



Yeltsin Aide: Stalin Had American Pows Executed

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WASHINGTON - A joint U.S.-Russian commission has "discovered shocking facts" of Americans executed under the regime of Soviet dictator Josef Stalin, Russian leader Boris Yeltsin said in a letter disclosed today.

The Russian head of a joint commission searching for American POWs and MIAs, who read Yeltsin's letter to a Senate committee, also said "we are nearly convinced that no U.S. citizens are currently being detained" in the former Soviet Union.

Dmitri Volkogonov, an aide to Yeltsin, told the Senate committee on POW and MIA affairs that statement is based on a "thorough analysis" of archival documents, interviews with witnesses and inspections of possible housing sites of Americans.

"The commission has found traces of American citizens' stay in camps and prisons of the former U.S.S.R. and discovered shocking facts of some of them summarily executed by the Stalin regime and in a number of cases being forced to renounce U.S. citizenship," said the Yeltsin letter, dated Nov. 5.

The letter, read by Volkogonov through a translator, said some of the Americans still live in the territory of the former Soviet Union and it said their names and addresses have been given to U.S. officials.

But the letter said those still in Russia are there voluntarily.

Volkogonov, in his written statement, said a group of Americans is living in Russia whom he described as "political refugees from the U.S.S.R. period or individuals voluntarily remaining in Russia." In answer to a reporter's question, Volkogonov said that 119 Americans were held in Soviet camps after World War II.

The vice chairman of the Senate committee, Sen. Bob Smith, R-N.H., said U.S. investigators have been denied access to Russian witnesses believed to have information about American servicemen taken prisoner during the Vietnam and Korean wars.

Officially, 8,177 American servicemen never returned from the Korean War, which ended in 1953. That number includes 2,119 who died in camps, about 900 killed after capture and about 1,000 who were lost at sea or in air crashes or were buried by Americans in Korea. The fates of 3,400 of the total remain unknown, said Paul Cole, a Rand Corp. researcher under contract to the Pentagon.

Also yesterday, a former intelligence officer and White House aide to President Eisenhower testified yesterday that Eisenhower agreed to suppress U.S. intelligence information about the fate of at least 900 servicemen secretly transferred to the Soviet Union after their capture during the Korean War.

Philip Corso, a retired Army lieutenant colonel who served in Army intelligence and later on the National Security Council in 1953-57, said he prepared a 1954 report, based on eyewitness accounts, which indicated that between 900 and 1,200 U.S. POWs from Korea were turned over to the Soviets by the Chinese and North Koreans and confined in Siberia.

Corso said Eisenhower decided to withhold the information because he felt that "the POWs should be given up for dead because the Soviets would never relinquish them."

Corso's allegations were disputed by Department of Defense officials.

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