Memoirs

The following report is a summary of information obtained by the U.S. Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIAs, and by analysts of the Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office.

The information, referred to as the "Memoirs," was provided to the analysts through an interview with a source who had been living in internal exile in the former Soviet Union.

Our analysts translated the interview with the source, and passed it to the Russian side of the Commission during the Commission's plenary meeting in Moscow in late 1999 In addition, U.S. analysts stationed full-time in Moscow are using this report to investigate leads and examine archives in Russia which may shed some light on the information in the "Memoirs."

It should be noted that the information in the "Memoirs" relates to the 1940s and 1950s, and most of it is collated from second, third or fourth hand reports.

A relatively small portion of the "Memoirs" is excerpted from the original as the information does not relate to the POW/MIA issue, or the information would tend to reveal the identify of the source.

SUMMARY OF MEMOIRS – Part A

In the spring of 1954, a new worker, who had previously served as a radio operator aboard fishing vessels belonging to the Far Eastern Flotilla, arrived at the Leningrad Gold-prospecting Brigade in **Partizanskii (Udereskii District, Krasnoyarskii Region)**. He recounted that, in n when he was fishing some forty miles from the **Island of Okusiri** in the **Sea of Japan**, he "forced his way into" discussions about a certain aircraft that had crashed Within a few minutes, a "radio message" arrived from the base of the Trawler Fleet, stating that all vessels belonging to the flotilla were to commence at once a search for the crewmembers. Immediately thereafter, an encoded message arrived from the base's deputy political officer directing that the "enemy spy pilots,"or their corpses, if they were found, be brought at once "under the strictest secrecy" to the coast guard ships belonging to the Border Patrol Just one point was not clear From whom was this "strictest of secrets" being kept? From the fishermen of an enormous flotilla scattered across the oceans and seas who were supposed to be the ones searching for those involved in the crash? For days, it seemed that the entire communications network was saturated with transmissions by crews of the search aircraft Then, suddenly, everything went silent

A week later, we radio operators were informed in the **Port of Ol'ga** that an American military spy plane had been downed over our territorial waters by air defense (PVO) units, had fallen into the sea and that the entire crew had perished Why were they so incredibly quick to bury the Americans, who, unlike our pilots and sailors, had top-quality personal rescue gear? . Two months later, the captain of the fishing vessel on which the worker served served, returned from **Khabarovsk** (He had been visiting with his sister there) He told the radio operator that not all the crew members of the "American" [aircraft] had, in fact, died "back then" (in June) and that ten of those people were now in pre-trial solitary confinement in a prison in the city of **Svobodnyi, near Blagoveshchensk** To keep them away from curiosity seekers, they were transferred there immediately from the internal prison of the **Khabarovsk MGB** [i e , Ministry of State Security, predecessor organization of the KGB, trans] The worker added that his captain was unfazed by this and that he knows the truth -- His sister was married to "just about the most prominent figure in the **Khabarovsk Regional Committee**" [of the Communist Party, trans] In reply to the worker's question, ' What happens now?," the captain answered.

"They will be squeezed for what is required And, of course, they will finish them off They'll be worked to the bone and shipped off to **Zeya** and not for the first time **Svobodnyi** is where they have their principal drowning base In echelons, straight from the trains, they had been drowning people for thirty years like nothing And that's all They definitely will be counted in all the documents as having drowned See, even TASS made the announcement: They fell, as it were, into the sea "

The report alarmed me a great deal

In the very beginning of 1953, a courier from the **Udereiskii Regional KGB** summoned me to the **Nizhne-Angarskoe Geological Reconnaissance Directorate** in **Motygino** There I was informed that, at the direction of the senior geologist, **Ivanchenko**, I was being sent

to handle an emergency situation at the Northern mining enterprise On that same day, with an escort and two geologists, we flew off to **Krasnoyarsk** We were met there by representatives of the director of the Regional GRU He reported that, together with other specialists, I was to fly to the north, where a *ChP* (Extraordinary Event) took place at one of the enterprises constituting the "integrated system" A crust of ice within the ground had burst apart and flooded the area of the elevator Responding to my retort that I lacked the proper educational background, and, therefore, the results of my expertise (or my suppositions) would be considered incorrect. He waved in front of my face a thick folder with my "Personal File " [illegible] the discussion, he announced, "Around here what matters are not your diplomas but your actions! Don't get gloomy, young man Go! You do your work, and I'll worry about freeing you from exile. . ."

The following day – it was January 8th – along with two geologists from **Motygino** and another three specialists from the "26th [Post Office] Box, (**Krasnoyarsk**), we flew out toward the **Island of Dikson**. (approximately 2,000 kilometers to the north of **Krasnoyarsk**) Two or three days later -- there was a blizzard and the airports were closed -- we flew for about three hours to the village of **Solnechnyi** (?) on **Bol'shevik** (an island in the **Severnaya Zemlya** archipelago) There we once again "sat" because of the weather Finally, after flying across the **Vil'kitskii Gulf**, we landed in the tundra, some 160 kilometers from **Chelyuskin Bay** The site was called "**Rybak** "

It was inmates who worked here at the mining enterprise since the camp was right next to the mine The reason for the emergency situation -- an ignorance of elementary engineering -- could have been clarified without having to fly out to the site Its consequences could have been eliminated as well by instruction from a competent engineer What was needed were experienced pyrotechnic specialists and demolition experts And they sent us a demolition-qualified inmate tall, exhausted by hunger and the Arctic, with a very characteristic, slightly elongated artistic face on which the unnatural protrusion of gray eyes in sockets sunken from emaciation revealed someone ill with exophthalmos goiter In an accent clearly that of an English speaker, he also openly identified himself as a citizen of the United States of America, Allied Officer **Dale** His statement did not appear to make any impression on my colleagues In fact, on the return trip, already in **Krasnoyarsk**, one of them heard me say "Tell me, please An American! An ally And also in the camp" He retorted "And they're not only in **Rybak** You have as many as you want of them in **Strelka**! So much for our 'so-called allies'"

Somewhat later, after having returned to **Udereya**, I asked those who had escaped from **Strelka** about our "allies " Yes, they knew about the Americans, but they had no contact with them From the very moment of their arrival on the territory of the Enterprise, they were all kept in isolation

I was unable to converse with the American prisoner **Dale** The camp guards "monitored" me very closely Even before we entered his area, I and all the others were warned that it was strictly forbidden to speak with anyone!

Six days later, we flew to **Dikson** Only then did I learn that we were in a uranium mine

In **Kranoyarsk** I was compelled to sign a non-disclosure statement with regard to everything that I had seen and heard in **Rybak** In **Noril'sk**, many years later, a colleague who had worked with me in **Udereya** at the time in question, related that many of the Americans "who had fallen into our hands in 1945 from the liberated Fascist camps" were held in **Rybak** and probably perished there. "

My status as an exile did not permit me to clarify anything at all about those Americans who were alive from the aircraft downed in the Far East This applied even in the case of those Americans who were located much closer—in **Rybak** or in **Strelka** But at least in the case of **Rybak** I had a chance to see one of them with my very own eyes! I could also not but believe those who fled from **Strelka**, who trusted me with their lives, and who understood perfectly the price of such information

But then, in **Udereya**, my sad experience showed that the "flow" of Americans from the prisoner of war camps in Germany and in the Far East, and now from Korea, was proceeding at a robust pace, filling in the bottomless hell of the GULag I first met these people in **Peveka** There, in the region to which I was sent after the hospital (as a result of an accident in "**Zemlya Bunga**") four Americans, specialists in automation systems, were being detained They were sent there from the mining camps of the Northwestern Directorate of **Sevvostlag** to delve into the functionality of mobile electric power stations that reached **Chaunskaya Guba** under the Lend-Lease program . Later, at the very beginning of navigation in the **Sea of Okhotsk**, I met a still another group of Americans in the summer of 1948, at the **Magadan** transfer point in the **Bay of Nagaev** There were 14 of them, and they had just been taken from the holds of a ship transporting slaves: helpless, enfeebled by a week-and-a-half's worth of tossing on the seas, hunger, exhaustion, and desperation I cannot single out anyone of them They all appeared uniformly lifeless and faceless But I recall how many of them there were and the number of their brigade "1014." I recall the name of their brigade leader **Geldol'f** He, too, was indistinguishable from the others, except, perhaps, by his height He was tall and, for a tall person, very round-shouldered. It is difficult for me to remember anyone's individual features, anyone's eyes, because in enormous barracks with three levels of wooden cots it was dark and hazy, as in a crypt What I also recall is the physical appearance and name of the American doctor in the group of fourteen, a small but thick-boned fellow named **Gertsige**

And this is all that I can recall about the meeting in the **Bay of Nagaev**

Both the brigade leader and the doctor knew a bit of German. They said that they had served with the navy somewhere out at sea There they were seized by the Japanese in 1943 They were detained in camps, first in the Philippines (?), then in **Manchuria**, outside of **Harbin**, where they were duped by Soviet "liberators" There was very little opportunity to communicate with them One night they were taken off to the depths of **Kolyma**, into the bottomless abyss of its vastness We were incomparably better off A week later we were loaded into the hold of a military transport heading into the **Bay of Vanin**, toward construction site "501" . .

Just to finish this point I did not have any direct contact with Americans in **Peveka** I saw them several times as they were taken by convoy to and from the port But a doctor from Leningrad told me about them on numerous occasions The doctor even provided the names of

two of them Filipp (Pill') Ettli and Frederking (or Frederling). I might be in error here That is all

During the latter half of the 1960s, I once again had occasion to hear about the fate of the crewmembers aboard the American plane downed in the Far East in June (?) 1952 I was called upon to fly out to **Komsomol'sk-na-Amure** on a business trip with the deputy director of my institute. ' "those" years this fellow was the director of **DAL'STROI**, i e , from the viewpoint of the Nurenberg charge sheet, he was a war criminal of the first order

and then, in a moment of particularly "sincere closeness," I made my decision

He was not in the least surprised by my question He replied at once

"Yes, at first ten people were alive. Yes, first they were brought to **Khabarovsk** But, then, of course, they were sent off to **Svobodnyi** They were supposed to have been met by people from the Ministry of Defense They were not met, though You see, there was some screw-up in Moscow Well, I can tell you that they were not met What happened to them after that, I do not know And I would advise you not to know as well Let the leadership worry itself about it "

Later that very same year, in **Murmansk**, an acquaintance who was a friend and erstwhile colleague of the Deputy Director "throughout the Far East," repeated almost word-for-word the testimony of the former **DAL'STROI** director but went on to clarify "The guys from within 'worked over' the Americans so badly that only eight were take . And those had nowhere to go after all that And so what? Do know what sort of arrogance they had? They were Americans! You understand!!! "

"They probably drowned them," I offered as a supposition

"Well, well ! And how did you find that out? He probably bared his soul to you, right?"

In 1973, I had my birthday celebration, to which I invited only my closest friends The group included the husband of my classmate He was a general with an outstanding service record.

Much was said over 19 years of complete mutual trust and affection While accompanying the general after an evening at our home, I decided to ask him whether he knew anything about "those" Americans [His reply]

"I know only that they did not come over our way If that had been the case, they would be alive and healthy And, by now, they would have been back home for a long time, across the ocean. I know that **Zhukov** was aware of the extraordinary event (*ChP*) that occurred in the summer of 1952. I know that **Zhukov** immediately contacted **Stalin** directly with a request that he involve himself in the fate of the American pilots, who as he understood, were listed from the very beginning as having perished But neither **Stalin** nor his underlings responded to the disgraced marshal. Lastly, I know that, as soon as he became deputy minister of defense in 1953, the

marshal directed a search for people and documents. But **Beria**'s archives, as it were, had neither those people nor the documents about them Probably, 'nothing was there any longer.' "

In the 1980s, I once again was in the Far East, to which I was inextricably drawn by the undisclosed secret regarding the loss of the American aircraft My companion on these trips was a new acquaintance I became acquainted with him and convinced him to transfer over to my institute, into the scientific field, I must say, all for the same reason his many years of involvement in the geographical area of constant interest to me Before we met, he was for many years a supervisory official in two agencies in the capital and directed energy-related and hydromechanical construction in the Far East And, as an advisor to the minister, he had to have been closely acquainted with those who could have and m ive known the truth about the Extraordinary Event (*ChP*) of thirty years before Two years of persistent searching by him, who unquestionably was himself intrigued by the idea of revealing the crime, shed no new light on the course of events of the summer of 1952 or related details But he did learn the names of two crewmembers of that aircraft, **BUSH** and **MOORE**, who will forever remain in the soil of the **Khabarovsk Region** And however blasphemous this thought may appear to the uninitiated, let people take my word By their horrible fate they were spared the vastness of the GULag's underworld a prison isolation cell with the proud name "**Svobodnyi**," which is in close proximity to **Blagoveshchensk** ! And many others

[signed]
August 1983

SUMMARY OF MEMOIRS – Part B

In the fall of 1951, a group of American – POWs (?) from Korea (?) arrived at the **Kirovskij** mining camp, **Uderejskij** administrative district, **Krasnoyarsk** region However, in the beginning of 1952, they disappeared without trace In any case, during the liquidation of the prison camp during the winter of 1951 and into 1952, none of them were among the frost bitten prisoners, who were marched in column to Motygino (in the southern part of the region) and offered medical assistance

A worker from **Kirovskij,** a deportee, witnessed how "late at night, on Russian Christmas, a group of approximately 20 persons, maybe slightly more, were led from the camp along the **Veniaminovkij** road [note the road connecting the town of **Kirovsk** and **Veniaminovskij**] "

The deportee's daughter and her friend, a Cossack, witnessed that during the last days of December 1951 "more than 20 prisoners, wearing bare threads and half frozen, were moved along the road to **Veniaminovkij** "

The daughter of the manager of **Veniaminovkij**, stated that "on Christmas we were given a present; frost bitten prisoners being led and driven like cattle by the NKVD They did not speak Russian They only said "American, American" and "eat, eat" They wanted food Then, in the morning, around 6o'clock, they were marched away to somewhere further However, further lies only a wasteland, mountainous, desolate and uninhabited, the taiga a dead-end

A driver and hunter from village of **Chinuel**, observed from his car, prisoners of some sort that were speaking, but not in Russian, coming at him and being marched passed his car along the road The guards were trying to prevent the prisoners from talking This was early in the morning, on Christmas He could not understand why prisoners were being marched on a holiday(?) Why to the north? There is nothing there, there is no work for them to do

That evening, when he returned to his home in **Chinuel**, the column was passing the mouth of the **Ishimbi River** it seemed, towards him, to **Chinuel** itself The next day, around 7am, he was going back to **Kirovsk** when he again encountered the same column of prisoners, having t h i n n e d o u t It was approaching the town of **Kamenka**, nearing the river.

Yet another witness He worked as a dredge operator at the **Kirovskij mine** In February 1952, while hunting in the lower reaches of the Parenda, where it empties into the Kamenka river, he happened upon small clearing already slightly covered with snow For some reason it had been covered over with beams of logs The dogs immediately were aroused. They dragged out some type of boot - worn out at the heel , slippers and even a shoe, resembling American shoes by the – copper nails Forcing him to put on his glasses, in disbelief as to what they had in their teeth

He had heard rumors and became quite nervous. Especially disturbing to him was the behavior of his dogs They were nervous, whimpering, scratching at the snow and barking in a manner unlike any that they had before on the hunt. He tried to dig up the ground – covered in a half meter of snow Suddenly, the snow was up to his waist But beneath, the ground was already frozen although, clearly the ground had been turned-up and filled back in .It was obvious that someone had been buried here and the dogs began to back up and howl like near a corpse...

He stopped tempting fate, - left The hunt was over

A week later, he met with his friend, who worked for the militia. His friend recommended he keep quiet, for God's sake...

In July 1952, my friend and I, based on this information, tried to locate that clearing However, the swamp had flooded over.

In the fall, we again began to search But, we had been "sold-out" We were questioned by the police and held for ten days in detention

In the 1960s, I again tried to locate this burial site However, the taiga had completely grown over it. I was assisted by very kind people. Again, someone did not like my search Just like the incident of the shooting of the Americans in Bodajbo, in Moscow, again to the prosecutor's office, USSR (local Government District Attorney's office) the official car arrived. .

Then, in August 1964, I officially requested from Krasnoyarsk .."as to the fate of American prisoners of war at the Kirovskij mining camp " But of course I did not receive a reply So, I then submitted a letter to the USSR prosecutor's office itself However, the reply was not from Pushkinskij, but from Kirovskij – from the military prosecutor's office In the reply, on a carbon copy, it stated "...regarding the fates of citizens of the USA, held at the Kirovskij Springtime camp, the Prosecutor of the Krasnoyarsk region has no information "

The Prosecutor, USSR, through the military, forced the regional, Krasnoyarsk, to reply That reply stated there were such persons, however, we do not know where they were taken.

A list was compiled by a woman, containing 22 names of citizens of the USA imprisoned in the Kirovskij camp during the winter of 1951 to 1952. When this person arrived at Kirosvkij, she worked as a sanitation worker Part of her duties included cleaning toilets at the camp She put the list together over a month's time It is not complete, since she was not able to ask anyone for help

During ten years of repression even she herself had forgotten about this Because she is alone, in an exile brought about from working in the zone of the camp

By 1951, this once slim figured, fair-haired, gray-eyed beauty had turned into an old woman But, to this "old woman" I devoted to my investigative work She was able to recall and "Shed light on everything" She was able to record only 22 names of Americans, as she was being carefully watched She was not even able to get their first names One day, she managed to sneak a pencil in, broke it into pieces and handed them out to the Americans so they could record their names and addresses on pieces of newspaper Several days later, she smuggled them out, covered in filth, in a canvas bag She cleaned them, dried them, placed them in a empty fruit jar, and buried them

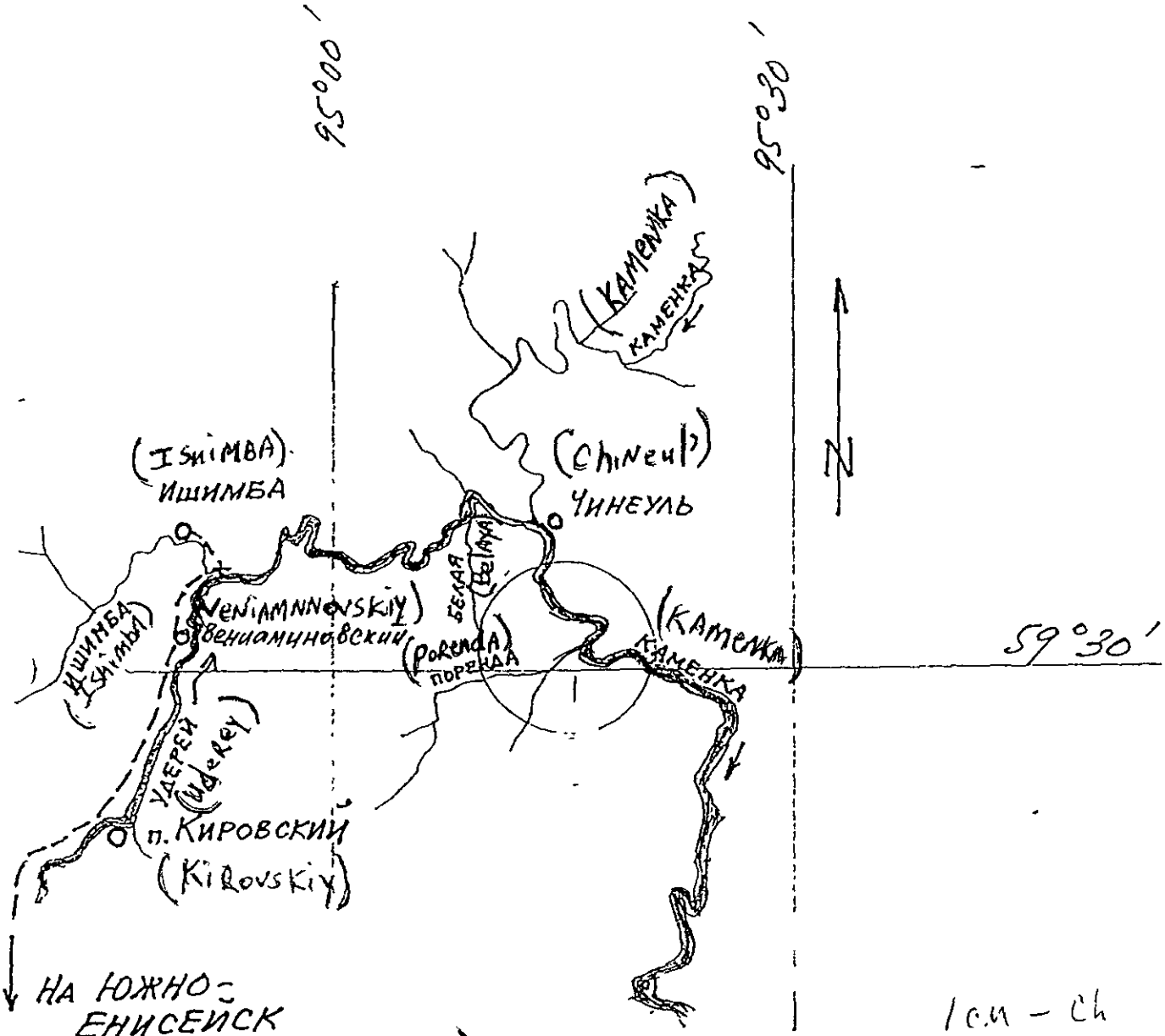
During Christmas of that year, when the Americans were being marched to north toward **Veniaminovkij**, she disappeared without a trace, just like the Americans And I remain, still hopeful of finding this glass jar

[script]
2 Sep 1979
Moscow

[handwritten] No dates!

1	Al'bertson, Sem	[Albertson, Sam]
2	Foster	[Foster]
3	Xetch	[Hatch]
4	Lion, Dtopdzh	[Leon, George]
5	Sikssmit	[? Smith]
6	Ambroze	[Ambiose]
7	Millei	[Miller]
8	Devis	[Davis]
9	Summeibi	[Summeiby]
10	Budhei Allan	[Butcher, Allan]
11	Dzhonson. Xubert	[Johnson, Hubert]
12	Vekslei	[Vexlei oi Vekslei]
13	Kuk, Irving	[Cook, Irving]
14	Morin	[Morin]
15	Larsen	[Larsen]
16	Boyar	[Boyar or Boyer]
17.	Fisher	[Fisher]
18.	Gel'fand	[Galvan, Halvan]
19.	Natazon, Filipp	[Natazon, Philipp]
20.	Gershfel'd	[Gershfield or Hershfield]
21	Sich, Garri	[Seech, Gary or Harry]
22	Kajzer	[Kaiser]

[handwritten notation on bottom right]
POWs of North Korea
Through Khabarovsk
In the villages of Kirovskij-
Uderejskij region
Kransoyarsk kraj [administrative district].



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MAY 1954

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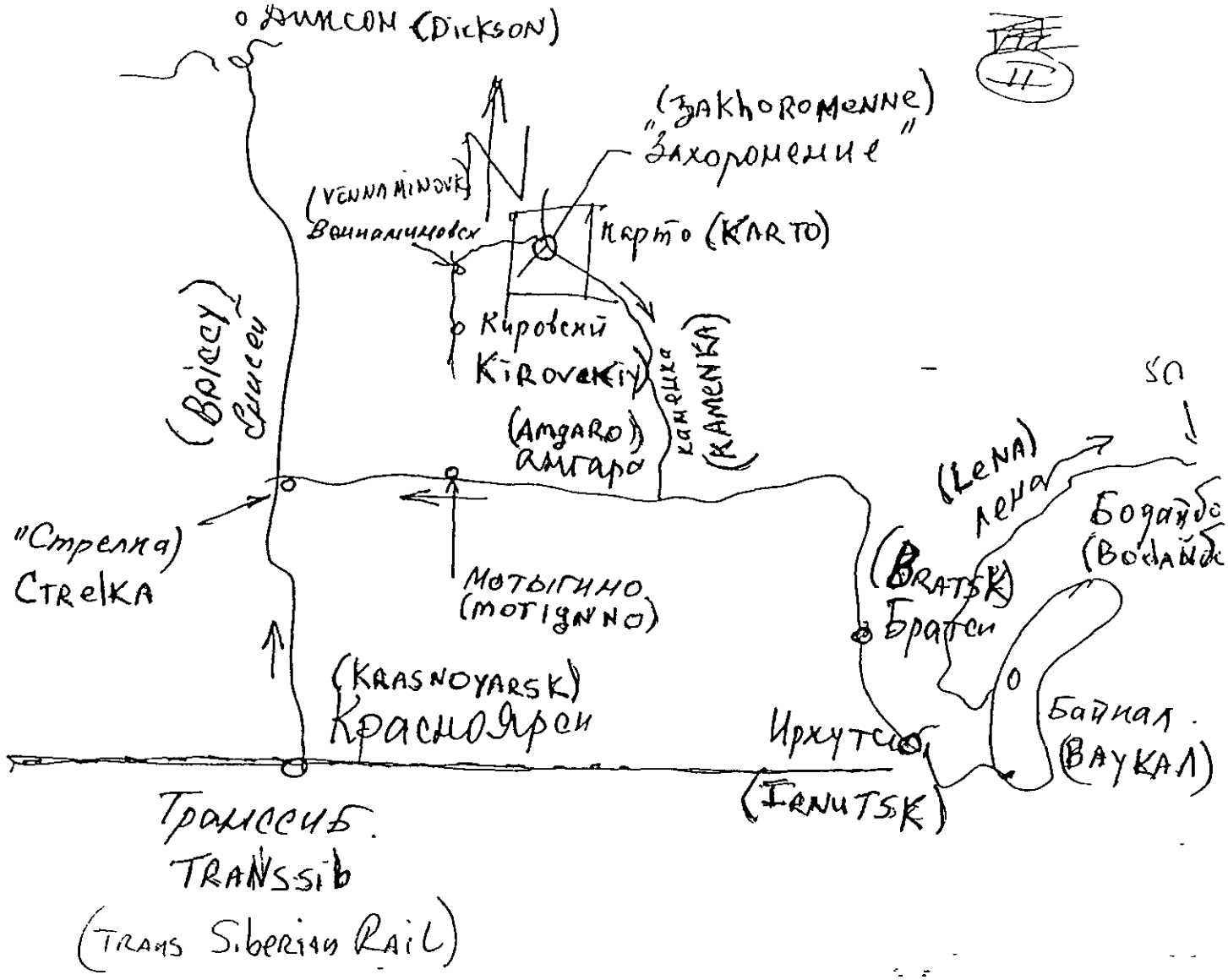
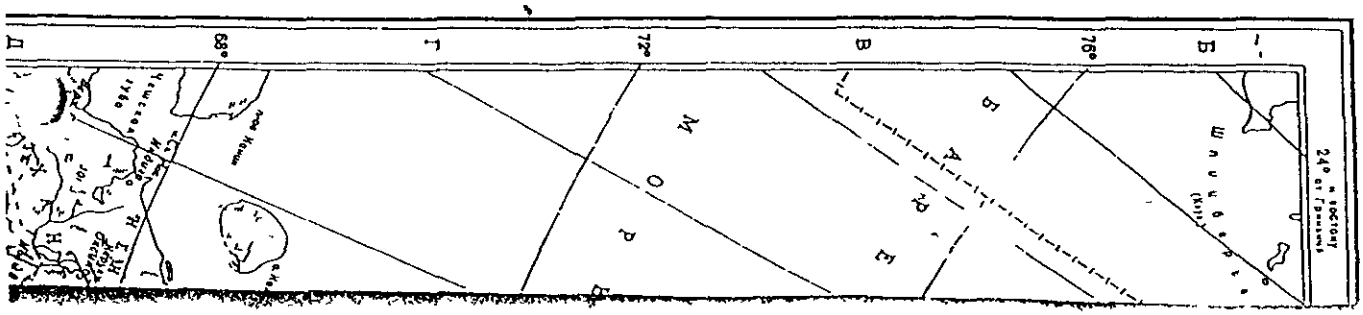


Диксон (Dickson)
(Zakhoromenne)
"Захоромение"
(Venna Minovk)
Вениаминовск
Карто (Karto)
Кировский
Kirovskiy
(Amgaro)
Амгара
Каменка
(Kamenka)
(Briccy)
Енисей
"Стрелка)
Strelka
Мотыгино
(Motignno)
(Krasnoyarsk)
Красноярск
Транссиб.
Transsib
(Trans Siberian Rail)
(Lena)
Лена
Бодайбо
(Bodaйбо
(Bratsk)
Братск
Иркутск
(Irnutsk)
Байкал
(Baykal)



РСФСР. ЗАП.

SUMMARY OF MEMOIRS – Part C

TESTIMONY

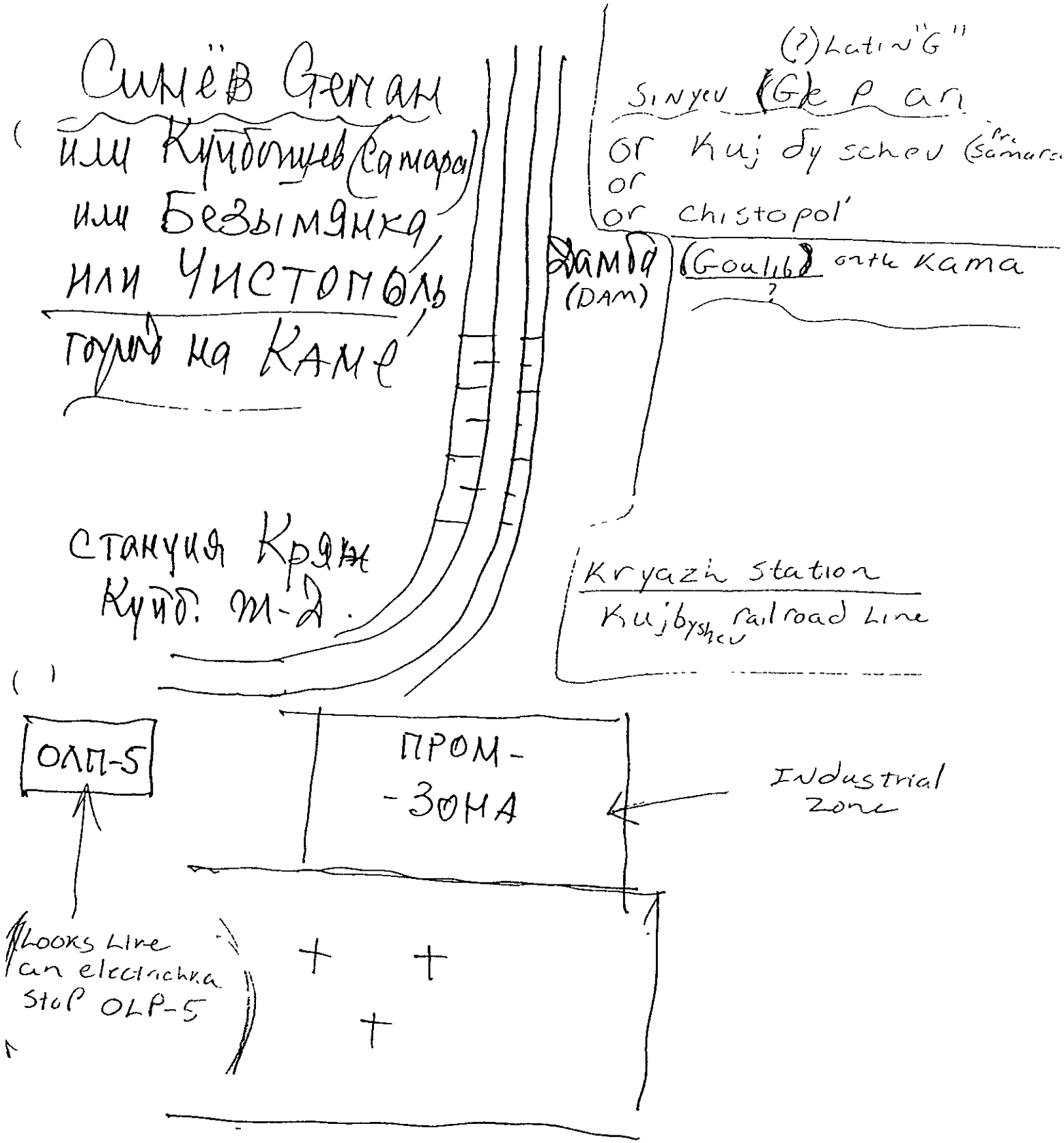
At the end of June – beginning of July 1941, during the massive repression against prisoners by the NKVD (town of **Kuybishev**), many foreigners were executed In July 1943, there was another wave of arrests and executions, except now it was against foreign specialists (a list of 138 names, who were executed in 1941) I found myself in the town of **Kuybishev**, and I found out the reason for the executions

Counterintelligence "SMERSH" (headed by **Abakymov**), during this period "cleansed" the areas of any unecessary specialists – Americans and Swedes, that were utilized from 1936 for the construction of underground industrial complex by the **Shigulev Mountains** (on the right bank of the Volga River, opposite the town of **Kuybishev**)

All of them were recruited by Soviet representatives in Germany and Great Britain, and according to the official paperwork worked in "Third World countries" Once the contract was formed, their fates were sealed The head of "recruitment" of foreign specialists was **Leonid Skoblinskiy,** who until 1929 was the head of the political section of the VChK-OGPY (predecessor to the NKVD) In the 1930s, he was the secretary of the Party Bureau of the Soviet Bank in Paris And, during 1941 – 1943, under the cover of [WWII], SMERSH "finished" its dealings with the Americans and Swedes. They were killed in the transportation tunnels that were labeled "Liter Zero One " [After the executions] they were taken out of the tunnels and buried near cemeteries of the German POW camps The actual cemetery was located of the south border of the "industrial zone" of the Separate Labor Point No 5 in **Kpaishe** (in the area of the Kuybishev railroad)

From May 1941 till November 1943, I was a prisoner and worked in the complex **"Liter Zero One."** I knew very well what was happening during that time. A witness to all the crimes was my foreman Somehow he escaped the liquidation Another witness who informed us of everything that went on in these tunnels I had a list of the executed Americans and Swedes, that was prepared by my comrades [who were killed] But in November 1943, this list was lost possibly, the area where the Americans and Swedes were buried is still open (i.e free from construction) This area was "free" in 1957, when I visited it in search of witnesses

[signature]
16 November 1961



ЧАСТЬ В ТРАФИК : MEMOIR PART C GRAPHIC

ЖЕЛЕЗНЫЕ ДОРОГИ СССР

RAILROADS OF THE USSR

НАПРАВЛЕНИЯ И СТАНЦИИ

ROUTES AND STATIONS

6-е издание

6TH EDITION

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MAIN DIRECTORATE OF GEODESY AND KARTOGRAPHY OF THE SOVIET OF MINISTERS OF THE USSR

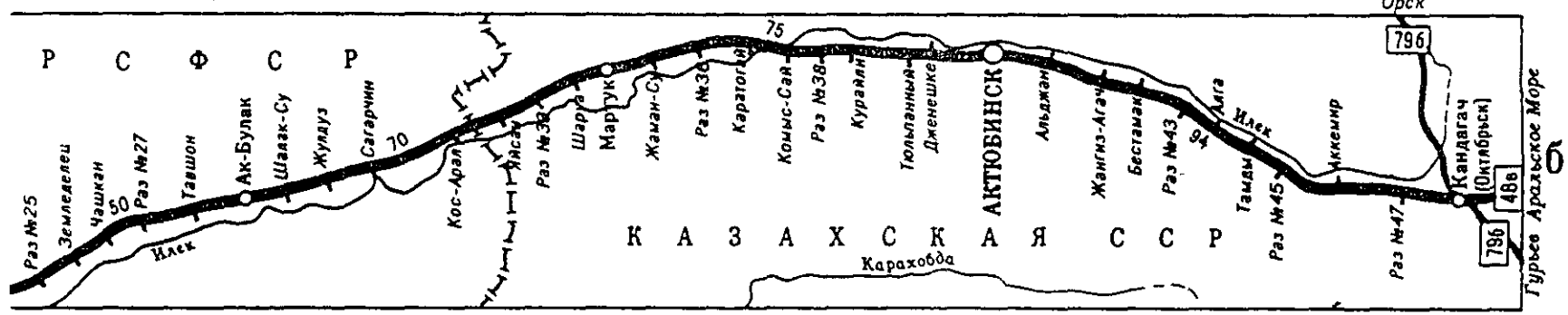
MOSCOW 1971

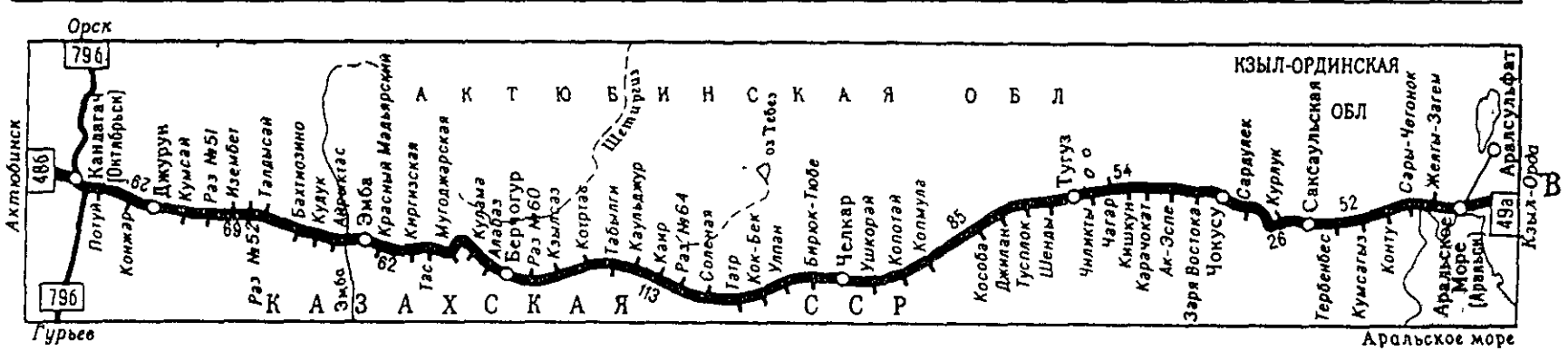
SYZRAN' - KUYBYSHEV - TASHKENT

СЫЗРАНЬ–КУЙБЫШЕВ–(ТАШКЕНТ)

URBAKH-ILETSK-KANDAGACH-ARAL'SKOE SEA TASHKENT ALMA-ATA

УРБАХ–ИЛЕЦК–КАНДАГАЧ–АРАЛЬСКОЕ МОРЕ–(ТАШКЕНТ, АЛМА-АТА)





Actually most of the lists on prisoners were lost in November 1943, when we had to off load members from the "Baku Stage", and I had to destroy the lists However, I was able to save the list containing foreigners, by writing it in the inside of my jacket, and later turned this list into the contents of my second letter

The head of the medical examiner's office of the labor camp also gave me the first and last names of the executed foreigners (including Americans) Her department made up the forms on all foreign prisoners, who were executed without a trial These forms listed fiction "history of illness" and made up the causes of death (according to the GULAG statistics, these documents were coded by the number "08".

[signed]
22 December 1994

SUMMARY OF MEMOIRS – PART D

In November – December 1945 from the occupied **Manchuria** (by the Soviet Army) a MVD convoy took out six groups of prisoners containing American POWs that were held in Japanese prison camps in 1943 – 1945 The itinerary for the convoys were "Dunfanhoon – Chita – Ulan Ude" and "Chan-Chun – Chita – Ulan Ude " It was known to the convoy that these six groups of prisoners were going to a special GULAG to work on the railroad between Ulan Ude and Ulan Bator. Actually, all the Americans from the convoy, once it reached Ulan Ude, were transferred to winter camps in Bodaibo (North Siberia). They were all executed there

At the end of 1940s – beginning of 1950s, when the interior forces were demilitarized, some of them stated that Americans were executed in the **Bodaibo** prison, a place that "traditionally" hosted executions from the 1930s of middle-class Kozaks from Zabaikal and Don (Andrus Krulikas and Vasiliy Kamkov) (There were a total of 200 individuals who were executed)