

106TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. CON. RES. 118

Commemorating the 60th anniversary of the execution of Polish captives
by Soviet authorities in April and May 1940.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 25, 2000

Mr. HELMS (for himself, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. ROTH, and Mr. BIDEN) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Commemorating the 60th anniversary of the execution of
Polish captives by Soviet authorities in April and May 1940.

Whereas 60 years ago, between April 3 and the end of May 1940, more than 22,000 Polish military officers, police officers, judges, other government officials, and civilians were executed by the Soviet secret police, the NKVD;

Whereas Joseph Stalin and other leaders of the Soviet Union, following meeting of the Soviet Politburo on March 5, 1940, signed the decision to execute these Polish captives;

Whereas 14,537 of these Polish victims have been documented at 3 sites, 4,406 in Katyn (now in Belarus), 6,311 in Miednoye (now in Russia), and 3,820 in Kharkiv (now in Ukraine);

Whereas the fate of approximately 7,000 other victims remains unknown and their graves together with the graves of other victims of communism, are scattered around the territory of the former Soviet Union and are now impossible to locate precisely;

Whereas on April 13, 1943, the German army announced the discovery of the massive graves in the Katyn Forest, when that area was under Nazi occupation;

Whereas on April 15, 1943, the Soviet Information Bureau disavowed the executions and attempted to cover up the Soviet Union's responsibility for these executions by declaring that these Polish captives had been engaged in construction work west of Smolensk and had fallen into the hands of the Germans, who executed them;

Whereas on April 28–30, 1943, an international commission of 12 medical experts visited Katyn at the invitation of the German government and later reported unanimously that the Polish officers had been shot three years earlier when the Smolensk area was under Soviet administration;

Whereas until 1990 the Government of the Soviet Union denied any responsibility for the massacres and claimed to possess no information about the fate of the missing Polish victims;

Whereas on April 13, 1990, Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev acknowledged the Soviet responsibility for the Katyn executions;

Whereas this admission confirmed the 1951–52 extensive investigation by the United States House of Representatives Select Committee to Conduct an Investigation and Study of the Facts, Evidence, and Circumstances of the

Katyn Forest Massacre and its Final Report (pursuant to House Resolution H.R. 390 and H.R. 539, 82d Congress);

Whereas that committee's final report of December 22, 1952, unanimously concluded that "beyond any question of reasonable doubt, that the Soviet NKVD (People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs) committed the mass murders of the Polish officers and intellectual leaders in the Katyn Forest near Smolensk" and that the Soviet Union "is directly responsible for the Katyn massacre"; and

Whereas that report also concluded that "approximately 15,000 Polish prisoners were interned in three Soviet camps: Kozielsk, Starobielsk, and Ostashkov in the winter of 1939-40" and, "with the exception of 400 prisoners, these men have not been heard from, seen, or found since the spring of 1940": Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives*
2 *concurring)*, That Congress hereby—

3 (1) remembers and honors those Polish officers,
4 government officials, and civilians who were mur-
5 dered in April and May 1940 by the NKVD;

6 (2) recognizes all those scholars, researchers,
7 and writers from Poland, Russia, the United States
8 and, elsewhere and, particularly, those who worked
9 under Soviet and communist domination and who
10 had the courage to tell the truth about the crimes
11 committed at Katyn, Miednoye, and Kharkiv; and

1 (3) urges all people to remember and honor
2 these and other victims of communism so that such
3 crimes will never be repeated.

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