Victims of Yalta: The Secret Betrayal of the Allies—1944-1947 by Nikolai Tolstoy tells the sordid tale of the betrayal of millions of anti-Bolshevik Russians who fought back against the Soviet terror before and during World War II, and how they were betrayed by the Allies in what is called “Operation Keelhaul.”

After the war, literally millions of anti-communist Cossack fighters and civilians came under the control of British, French and American forces. Tolstoy says these Russians included prisoners of war, forced laborers, collaborators, refugees and émigrés. Some were Russian POWs who had fought against the Soviets in Waffen-SS units. Still others were captured Soviet soldiers. (Unfortunately for them, Stalin considered any Soviet soldier who surrendered a traitor and deserving of death.) And many were merely average Russians who had fled the USSR to escape the Soviet terror campaigns. . . .

But no matter the status of the person, the secret Moscow agreement of 1944, confirmed at the 1945 Yalta conference, demanded that ALL Soviet citizens in the West be forced to return to Russia. This was a death sentence by execution or forced labor in the Gulag for the vast majority, and Churchill, FDR and the other Western Allied leaders were well aware that they would be ensuring millions of people certain death.

According to Tolstoy’s estimate, based on data from a former NKVD officer, in the end, a total of 5.5 million Russians were “repatriated” from areas formerly occupied by the Axis. Of these, 20% received a death sentence; 20% received a 25-year labor camp sentence; about 17.5% received sentences of five to 10 years; 10% were exiled for six years or more; 15% worked as conscripts in assigned areas and were not allowed to return home; and about 17.5% were allowed to return home but remained blackballed, thus finding it difficult to survive.

Of course not all Russians went peacefully, so the Allies used either force or subterfuge to get the Cossacks and their families to agree to relocation. For instance, at Camp Peggetz near Lienz, Austria, the British guaranteed a group of thousands of Cossacks that they were attending an important British conference to determine their fate, when in fact they were being delivered into Soviet hands. When the Cossack men figured out the plan, they refused to board the military transport trucks and fought back. The Brits truncheoned the disarmed Cossacks into unconsciousness and threw their bodies like “sacks of potatoes” onto the trucks bound for the Soviet camp, according to one witness.

Women and children thus went more willingly. “Repatriation programs” were also enacted in France, Belgium, Holland, Finland, Switzerland, Sweden and Norway. The only country known to have resisted forced repatriation of Russians was Liechtenstein. In the end, this massive betrayal of millions of human beings remains one of the blackest stains on the West and helps explains the general distrust Russians even today have for the trustworthiness of Western politicians.

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