Red Army, the German-fascist authorities from month to month embraced ever new categories of the population in their forcible “recruitment,” and in certain places, especially during their retreat, carried away with them absolutely the whole population capable of walking, in order to dispatch them to the deep German rear. Whereas previously agents of the Hitlerite slave-traders tried to select only physically the most sound and enduring persons, chiefly from fifteen to forty-five years of age, during the past few months, which coincide with the “total” (all-embracing) mobilization conducted by the Hitlerites, they drive to slavery even the sick and invalids, while now the age of the people being enslaved ranges from twelve to sixty years.

With the sadistic cruelty inherent in the Hitlerites, when driving the people to slavery they break up families, separating parents from children, brothers from sisters, wives from husbands.

Whole towns and districts have been depopulated as a result of the organized kidnapping and extermination of Soviet people by the Hitlerite cannibals. Here are some typical data for the Gzhatsk District of the Smolensk Region, recently freed by the Red Army:

In this district, which prior to the German occupation counted 32,000 residents, only about 7,500 remained by the time the Red Army came; 5,419 persons were driven away to Germany from the villages of Gzhatsk District, including 624 “able-bodied” children under fourteen; while in the town of Gzhatsk, which before the occupation counted over 13,000 residents, only a little over 1,000 people—the overwhelming majority of whom were little children separated from their parents—were found on the day it was liberated from the invaders.
Almost everywhere the abduction of Soviet people to German captivity is accompanied by sanguinary reprisals taken by the invaders against Soviet citizens who hide from the slave-traders hunting after them. Thus in Gzhatsk the Germans shot 75 peaceful residents of the town who failed to report to the gathering center, where they were summoned by notices of the commandant to be dispatched to Germany.

In Poltava at the close of December, 1942, a group of sixty-five railway men who refused to go to Hitlerite penal servitude in Germany was sentenced to be hanged.

The occupation authorities treat all those who evade "recruitment" to Germany as guerrillas, proclaim them "outlawed," send punitive expeditions to districts which failed to supply the required "quota" of slaves, burn down whole villages and shoot hundreds of people. At the close of February of this year announcements signed by the German district commissioner were posted in the villages of the Slutsk District in Byelorussia, which read: "All residents, both men and women, born from 1900 up to 1927 must report at 10 o'clock March 2, 1943, at the district administration office for examination and dispatch to work in Germany. They are to take along clothes, footwear and three or four days' supply of food for the journey. Those who fail to report will be suspected of banditism and dealt with accordingly."

In the Gentsevichi District in Byelorussia (southeast of Baranovichi), in the early half of March of this year a German punitive expedition burned down dozens of villages and shot hundreds of residents as a reprisal for the residents' failure to report for dispatch to German penal servitude.

Reports are coming in from various localities of the Lithu-
anian and Latvian Soviet Socialist Republics about the man-hunts organized by the Hitlerites to round up people both to compulsory labor on the construction of fortifications and to gathering centers for dispatch to German slavery in Germany and to countries she occupied. In the Soviet Baltic Republics more than 300,000 persons have been mobilized for the construction of fortifications, and the most cruel reprisals, down to death by hanging, are meted out to those who shirk registration in the lists of the so-called “labor front” and dispatch to Germany.

Ever more frequently and in an ever more organized manner Soviet citizens on territories seized by the Germans offer courageous resistance to the German slave-owners and their agents. Numerous reports are coming in from the Baltic, Ukrainian and Byelorussian districts about the mass joining of guerrilla detachments, not only by the adult male population but also by women and adolescents who hide from abduction to Germany, and in the ranks of these detachments they defend their freedom.

The growth of the guerrilla movement in connection with the resistance of the Soviet people to forcible abduction to German slavery is admitted with alarm in a number of secret dispatches of the German military and police organs. When driving Soviet people to fascist slavery the Germans arrange round-ups of them, dispatch punitive expeditions, cordon off whole districts and towns, seize people on roads, and drive them by force to the gathering centers.

_The Slave Trains’ Tragic Cargo_

The Soviet Government has at its disposal numerous materials depicting the inhuman conditions of the forcible dispatch of peaceful Soviet citizens to Germany in boarded-up cars guarded
by soldiers or police. Day and night trains with slaves roll to Germany from the occupied districts of the Ukraine, Byelorussia and Russia. The people are loaded into cars like cattle, sixty to seventy to each boxcar. Exhausted and sick people are thrown out of the cars down embankments and thus the roads to the West are littered with the bodies of Soviet people.

Raissa Davydenko, who escaped from fascist captivity, resident of the town of Millerovo freed by Red Army troops, related: "We were packed so tightly in cold boxcars that one could not even turn. In every car went an overseer who answered every request by a blow with a club. They starved us throughout our journey. . . ."

Collective farmer Varvara Bakhtina, from the village of Nikolaevka, Kursk Region, relates: "In Kursk we were shoved into cattle-cars, fifty to sixty persons to each. We were not allowed to go out. Time and again we were manhandled by the German sentry. In Lvov we were detrained. Here we were inspected by a special committee. In the presence of the soldiers we were forced to strip ourselves naked and our bodies were examined. The nearer to Germany, the emptier our train grew. In Kursk we took on 3,000 people, but almost at every station they threw out sick people and those who were dying of hunger. In Germany we were confined in a camp with Soviet war prisoners. That was a tract of forest surrounded by a high barbed-wire fence. Four days later we were distributed to various jobs. Myself, my sister Valentina and thirteen other girls, were assigned to munitions works."

Vladimir Petrovich Beloshkovsky, born in 1924, resident of the village of Sredneteploye, of Verkhneteploye District, Voroshilovgrad Region, who on October 8, 1942, escaped from Germany, stated: "On our way German soldiers manhandled us. I
saw with my own eyes how when our adolescents ran out at the stations to get a drink of water they were beaten by soldiers. Mobilized girls were also beaten. They were driven into cars and locked up. The civilian population in Germany insulted us, threw sand into our eyes and pelted us with stones, and the children mocked us by saying "Russian swine." Our journey lasted twelve days. On September 18, 1942, we arrived at the German town of Halle. Upon arrival we were ranged up, then German women came and began to pick out girls to slave for them."

Thus it should be considered as an established fact that in an effort to avail themselves of millions of slaves the German-fascist authorities resort to brutal violence with regard to the Soviet civilian population, and in sending seized Soviet citizens to German captivity create conditions under which a considerable part of them perish on the way from hunger, beatings and conditions of transportation to Germany such as are fit only for animals.

3. Inhuman sufferings and annihilation of Soviet citizens in German-fascist captivity.

For hundreds of thousands of Soviet citizens driven away to Germany the Hitlerite slave-owners have established even more appalling conditions of forced labor than those which existed in the darkest times of ancient slavedom. Soviet citizens have been herded into concentration camps fenced off by barbed wire. They are driven to work and back in columns under the escort of armed Hitlerites. The Soviet people have been deprived of their names; they are called out by numbers. Russians and Ukrainians are given special distinguishing badges: the former have a badge with a white border and the word "Ost" in the middle; the latter
wear a similar badge with a yellow border. Soviet citizens are forbidden to leave the camps. A starvation regime has been instituted for the enslaved Soviet people.

In his above-mentioned instructions, Goering stated: "The Russian is unpretentious; therefore it is easy to feed him without noticeably upsetting our food balance. He should not be pampered or accustomed to German food."

Descriptions of the life and conditions of Soviet citizens in Germany can even be found in the German-fascist newspapers, as for instance, the following item published in the Frankfurter Zeitung on April 17, 1942: "Workers from occupied Soviet regions are quartered in a camp surrounded by barbed wire. These people, who have been brought to Germany from the Kharkov District, should of course be treated with severity and kept under surveillance, for there is no guarantee that there are no Bolsheviks capable of acts of sabotage among them. Their immediate chief ... maintains his authority with the aid of a whip."

"If We Ever Meet Again"

Letters written home constitute terrific documentary evidence of the inhuman sufferings of our people in German penal servitude. "Mother dear," wrote Nona G. on October 8, 1942, from a German camp, "the weather here is bad. It rains all the time. I go about barefoot because I have no shoes. I am dressed like a beggar. We receive bread twice a day—one hundred grams each time. We work twelve hours a day. Mother dear, I am terribly lonely. We know nothing but factory and barracks. As soon as I return from work I fall onto the bed and cry my heart out, recall home and you, and thus I fall asleep. During the short
period of our life here we have all lost our strength. We do not sleep enough or eat enough. There are sixteen of us in a small room, all Ukrainian girls and myself. If we ever meet again I will tell you everything. But it is not likely that we will meet, because we will spend the winter in summer wooden barracks. With such food, without sleep, naked and barefoot, I will not hold out. If you can, don’t refuse my request and send me some garlic and onions, because there is no variety in food. My gums already hurt—scurvy is setting in."

In another letter on November 10, 1942, the same Soviet girl wrote: "Mother dear, our life is worse than a dog’s. We get the same kind of green soup, which as before no one can eat. I have racked my brain dry with thinking and my eyes do not see for tears. Today we worked all twelve hours hungry. But cry or not, one has to work . . . what sort of work can a person do who is hungry day in and day out. The chief comes in, or the German woman watching from the side urges us on, ‘Nona, arbeiten, schneller, schneller.’ (‘Nona, work faster, faster’). My dear Mother, how hard it is for me without you. I cannot hold back my sobs. I cry from resentment.

“Oh, there is much that is still worse, still harder, but I have no strength to describe it. . . . We are already accustomed to having the door opened at two o’clock at night and a policeman switch on the light and shout: ‘Aufstehen!’ (‘Get up!’). We all get up at once and go outside. We stand for an hour. They begin to count us. We wait for the second shift to come out. We freeze standing outside. Can you imagine it—almost all of us barefoot? And sometimes in pouring rain or frost. I simply cannot describe all the sufferings and tortures. Mother dear, I am tired out. We are not allowed in town. We live in a forest. We heard that we are to be transferred to another factory. We work
together with Ukrainians, French and Serbs. Mother dear, if you can, please send me a parcel with onions and garlic. Don't refuse my request."

"I Cannot Go On Living"

The girl Masha, carried away to Germany from the Voroshilovgrad Region, writes to her mother: "My dear, beloved Mother, I am writing a fourth letter to you, but get no reply. I live at the home of my boss. The family is small, two of them and one child, but Mother, I work hard. There are eight rooms and one hall altogether. I get up at 5 A.M. and go to bed at 10 P.M. Mother, every day I wash clothes in the morning and evening. The boss shouts all the time and I am so afraid of him that I am terrified and cry out in my sleep.

"In the whole of this time they let me visit our people in camp once, on Sunday. I was half an hour late in returning. Mother, I will never forget as long as I live how the boss hit me across the face and pulled my hair. Mother, I was paid seven marks fifty pfennigs for a month. I am wearing out my last clothes, I have nothing of theirs. Mother, we were told to write home asking for coats and felt boots. They will insist, but I beg you, my dear Mother, send nothing here. I won't get it anyway. What shall I do? They won't let me go home and I can't stand it any longer. I cry every day and there seems to be but one way out, to take my own life. Mother, my own, if you wish to see me alive, save me from this captivity. I cannot go on living and stand all this. My own Mother, try to manage it. I will repay you if only I live. Well, Mother, I cannot write any more. My tears choke me. Kisses to all our relatives. Your daughter as always, Masha."
The Soviet girl Nadya L. wrote home from Chemnitz: "Dear Mother! We live in a barracks, sixty of us, and sleep on straw. It is very cold in the barracks. We go to work at a knitting mill. We work from 6 A.M. to 9 P.M. For food we are given in the morning a bowl of boiling water and fifty grams of bread. For dinner soup without bread and for supper soup without bread. In addition, at work we are given twenty-five grams of bread in the morning and twenty-five grams at dinner time. Dear Mother, the food is pretty bad, but that would be nothing if only we could go home. We received your letter, Mother, and cried over it. I feel very sad living in captivity. I do not see the light. I see nothing but my horrible barracks. We are herded to and from work like slaves."

Starved, Persecuted and Ridiculed

Manya K. writes to her parents: "We live in the town of Blanckenburg in Germany. Thirty-three of us work for a boss. There are Ukrainians, Poles, French and Russians here. We get poor food. They give us very little bread and we are head over ears in work. The foreman watches over us. Our every step is watched. We are not allowed to go anywhere—only to and from work. We work twelve hours a day and have nothing to wear to work. We are given no money. Dear Father, how tired I am of being a slave and working, I don’t know for whom and for what. And our labor is not valued. We are persecuted and ridiculed by all. If I had wings I would fly to my native town."

The girl F.N. wrote to her parents in Kursk when it was occupied by the Germans: "We in Germany are prisoners. We live very badly. We work in the fields. We eat twice a day—in the morning 200 grams of bread, and at dinner one bowl of
soup. There is very much work. I am very sorry that I went to Germany. There are twenty-eight of us working for my boss—Russian, Polish and French girls. In addition there are fifteen Polish girls working for another boss who sleep and eat at our boss' place. Katya and I live together and sleep in one bed. Mother, we work in Germany for nothing. I have worn out all my clothes and there is no place to buy anything and I have no money. We have worked four months and have not received a single kopek. We live in prison. In short, you can guess how we live.”

Leonid D. wrote home to Shchigry, Kursk Region, from a camp in Stuttgart on January 3, 1943: “Greetings, my dear ones, Father, Mother, Raya, Vanya and little brother Yurik. First of all I want to describe to you my life from beginning to end. My dear ones, when we arrived in Germany we were sorted out in a distribution camp and then I was separated from sister Zoya and have not seen her since. Dear Mother, we were dirty and did not bathe for two months at a time and were covered with lice.

“The factory is five kilometers from camp and I can hardly move my feet with this food, so that this life in Germany will remain in my memory as long as I live. If I live through it and return home I will tell you everything, my dear ones, and your hair will stand on end. I had already made up my mind to take my life but did not do it. I think better times for us will come. Dear Mother, if I had wings I would fly away from here.”

Seventeen-year-old Nina S. wrote home from a foreign land on August 18, 1942: “Dear parents, Father and Mother, I am in the town of Sonnenberg, live in barracks and work at a factory. How hard it is! I have become quite thin. Mother dear, we live behind bars like prisoners. I have already torn my shoes
Philip Botsman, who lost his health in German penal servitude and returned home, relates: "This village of Mironovka was to supply twenty youths and girls for dispatch to Germany. Young people were seized in the streets and dragged out of beds at night. Twice I managed to hide, to get away, but the third time I was caught and locked in a railway car. Together with the others I landed in Berlin. Several hundred persons were driven into cold barracks surrounded by a high fence. We slept on a stone floor. I began to work in a knitting factory where military uniforms were manufactured. French and Polish war prisoners and Spaniards worked here. The German foremen were most suspicious of Russians and picked on them most of all. At the slightest pretext there were beating and abuse.

Tracked Down by Bloodhounds

"We worked without straightening our backs, in silence. We had our dinner right in the shop, a bowl of cold soup made from potato peelings. By dinner time no bread was left. All 300 grams of ersatz bread were already eaten up in the morning. At night we were driven back to the barracks. And thus it went day after day. Fatigue, hunger, misery. One girl from the Orel Region, beaten by the overseer, hanged herself. Some tried to escape, but that was difficult. The first German who recognized you for a Russian would deliver you up. The Germans used hounds to track down the fugitives. Hunger and heavy labor ruined my health."

The inhuman conditions in which the criminal Hitlerite Government placed the Soviet people driven to Germany and doomed
to death are attested not only by numerous official German orders and instructions and letters of Soviet people from Germany, but also by letters written by the Germans to officers and men of the German army on the Soviet-German front. A letter from his mother in Chemnitz was found on a killed German soldier, Wilhelm Bock, of the 221st Germany Infantry Division. It said: "Many Russian women and girls work at the ‘Astra Werke’ Factories. They are made to work fourteen and more hours a day. Of course they get no wages. They are taken to work and back under armed escort. The Russians are so over-tired that they literally drop on their feet. Often the guards apply the whip to them. They are forbidden to complain about the bad food or the beatings. The other day my neighbor bought a housemaid. She paid money to the cashier and was given an opportunity to pick any woman to suit her taste, of a lot just driven in from Russia."

On August 10, 1942, Lotta Meller wrote to private Elin Schilling from Pufenhausen: "Recently the Russians arrived here in Pufenhausen. Our life will be an interesting one: a dictionary in one pocket, and a revolver in the other."

Thousands of Soviet citizens fail to stand the savage conditions of slavery. Enormous mortality reigns in the camps.

Ten Marks Per Head

On April 30, 1942, Frieda Putz from Gueltze, near Alten­treptow, Demmin District, wrote to Private Otto Tesk of the 6th Company, 4th Regiment, 32nd German Infantry Division: "... On Wednesday two Russians were again buried here. Now five of them lie buried in our cemetery and two are dying. And why should they live, they all ought to be killed. . . ."

The criminal government of Germany organized the buying
and selling of Soviet citizens who have been converted into slaves. For a small payment not exceeding 10 to 15 Reichsmarks per person, every German can buy slaves for himself. Slave markets have been set up in Germany. There, as in times of slavery, buyers of slaves feel the muscles of the arms and legs of Soviet citizens who are sold into slavery, and exchange slaves worn out by ruthless exploitation for stronger ones.

Maria Wickert, from Fankweiler, writes to her husband, non-com Joseph Wickert, Field Post No. 261873: "I did not write you about the receipt of 100 marks you sent. I gave them at once to your mother so that she could buy war prisoners. Now this is not so expensive."

Ruth Knappe from Grumm, in Amhalt, writes her husband Corporal Franz Knappe, Field Post No. 08999: "I do not have that Ukrainian any longer. . . . He refused to obey and was terribly lazy. Now he is at Herbert's. We wanted to see whether he would be more suitable on a bigger farm but there it is the same thing with him. I informed the labor bureau of that by telephone. But they could not tell me when a fresh transport arrives. Herbert keeps him so far but will exchange him afterwards."

In the hands of the slave-owners Soviet citizens are subjected to inhuman cruelties and exploitation. For the night Soviet citizens are locked up in cold storerooms and barns. They are starved and tortured by work which is beyond their strength. The Soviet people are humiliated and their human dignity trampled upon in every way.

Valya Demushkina, a girl of 16, returned home from Nuremberg. She related: "I worked for one German woman. Her husband, Oberlieutnant Karl Stock, was killed on the Eastern front near Stalingrad. On January 1, 1943, Frau Stock
was awaiting guests for a New Year dinner. Absorbed in work and in my gloomy thoughts I failed to notice how the milk put by the cook on the electric range began to boil and overflowed. The kitchen was filled with the smell of burning milk. Infuriated, the lady rushed into the kitchen, snatched the pot with the remnants of the milk out of my hands and splashed it in my face. I fainted. I came to in the hospital and felt unbearable pain and darkness. I was blinded. For three weeks I lay in the hospital and then started on my long way home.”

Nadya, aged 16, a ninth-grade student of a secondary school in Voroshilovgrad Region, writes: “The Germans forcibly sent nearly all our youth to penal servitude in Germany. The air at the station when they were leaving was filled with weeping and wailing. Both those who were leaving and those who had come to see them off wept. Myself and 16 other girls were sent to the town of Schwartz. Regular trade in Russian people took place there. The Germans, men and women, turned us about, measured and fingered us.

“I was bought by Karl W., a baker. He forced me to work from six in the morning till late at night. Though I lived at the baker’s I seldom ate bread. Every day I washed the floor, did the laundry in the morning and in the evening, tended the children and dressed them. The Frau was not too mean—she would push, pinch or hit you on the head sometimes, but it was not too painful. I only used to feel very bitter when I recalled that I studied in the ninth grade, learned the French language and history, and now became a slave myself as in times of Roman domination. From work beyond my strength, hunger and beatings, I fell ill. When I recovered a little I escaped home. In Brest-Litovsk I was detained and put into a concentration camp. In that camp thousands of Soviet citizens languished in semi-
demolished barns. Every day 10 to 15 dead were carried out of the camp.

Boast of Their Brutalities

The German slave-owners often boast openly of their brutal treatment of Soviet people. Contractor Lorens Speer wrote his son-in-law, Private Joseph Speer: “We have now a Ukrainian wench of 19 working for us. Don’t you worry—she will work. On Sunday 20 more Russians will come to the village. I shall take several pieces.”

Lance Corporal Wilhelm Hausman of the 7th German Infantry Division received a letter from his mother in Schweihausen saying, “We too have six Russians at the dairy farm. They are locked up there for the night. Among them are youths of 14 to 15 years. Don’t you worry, they will be able to work.”

On July 12, 1942, Frau Susi Kramer from Teplitz-Schoenau (Sudeten Region), wrote to Lieutenant Gerhard Spllett of the 8th Company, 187th Regiment, 81st Infantry Division: “They must send us 10 Russians to the brewery. I will make that gang shift about. What I would like best is to kill all the Russians.”

Thousands of Soviet citizens forcibly driven to German slavery perish of hunger, cold, unbearably hard labor and torture. Many Soviet citizens, driven to despair by inhuman treatment on the part of the slave owners, committed suicide.

German letters contain many proofs of the fact that not infrequently Soviet people prefer death to slavery under the Germans. Here is a letter found on Corporal Rudolph Lammermeier of the 405th Regiment, 121st Infantry Division, killed near Leningrad. This letter was written by his mother from the township of Luegde: “Yesterday afternoon Anna Lisa Rostert came run-
ning to our place. She was very embittered. The Russian girl hanged herself in their pig-sty. Our Polish maids said that Frau Rostert always beat and scolded the Russian. She came here in April and all the time went about in tears. Probably she committed suicide in a moment of despair. To console Frau Rostert we told her that for a cheap price she could get another Russian maid.”

4. The responsibility of German authorities and German citizens guilty of the inhuman exploitation of forcibly abducted Soviet citizens.

On the basis of the above and other documentary materials at the disposal of the Soviet Government, it considers irrefutably established that, trampling upon the most elementary rights of nations and rights of man, the Hitlerite government of Germany committed and continues to commit the following unheard-of crimes:

By deceit, threats and violence many hundreds of thousands of peaceful Soviet citizens, including children, adolescents and women, are driven to slavery in Germany; a regime of slaves deprived of all rights, and laboring beyond their strength, is instituted for abducted peaceful citizens; Soviet citizens are sold into slavery to enterprises and private persons in Germany, are subjected to all kinds of humiliation and torture and doomed to hunger and slow, painful death.

The Soviet Government places the whole responsibility for these base crimes being committed in flagrant violation of the universally accepted rules of the conduct of war, in the first place upon the ruling Hitlerite clique and the Command of the German-fascist army. The Soviet Government also holds fully
responsible for the above crimes all those Hitlerite officials who are in charge of the recruitment, abduction, transportation and maintenance in camps, selling into slavery and inhuman exploitation, of peaceful Soviet citizens forcibly carried from their native country to Germany.

The Soviet Government Holds Responsible—

In virtue of this the Soviet Government considers that just as severe responsibility as that borne by the ringleaders of Hitlerite Germany must also be borne by such already convicted criminals as the "Chief Commissioner for the Utilization of Labor Power," Gauleiter Fritz Sauckel, and Hitler’s Reichskommissars in captured Soviet territories: "Reichskommissar of the Ukraine," Erich Koch; "Reichskommissar of Ostland" (territories of the Lithuanian, Latvian, Estonian and Byelorussian Soviet Republics), Heinrich Lose and his assistant, "General Commissioner of Byelorussia," Wilhelm Kuke; as well as the chief inspirer of the German-fascist slave-owners, Alfred Rosenberg, who holds the post of "Reichsminister for the Occupied Eastern Regions."

At the same time the Soviet Government holds fully responsible also the private persons in Germany who inhumanly exploit at their enterprises or in their households the forced labor of peaceful Soviet citizens. Those private persons should bear their responsibility for the countless privations and sufferings they have brought upon the Soviet people. The Committee for the investigation of crimes of the German-fascist authorities which has been created in the Soviet Union keeps a full and precise record of all the facts pertaining to the abduction of Soviet people to German slavery, and personal lists of those Hitlerite officials and private persons in Germany who are guilty of the inhuman
exploitation and death of Soviet citizens in German-fascist captivity.

The Soviet Government and the peoples of the U.S.S.R. are well aware that along with Soviet citizens millions of peaceful people from the countries of Europe occupied by the Hitlerites have been driven to German-fascist slavery by force and deceit. Clamoring about the notorious "total" mobilization, the Hitlerites strive to turn into their slaves hundreds of thousands of peaceful citizens of Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, France, Belgium, Greece, Norway and Holland, whose peoples, together with the peoples of the Soviet Union, see their common task in the earliest defeat of Hitlerite Germany and in the destruction of the Hitlerite state as their mortal enemy.

The Soviet Government expresses its confidence that all interested governments are unanimous in that the Hitlerite government and its agents should be made to bear full responsibility and severe punishment for their monstrous crimes, for the privations and sufferings of millions of peaceful citizens who are forcibly abducted to German-fascist slavery.

(Signed) Molotov

Moscow, May 11, 1943.
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