



# Интервью тов. И. В. Сталина с корреспондентом „Правды“ относительно речи Г. Черчилля

В этот раз вы, корреспондент „Правды“ из США, Сталин с большой любовью ее читаете, читали и в Париже, в Лондоне. Вы знаете, что коммунисты во всех странах, особенно там, где они имеют не только влияние, но и власть, являются очень интересными людьми. Мы считаем, что коммунисты во всех странах являются очень интересными людьми. Мы считаем, что коммунисты во всех странах являются очень интересными людьми.

**Вопрос:** Как Вы относитесь к тому, что Черчилль, представляя себя и Соединенные Штаты Америки?

**Ответ:** Мы не считаем, что Черчилль представляет себя и Соединенные Штаты Америки. Мы считаем, что Черчилль представляет себя и Великобританию. Мы считаем, что Черчилль представляет себя и Великобританию. Мы считаем, что Черчилль представляет себя и Великобританию.

**Вопрос:** Можете ли сказать, что речь о Черчилле звучит здесь так же, как в Лондоне?

**Ответ:** Да, мы считаем, что речь о Черчилле звучит здесь так же, как в Лондоне. Мы считаем, что речь о Черчилле звучит здесь так же, как в Лондоне. Мы считаем, что речь о Черчилле звучит здесь так же, как в Лондоне.

## В этот раз в „Правде“ Советов СССР

### Стахановские вохты на предприятиях Москвы

Поздравляем наших рабочих и служащих на предприятиях Москвы, которые участвуют в выполнении Стахановского плана. Мы считаем, что стахановские вохты являются очень интересными людьми. Мы считаем, что стахановские вохты являются очень интересными людьми.

**Вопрос:** Как вы относитесь к тому, что стахановские вохты являются очень интересными людьми?

**Ответ:** Мы считаем, что стахановские вохты являются очень интересными людьми. Мы считаем, что стахановские вохты являются очень интересными людьми. Мы считаем, что стахановские вохты являются очень интересными людьми.

## Областность

Областность является очень интересной проблемой. Мы считаем, что областность является очень интересной проблемой. Мы считаем, что областность является очень интересной проблемой.

**Вопрос:** Как вы относитесь к проблеме областности?

**Ответ:** Мы считаем, что областность является очень интересной проблемой. Мы считаем, что областность является очень интересной проблемой. Мы считаем, что областность является очень интересной проблемой.

## Ученые в области истории и философии

Ученые в области истории и философии являются очень интересными людьми. Мы считаем, что ученые в области истории и философии являются очень интересными людьми. Мы считаем, что ученые в области истории и философии являются очень интересными людьми.

**Вопрос:** Как вы относитесь к работе ученых в области истории и философии?

**Ответ:** Мы считаем, что ученые в области истории и философии являются очень интересными людьми. Мы считаем, что ученые в области истории и философии являются очень интересными людьми. Мы считаем, что ученые в области истории и философии являются очень интересными людьми.

## Ученые в области образования и воспитания

Ученые в области образования и воспитания являются очень интересными людьми. Мы считаем, что ученые в области образования и воспитания являются очень интересными людьми. Мы считаем, что ученые в области образования и воспитания являются очень интересными людьми.

**Вопрос:** Как вы относитесь к работе ученых в области образования и воспитания?

**Ответ:** Мы считаем, что ученые в области образования и воспитания являются очень интересными людьми. Мы считаем, что ученые в области образования и воспитания являются очень интересными людьми. Мы считаем, что ученые в области образования и воспитания являются очень интересными людьми.

Мы считаем, что Черчилль является очень интересным человеком. Мы считаем, что Черчилль является очень интересным человеком. Мы считаем, что Черчилль является очень интересным человеком.

**Вопрос:** Как вы относитесь к тому, что Черчилль является очень интересным человеком?

**Ответ:** Мы считаем, что Черчилль является очень интересным человеком. Мы считаем, что Черчилль является очень интересным человеком. Мы считаем, что Черчилль является очень интересным человеком.

Мы считаем, что Сталин является очень интересным человеком. Мы считаем, что Сталин является очень интересным человеком. Мы считаем, что Сталин является очень интересным человеком.

**Вопрос:** Как вы относитесь к тому, что Сталин является очень интересным человеком?

**Ответ:** Мы считаем, что Сталин является очень интересным человеком. Мы считаем, что Сталин является очень интересным человеком. Мы считаем, что Сталин является очень интересным человеком.

**Prof. Boris V. Sokolov**

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# THE LOSSES OF THE RED ARMY DURING THE GREAT PATRIOTIC WAR, 1941–1945

ARTICLES

## **Abstract**

The paper discusses the matter of the Soviet Army losses suffered in World War II as portrayed in the Soviet post-war propaganda and historical research, as well as in recent research and disputes. The calculations of losses of the Soviet Army have been a matter of academic research, mainly based on statistical estimations. The paper exposes also the problem of the unreliability of the basic data on casualties.

**Keywords:** Soviet Army, losses, historical research, propaganda

For the first time, the figure for the Soviet military losses was mentioned by Stalin in 1946 in his interview devoted to Winston Churchill's Fulton speech. He stated:

“As a result of the German invasion, the Soviet Union irretrievably lost about seven million people in the battles with the Germans, as well as due to the German occupation and the deportation of the Soviet people to German forced labour. In other words, the Soviet Union lost several times more people than England and the United States of America combined.” (“Interv’yu tov. I.V. Stalina...”, *Pravda*, 14 March 1946”).

Во-вторых, нельзя забывать следующего обстоятельства. Немцы произвели вторжение в СССР через Финляндию, Польшу, Румынию, Болгарию, Венгрию. Немцы могли произвести вторжение через эти страны потому, что в этих странах существовали тогда правительства, враждебные Советскому Союзу. В результате немецкого вторжения Советский Союз безвозвратно потерял в боях с немцами, а также благодаря немецкой оккупации и угону советских людей на немецкую каторгу — около семи миллионов человек. Иначе говоря, Советский Союз потерял людьми в несколько раз больше, чем Англия и Соединенные Штаты Америки, вместе взятые. Возможно, что кое-где склонны предать забвению эти колоссальные жертвы советского народа, обеспечившие освобождение Европы от гитлеровского ига. Но Советский Союз не может забыть о них. Спрашивается, что же может быть удивительного в том, что Советский Союз, желая обезопасить себя на будущее время, старается добиться того, чтобы в этих странах существовали правительства, лояльно относящиеся к Советскому Союзу? Как можно, не сойдя с ума, квалифицировать эти мирные стремления Советского Союза, как экспансионистские тенденции нашего государства?

“... the following occurrence that should not be forgotten. Germans launched the invasion in the Soviet Union through Finland, Poland, Romania, Bulgaria, and Hungary. Germans could launch this invasion through these countries because then in those countries existed the governments hostile to the Soviet Union. As a result of the German invasion, the Soviet Union irretrievably lost in the battles with Germans, as well as due to the German occupation and deportation of the Soviet people into German forced labour – approximately seven million people. In other words, the Soviet Union lost several times more people than England and the United States combined.” Interview with Joseph Stalin, a response to Winston Churchill's 5 March 1946 Iron Curtain Speech. *Pravda* 14 March 1946, no. 62 (10144). N.A. Nekrasov Library

As we can understand from the text, the figure of 7 million dead covered the losses of both the Red Army and the civilian population. It underestimated by several times the real losses of the Soviet Union, which Stalin probably did not know, and he mentioned the first figure that came to his mind, such that assuredly exceeded the losses of the Western allies.

The book “Les maréchaux soviétiques vous parlent [The Soviet marshals speak to you]” was published in French in 1950 and was soon translated into several languages. The Russian original has never been published. Its author was named as Cyrille Dimitrievich Kalinov, Colonel of the Soviet Army, who allegedly worked in the apparatus of the Soviet military administration in East Berlin and defected to West Berlin in 1949. Here, the data on the losses of the Red Army in the Great Patriotic War were based on secret Soviet documents: 8,500,000 killed and missing, 2,500,000 died of wounds, and 2,600,000 died in captivity. This adds up to 13,600,000 dead (Kalinov 1950; Kalinow 1950; Kalinov 1951 (1); Kalinov 1951 (2); Kalinov 1952).

Later, it became clear that there existed no real Colonel K.D. Kalinov, and the book was authored by two Russian emigrants who lived in Paris – a former Soviet diplomat Grigoriy Zinovievich Besedovskiy, who defected in 1929, and Kirill Dmitrievich Pomerantsev, who emigrated with his parents in 1920. Pomerantsev in his memoirs revealed how the creative process unfolded: Colonel Kalinov’s memoirs

“were written at my apartment to a cognac and milk cocktail »Gloria« (an excellent thing!) and even, in my honor, Kalinov was »baptized« as Cyrille.” (Pomerantsev 1986, 134; see Blackstock 1966).

Thus, the figure of 13,600,000 dead and missing Red Army soldiers is not really based on any documents, but is an arbitrary estimate of Besedovsky and Pomerantsev. Neither of them served in the Red Army during World War II, although they participated in the French Resistance, and did not imagine the real level of combat ability of the Soviet armed forces. Therefore, the figure they give is approximately half of the real irrevocable losses of the Red Army in 1941–1945.

Nevertheless, the West German demographer, Helmut Arntz, took the figure of the imaginary Kalinov for the real number of losses of the Red Army. In addition, Arntz considered the figure of 7,000,000 dead, mentioned by Stalin in 1946, for the number of dead related only to the losses of the Soviet civilian population, although this did

not follow in any way from the text of Stalin's interview. Based on this, he estimated that 20,000,000 Soviet citizens were killed or deceased, a figure, which was later borrowed by Nikita S. Khrushchev. Strictly speaking, summing up the above figures gives 20,600,000, but Arntz probably decided to round it up, perhaps thinking that some of the missing might still be alive (Arntz 1957, 600–601).

In 1961, Nikita S. Khrushchev in a letter to Swedish Prime Minister Tage Erlander estimated the total number of Soviet losses in the war at 20,000,000 (*Mezhdunarodnaya Zhizn'* 2/2017, p. 8). At the same time, it was unofficially assumed that half of the losses were incurred by military personnel, and half by the civilian population. And so, in 1972, the figure of 10,000,000 dead Soviet soldiers appeared in the French translation of Boris Uralnis book *Guerres et populations*, published in 1972 in Moscow (Uralnis 1972, 321). And in 1990, a joint Commission of the State Committee of Statistics and the General Staff of the Soviet Armed Forces estimated the losses of the Soviet Union at 26,600,000 people, including the losses of the Red Army (Denisenko 2005, 108; this figure was repeated in: *Grif sekretnosti snyat* 1993. The last edition of this book: *Rossiya i SSSR v voynakh XX veka. Kniga poter'* 2010. The edition of the part of the book, devoted to the Great Patriotic War: *Velikaya Otechestvennaya bez grifa sekretnosti. Kniga poter'* 2020 – however, there are no changes in the figures of the Soviet losses, including the losses of the Red Army, during the Great Patriotic War in the editions of 2001–2020 in comparison with the edition of 1993).

Current official figures of Soviet military losses in the Great Patriotic War, published for the first time in 1993, do not withstand any academic critique, and none of the absurdities, noted by the reviewers of the first edition, have been corrected in subsequent editions. Meanwhile, the data contained in these publications themselves refute the comically precise estimate of 8,668,400 Red Army, Red Navy, and NKVD soldiers killed and deceased during the war. However, another figure of 500,000 people who were conscripted for military training in May–June 1941 and became missing at the beginning of the war, was added in the second edition. The authors still tend to attribute this number, invented out of whole cloth, to civilian losses, and leave the figure of irrevocable losses of the Soviet armed forces in the Great Patriotic War at 8,668,400 people unchanged (*Rossiya i SSSR v voynakh XX veka* 2001, 236).

Grigoriy F. Krivosheev, defending the General Staff figure of losses, said in an interview for the magazine *Itogi*:

“I am surprised by the strange desire of some of our fellow citizens to blacken the army and increase the number of its losses during the war. You already know the names of these people – Boris Sokolov, Alexander Ruts koy, Dmitriy Volkogonov. Govorukhin in his film »Russia that we lost« says that we suffered losses 10 times greater than the Germans. Ruts koy said – 14 times greater. Believe me, all such statements contradict the archival documents of the General Staff.” (*Itogi* 19, 10 May 2005).

The researchers who try to approach the problem of Soviet military losses objectively and try to understand the discrepancies in official publications, are accused of falsifications (see Osipov 2010). Meanwhile, back in the jubilee year of 1995, I had a chance to meet Krivosheev and his team at a public dispute at the State Public Historical Library in Moscow. When Krivosheev announced the official figure of losses, calculated by him and his employees, I asked outright for his school grade in arithmetic. The general was sincerely indignant and, foaming at the mouth, began to prove that he graduated from school with a gold medal. The audience shushed me saying that the question was improper. I objected to this by giving an example of the losses of the Central Front in the Kursk defensive operation in July 1943, to prove at least a three-fold underestimation of losses in the collection *Grif sekretnosti snyat* (“The secrecy stamp is removed”). The audience was shocked, and Krivosheev and his colleagues were confused. Only a few minutes later, one of the co-authors, the late Captain of the 1st rank, Michael V. Filimoshin, who directly counted the losses in the Great Patriotic War, and to whom I had previously given the same example with the Central Front in private conversation to prove the absurdity of their calculations, rushed to the microphone and shouted in confusion that they could not be responsible for the figures which had been once mentioned by someone in reports. Nevertheless, the co-authors of the book *Grif sekretnosti snyat* continue to claim that the total figure of 8,668,400 dead is the true figure for the losses of the Red Army during the Great Patriotic War. They refuse to accept any criticism because they have to accomplish a certain ideological task.

However, Krivosheev’s figures may easily be refuted by the information contained in his own book. On 5 July 1943, at the beginning of the battle of Kursk, the troops of the Central Front numbered 738,000 people, and during the defensive battle from 5 to 11 July, they lost 15,336 killed and missing, and 18,561 wounded

and sick. At the same time, the German Army Group Center took 6,647 prisoners in the first decade of July, and 5,079 in the second decade (see “AOK/Ic POW Summary Reports...”). Almost all of these prisoners were taken before 12 July, and all were from the Central Front. Given this, the number of killed should be about 4,000 people, which is clearly too small as for over 18,000 wounded. By the time the Red Army went on the offensive to Orel, on July 12, the composition of the Central Front’s troops had hardly changed: one tank brigade had arrived and two rifle brigades had left.

However, these two rifle brigades did not go anywhere. The 226th Rifle Division was formed from the 42nd and 129th Rifle Brigades, which remained a part of the Central Front. And the number of divisions in Rokossovskiy’s front did not change due to the fact that the 132nd Rifle Division, which suffered heavy losses, was withdrawn from the Central Front (and from the field, in general) for re-organization (*Boevoy sostav* 1972, 162–163, 191–192). Taking into account the fact that its surviving ordinary personnel were most likely used to strengthen the remaining divisions, it may be assumed that the number of troops of the Central Front practically did not change due to changes in its composition. The tank brigade then numbered 1,300 people, and the 132nd Division, withdrawn for re-organization, likely did not have much more than 1,300 people.

Taking into account these calculations, by the beginning of the Orel operation on 12<sup>th</sup> July, the Central Front should have had approximately 704,000 personnel. However, at that time there were only 645,300 troops under Rokossovskiy (*Rossiia i SSSR v voynakh XX veka. Poteri vooruzhennykh sil* 2001, 285–286). This means that the true losses of the Central Front in the defensive battle of Kursk ran to at least 58,700 more than official statistics claim, and the bulk of the underestimation is due to irrevocable losses. The total losses of the Central Front in the period from 5 to 11 July may be estimated at 92,600 people. If we assume that the underestimation of losses was related only to irretrievable losses, then the latter are underestimated by about 4.8 times. And this is only provided that the troops of the Central Front did not receive reinforcements from march units during the defensive operation. If such replenishment had been received, then the real losses should have been even higher (the neighboring Voronezh Front received replacements during the Kursk defensive battle) (see Ivanov 1973, 22). Such a large number of people could not immediately desert or simply disappear into the unknown even in the conditions of fierce fighting.

Another example concerns the defense of Odessa, which lasted from 5 August to 16 October 1941. The official figures for the Soviet losses in this operation are 16,578 killed and missing, and 24,690 wounded and sick (*Rossiia i SSSR v voynakh XX veka. Poteri vooruzhennykh sil* 2001, 310). However, it is known that during the battle for Odessa, the Romanian army took about 16,000 prisoners (Axworthy, Scafeș, and Crăciunoiu 1995, 58; The figure of 16,000 prisoners captured by the Romanians in the battle for Odessa is confirmed by the fact that when Romania officially annexed Transnistria (Odessa region) in 1943, 13,682 natives of Transnistria were released from captivity; see Shneer 2003, 222–223. There is no doubt that most of them were captured during the battle for Odessa. In addition, 3,331 Soviet soldiers, mostly natives of Transnistria, escaped from Romanian captivity, see Axworthy, Scafeș, and Crăciunoiu 1995, 217).

It is absolutely impossible that for over two months of fighting, the defenders of Odessa lost only 578 killed. If we take into account that, according to the report of Vice Admiral F. S. Oktyabrsky to Stalin on 23 August 1941, the troops of the Odessa defense region lost an average of 800–1000 people daily (Yunovidov 2011, 406), then the total losses for 72 days of the defense may be estimated at 64,800 people, which is 23,532 more than given by the official data. According to K. M. Simonov, in one of the documents he found data that the Primorye Army lost 33,367 wounded from 12 August to 15 October (Simonov 1996, 496). Then irrevocable losses may be estimated at 31,400 killed and missing. The number of killed may be estimated at 15,400. I note that this estimation is close to one made by the Romanian and British historians. Mark Axworthy and his Romanian co-authors, Cornel Scafeș and Cristian Crăciunoiu, using the Romanian documents and the testimony of the prisoners, estimate the Soviet losses during the siege of Odessa at 60,000 people (Axworthy, Scafeș, and Crăciunoiu 1995, 58).

The third and fourth examples are connected with the battle of Berlin. As stated in Krivosheev's book, the losses of the two Polish armies during this battle were 2,825 killed and missing, while the irrevocable losses of all the Soviet troops, including the Polish armies, were 81,116 people (*Rossiia i SSSR v voynakh XX veka. Poteri vooruzhennykh sil* 2001, 307). However, the official Polish data show that the irrevocable losses of the two Polish armies in the Berlin operation amounted to 7,200 killed and 3,800 missing, which gives irrevocable losses of 11,000 people, i.e. 3.9 times greater than the official Russian statement (*Vklad Pol'shi* 2005, 34). It can be assumed



that the irretrievable losses of other troops participating in the Berlin operation were also underestimated in the same proportion. Given that, they should amount to about 316,400 people, which probably exceeds the irrevocable losses of the German troops opposing the Soviet troops during the Berlin operation, because the main part of the German troops surrendered to the American-British troops.

Marshal Ivan S. Konev likewise stated in the conversation with the American historian and journalist Cornelius Ryan, that his 1<sup>st</sup> Ukrainian Front alone suffered “in the entire battle from the Oder to Berlin and with my southern flank going toward the Elbe... 150,000 killed” (Ryan 1966, 321). Ryan’s book was firstly published in 1966, and Marshal Konev till his death in 1973 has never denied those data. However, in Krivosheev’s book there are only 27,580 killed and missing among the troops of the 1<sup>st</sup> Ukrainian Front during the Berlin operation (*Rossiya i SSSR v voynakh XX veka. Poteri vooruzhennykh sil* 2001, 307). If the official data about the irrevocable losses of the two other Soviet fronts, the 1st and 2nd Byelorussian Fronts, which also took part in the Berlin operation, were underestimated on the same scale as the irrevocable losses of the 1st Ukrainian Front in comparison with Konev’s data, i.e. 5.4 times, then the Soviet irrevocable losses, without the two Polish armies, may be estimated at 425,800 killed and missing.

In July 1966, the Soviet writer and journalist, Daniil Kraminov, published an article in *Pravda*, devoted to the criticism of Ryan’s book “The Last Battle”. However, Kraminov neither denied the fact of Ryan’s meeting with Soviet military leaders, nor the information about the Soviet losses during the Berlin operation which Konev had revealed to him (Kraminov 1966, 2). This fact proves that the figures given in Ryan’s book were reported by Konev. Had it been otherwise, Kraminov would have surely noted that the Marshal had never given Ryan any information about the Soviet losses. Kraminov was an experienced journalist who was in close contact with Western colleagues, and he understood that Ryan probably recorded the conversation, maybe even on a tape recorder, and an American translator was most likely present during the conversation. Therefore, it was useless to refute what was written in Ryan’s book. This could only cause an even greater public scandal.

The official data about the irrevocable losses of the Red Army during the Great Patriotic War so dramatically underestimate the real losses because the Soviet commanders of all levels were interested in underestimating their units’ losses in killed and missing (especially the latter, because some of them were defectors and prisoners), and sent unreliable reports to the commanders of higher level. They may

have been punished for the high level of the losses, but not for the underestimation of the losses.

Soviet irrevocable losses during the Great Patriotic War were first registered at the level of platoons and companies. The personal lists of killed were transferred daily to the battalion and regimental levels. In the archives we may find only regimental, divisional and higher levels of reports, because the primary lists were not kept. There were both personal and numerical records of the losses in the Red Army. The regiments sent the reports on casualties times a month, both regarding the number of casualties and personal lists of casualties. The divisions sent the reports on the number of casualties to the army headquarters six times a month, and personal list of casualties three times a month to the General Staff (NCOs and officers), and to the People's Commissariat of Defense (officers). The armies and fronts sent the reports on the number of casualties every ten days. The General Staff sent the reports of casualties to the Stavka every month. Those missing in action (MIA) should have been included in the reports only five days after they were missing. However, in reality MIA were registered with significant delay, if at all. The personal records were very poor because many soldiers, especially those who were conscripted directly into the units, had no identity cards or identification marks ("dog tags") (see Skvortsova 2010, 228–232). In many cases these conscripts were not identified by their company commanders before their death and the fact of their death was not recorded, so they were considered MIA. The same problem occurred with reinforcements from march units arriving at the front just before fighting. In many cases these soldiers were not identified by their company commanders and were considered MIA. Typically, the army and front reports underestimated the irrevocable losses even as compared to the divisional reports.

According to incomplete army daily reports (there is no information about the losses for May 6), the losses of 31st Army of the 3rd Byelorussian Front in May, 1944, amounted to 360 killed and 1,100 wounded. According to the army headquarters' month report, the losses were lower – 279 killed, 883 wounded and another 25 people – non-combat irrevocable losses (see the estimates in the journals of the 31st Army: Central Archives of the Ministry of Defense of Russian Federation, hereinafter TsAMO, Funds 386, Inventory 8583, File 368, Shtab 31 Armii. Zhurnal boevykh deystviy. May m[esya]ts. 1944 god [Staff of 31st Army. Combat Journal. Month May. 1944]; pp. 1–60.; TsAMO, Funds 241, Inventory 2593, File 352, Shtab 31 Armii. Zhurnal boevykh deystviy. May m[esya]ts. 1944 god [Staff of 31st

Army. Combat Journal. Month May 1944]; pp. 1–49; TsAMO, Funds 386, Inventory 8583, File 367, Zhurnal boevykh deystviy. Aprel' 1944 g. [Staff of 31st Army. Combat Journal. April 1944], pp. 1–82). The 31st Army had allegedly no MIAs at all, which is hard to believe. For example, on 1 May, the Germans counterattacked the Protasovo stronghold, occupied earlier in the morning by the units of the 10th detached penal battalion. According to official data, the battalion's losses amounted to 65 killed and 79 wounded. At the same time, it is said that only a few survivors of the battalion were left. It may be assumed that a significant part of the surrounded penal troops were captured or disappeared. In May 1944, the 31st Army received 12,145 replacements, of which only 417 people were sent for combat support and to rear units. In April, there were only 2,706 replacements, with reported losses of 413 killed, 1 missing, 3 non-combat irretrievable losses and 981 wounded. At the same time, the numerical composition of the divisions of the army on 1 April 1944 was: 220th Rifle Division – 3,490 people, 192nd – 3,340, 331st – 3,602, 88th – 3,546, 152nd UR [*Ukreplennyi Rayon*, fortified area] – 4,126 people, and in total – 17,524 people. By 31 May, the numbers for divisions of the 31st Army had changed as follows: 192nd – 4,467 people, 88th – 4,833, 331st – 5,968, 220th – 7,009, 152nd fortified area – 4,458 people, 174th Rifle Division – 4,203 people, 62nd – 4,867, 352nd – 6,087, 173rd – 5,986 people. Thus, the 4 divisions that were part of the 31st Army on 1 April, by the end of May, amounted to 26,735 people, i.e. increased by 9,211 people. In April, these divisions and fortified area reported 241 killed, 1 missing and 2 non-combat irretrievable losses, as well as 538 wounded, to a total of 782 people, and received a replenishment of 2,396 people. In May, these divisions and the fortified area lost 160 killed (the 152th fortified area allegedly lost only 22 killed, which is clearly underestimated, since just the 10th detached penal battalion, which was part of it, lost at least 65 people killed in the battle for Protasovo on 1 May), 547 wounded, and had irrevocable non-combat losses of 8 people, so a total of 715 people were lost. In May, these divisions and fortified area received a replenishment of 8,974 people. Accordingly, by the end of May they should have numbered 27,397 people, and yet they numbered only 26,735 people. Most likely, the difference of 662 people is due to unreported irrevocable combat losses. According to the report of the 31st Army headquarters, the irrevocable losses of these formations in April and May 1944 amounted to 412 people. The real irrevocable losses, most likely, amounted to 1,074 people, i.e. they were 2.6 times higher. Note that

during these two months, the front line of the 31st Army did not move, there could be no unaccounted conscription directly to the units, and the losses were many times lower than during large operations, so underestimation of losses in April and May 1944 should be far smaller than, for example, during the operation 'Bagration'.

While historians of the conservative-patriotic direction enthusiastically and extremely uncritically accepted the figures of the Krivosheev's group, the historians of the liberal-democratic direction are simply afraid to criticize them, so as not to undermine the "patriotic consciousness of the people". According to the Petersburg historian and journalist Vyacheslav A. Krasikov, the Russian public, as far as can be judged not only by the results of opinion polls, but also by uncensored discussions on the Internet forums, craves at least illusory moral compensation, acknowledging any myth about "our glorious and victorious past". Even among the civil historians of the so-called liberal-democratic orientation, who advocated extreme objectivity ten to fifteen years ago, voices can be heard that "such an approach [so-called patriotic one – B.S.] is temporarily necessary, because the people are tired of the »terrible truth«", especially about the Great Patriotic War. Krasikov also stresses that in the Soviet times the data were repeatedly published according to which about 3 million Communists and more than 4 million Komsomol members died at the front. given that, it turns out (if accepting the figures in Krivosheev's book) that non-party members, who made up 60 percent of all conscripts, died 5 times less often than Communists and Komsomol members, a conclusion that is quite absurd (Krasikov 2010).

Igor I. Ivlev, a Russian historian, military archaeologist and searcher for the burials of the Soviet soldiers, believes that the total irrevocable losses of the population of the USSR in the Great Patriotic War amounted to 41,979,417 people, including 19,413,169 military personnel. These figures became practically semi-official for the "Bessmertnyy polk" movement ("The Immortal Regiment"), backed by the Kremlin (see "Parlamentskiye slushaniya"; Lemutkina 2017). According to Ivlev's estimate, based on the regional Memory Books of Russia and the CIS countries, as well as on official digital information about those who did not return from the war for some CIS and Baltic countries, 40,700,000 people were called up into the armed forces of the USSR. In the Memory books, according to Ivlev, "irrevocable losses of military personnel are taken into account in the amount of almost 17 million people." Ivlev believes that in the Memory books the number of soldiers, who really did not return, but were not registered,

is more than 15 percent, so the total number of soldiers, who did not return and were registered in the Memory Books (16,946,478) should be increased by 15 percent (2,541,972) – to 19,488,450 people. However, if the Memory books underestimate the number of dead and not returning, it is logical to assume that they also underestimate the number of people mobilized, especially those who were mobilized directly by the units.

Ivlev estimates the total number of all citizens of the USSR on 1 July 1945 at 169,809,524 people and the total population decline from mid-1941 to mid-1945 at 52,812,657. He also estimates the natural death rate for the war years at 10,833,240, which gives the total irrevocable losses of the army and the civilian population at 41,979,417 people (Ivlev 2017 (1); Ivlev 2017 (2); Ivlev 2017 (3); Ivlev 2017 (4); Ivlev 2017 (5)). In my opinion, Ivlev's estimate of the Red Army's losses in killed and deceased at 19,413,169 people is significantly understated, due to the underestimation of the number of conscripts mobilized directly to the units, and that of 400,000 people additionally conscripted into the Red Army in April 1941. Also Ivlev's estimates of the number of people sent to labor camps, at 436,600, and the number of the released POWs who were not mobilized for re-enlistment in the Red Army at 949,304 people, seem to be significantly overstated. Most likely, many of these categories of military personnel actually ended up in the ranks of the Red Army in one way or another. Ivlev's estimate of the total population losses of the USSR in the Great Patriotic war at 41,979,417 people seems close to reality, although it is somewhat excessive due to the overestimation of the actual birthrate during the war.

My own estimation of the irrevocable losses of the Red Army during the Great Patriotic War is based on the data about the irrevocable losses of the Soviet Armed forces by month in 1942, and about the number of wounded by month in percentage of monthly average level for the whole war in 1941-1945. I have assumed that November of 1942 was the month when the Soviet losses in POWs were the lowest in the whole year, and the irrevocable losses of the Red Army were counted with the greatest precision. I have subsequently divided the number of the killed by the number of wounded in November 1942. The received proportion of 5,000 killed to 1 percent of the average monthly number of wounded has been used for all the months of the war. Next, the numbers for the deceased in prison and some non-combat losses have been added to the sum while subtracting the number of MIA who were neither killed nor captured. The result is 26,900,000 killed and deceased in the Red Army during the Great

Patriotic War 1941–1945. I have corroborated this figure by analyzing the data from the Soviet population censuses concerning the male and female surplus in the conscripted age cohorts of 1941–1945. I have also estimated the number of killed and deceased among the Soviet civilians, using the data about the population size at the beginning and at the end of the Great Patriotic War, as well as the data regarding the natural increase and decrease of the civilian population. The total Soviet losses in killed and deceased comprise from 40,100,000 to 40,900,000. Hence, the Soviet civilian population losses may be estimated at 13,200,000 – 14,000,000 people. The ratio between the numbers of killed in the Red Army and Wehrmacht is about 10:1 in favor of the German side (see: Sokolov 2014, 467–492; Sokolov 1996, 152–193). Rather often the irrevocable losses of one Soviet rifle division were greater than the irrevocable losses of one German Army which units fought with that division. For example, on 12 July 1943, the Soviet 95th Guard Rifle Division lost 946 killed, 729 missing and 1,649 wounded, for a total of 3,326 men (*95-ya gvardeyskaya Poltavskaya* 2016, 47). And the German 4th Panzer Army, whose units fought the 95th Guard Rifle Division in the period from 11 to 20 July 1943, lost 1,400 killed, 244 missing and 4,081 wounded, for a total of 5,725 men (see “Heeresarzt 10-Day Casualty Reports...”). The irrevocable losses of the Soviet 95th Guard Rifle Division for 1 day are higher by 33 killed and missing than the irrevocable losses of the German 4th Panzer Army, which had 10 divisions, for 10 days.

Igor I. Ivlev, in one of the variants of his calculations, believes that the losses of the Soviet Armed Forces may amount to 21,000,000 killed and missing. The last figure was generated in the following way: the total number of the death notifications passed on to the families of the Arkhangelsk region by the local military commissariats, excluding those listed as MIA, who later emerged alive, exceeded 150,000. Under Ivlev’s estimation, about 25 percent of such notifications were never received by the military commissariats. There are 12,400,900 death notifications from the People’s Commissariat of Defense and from the Navy’s People’s Commissariat in all the military commissariats of the Russian Federation, including 61,400 notifications regarding the killed and missing among the officers and troops of the Border Guards, and 97,700 regarding the killed and missing among the officers and men of the NKVD’s Interior troops. Subtracting these, that leaves 12,241,800 notifications applicable to the officers and men of the Red Army. Ivlev believes that approximately 200,000 of these notifications are duplicates or concern persons who were not actually dead. Hence,

without these notifications, there are 12,041,800 unique notifications in the Russian Federation. If the share of notifications that were not delivered to the military commissariats was practically the same as their share in the Arkhangelsk region, then the total number of unique death notifications, excluding those of the Border troops and the NKVD Interior Troops, may be estimated at 15,042,000. In order to estimate the number of unique death notifications for the former territory of the Soviet Union outside the Russian Federation, Ivlev treats the share of conscripts from the Russian Federation as equal to the share of Russians in the Red Army, which he estimates on the basis of Krivosheev's book to be 72 percent. Thus the other Soviet republics had only about 28 percent of all the conscripts and 5,854,000 unique death notifications. Then the total number of unique death notifications regarding officers and troops of the Red Army equals 20,905,900, and with the addition of the death notifications from the Border Troops and Interior Troops, this number rises to more than 21,000,000 people (see Ivlev 2011 (1); Ivlev 2011 (2); Ivlev 2011 (3); Ivlev 2011 (4)).

However, it is incorrect to use the share of 72 percent for the number of unique death notifications in the Russian Federation. Rather, it is more correct to use the information about the share of the Russian Federation's population relative to the total Soviet population as of 1 January 1941, which amounted to 56.2 percent. However, one should exclude the population of the Crimean Autonomous Region, which was given to the Ukraine in 1954, and include the population of the Karelian Soviet Republic, which became part of the Russian Federation in 1956. Given that, the share of the Russian Federation falls at around 55.8 percent (Kozhurin 1991, 26). The total number of unique death notifications should be estimated at 26,960,000. Adding the notifications of the Border or Interior troops, and excluding the number of emigrants from the list of the MIA, we may arrive at the final number of 26,990,000 killed, deceased or MIA. This figure practically coincides with our estimate of the human losses in the Soviet Armed Forces which amounts to 26,900,000 people.

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