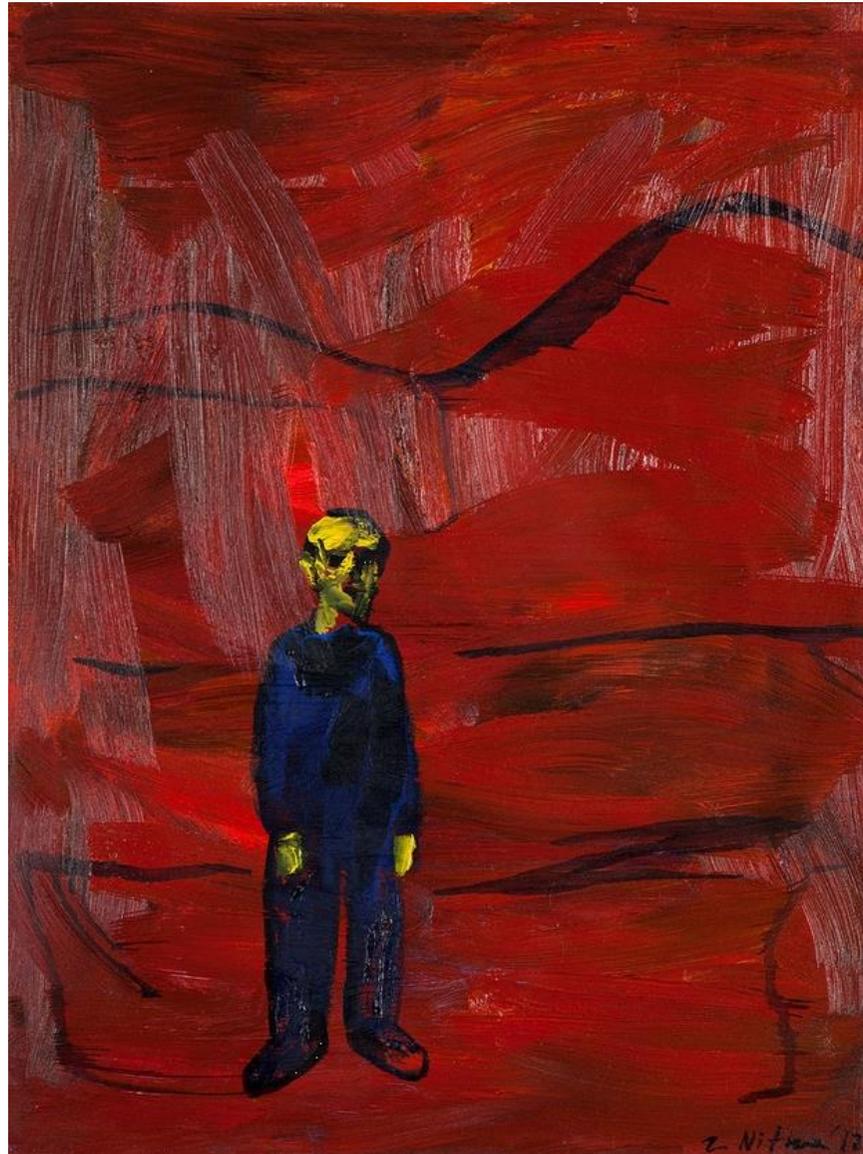


**Krinik in Khurbn - Pages 261 (end) - 269**



*Drawing courtesy of Zdzisław Nitka*

# נִקְמָה

## Annotation:

This chapter, written while still under the impression of the unspeakable horrors and trauma to which the author was subjected, is entitled "Nekome".

Nekome is a Yiddish term that has its roots in the Hebrew "Nakam"; it is commonly translated as "revenge" or "retribution". However, I am convinced that this translation is inadequate in its meaning and scope when it comes to defining such a multi-faceted term.

However, out of respect for the complexity of the term and since I am aware that the term "Nekome" underwent a shift in meaning in isolated instances in later years, I will refrain from translating it at this point.

(Beate Schützmann-Krebs)

## Nekome

Page 261/ 262

Eyn farlang hobn mir itst! nekome!

nekome far undzere tates und mames. far undzere brider un shvester, velkhe zaynen geshtorbn mitn vort „nekome“ oyf zeyere lipn!

nokh akht teg zikh opruen, hobn mir, a grupe yidn un kristn, zikh gemoldn tsum frantsoyzishn ofitsir, velkher iz geven komendant fun dem shtetl mit a bite, az mir viln frayvilik arayntretn in der shtotisher politsey, vayl mir viln khapn

We have one desire now! Nekome!

Nekome for us and our fathers and mothers; for our brothers and sisters who died with the word "nekome" on their lips!

After resting for eight days, we, a group of Jews and Christians, reported to the French officer, who was the commander of the little town, and asked to be allowed to voluntarily join the French police to catch our murderers. The officer

<p>undzere merder. der ofitsir hot dos glaykh bashtetik. s'iz geshafn gevorn a politsey fun dreysik man. yeder hot bakumen gever, ver a biks un ver a revolver.</p>	<p>immediately agreed. A police <b>force</b> of 30 men was created. Everyone was given weapons, either a rifle or a revolver.</p>
<p>di ershte oyfgabe iz geven reyn tsumakhn di arumike velder fun natsis. yedn tog hot men gebrakht gefanfene soldatn. undzer oyfgabe iz geven ibertsugebn ale gefangene in di hent fun di frantsoyzn. ikh mit mayne tsvey khaveyrim hobn bashlosn tsu dershisn yedn gefangenem vos es vet zikh undz nor makhn. in etlekhe teg arum iz gekumen a militerisher rabiner, velkher hot zikh mit undz farnumen.- nemt nekome far undzere brider un shvester- hot er undz gezogt.</p>	<p>The first task was to clear the surrounding forests of Nazis. Every day, captured soldiers were brought. We had the job of handing over all the soldiers to the French. My comrades and I decided to shoot each captive when we had the chance. After a few days, a military Rabbi came, taking care of us. "Take nekome for our brothers and sisters," he said.</p>
<p>di ershte vos es hot zikh undz ayngengebn tsu khapn zaynen geven tsvey SS-merder fun Oyshvitser lager. dos iz geven farnakht. mir hobn shoyn marshirt fun vald in shtetl arayn. plutslung trefn mir tsvey SS-mener lign un shlofn geshmak. mir bashlisen zey tsu shisn nit oyfvekdik zey. geredt un geton. a drik dos tsingl. trakh. un bayde lign shoyn in a kaluzhe blut.</p>	<p>The first ones we managed to catch were two SS murderers from the Auschwitz camp. It was at night. We were already marching from the forest into the town, when we suddenly came upon two SS men lying there, sleeping comfortably. We decided to shoot them without waking them up first. No sooner said than done. A press of the trigger, bang, and they were both already lying in a pool of blood.</p>
<p>mir geyen gemitlekh vayter. dos iz geven undzer ershter nekome-akt. mit yedn tog zaynen mir gevorn dreyster un mutiker. di tsivile bafelkerung hot gelebt in toyt-shrek. di gasn un heyfn zaynen say batog, say banakht, geven pust. yeder klenster farlang undzerrer iz derfildt gevorn in etlekhe minut.</p>	<p>We walked on leisurely. That was our first act of nekome. Every day we became bolder and braver. The civilian population lived in mortal fear. The streets and yards were empty both during the day and at night. Every smallest demand on our part was immediately met.</p>
<p>in etlekhe teg arum hob ikh derkent oyf der gas dem lager-firer fun Doytmergen, velkher iz gegangen ongeton in tsivile kleyder. im hobn mir bashlosn nisht tsu shisn. dos iz a tsu laykhter toyt.</p>	<p>After a few days I recognized the camp leader of Dautmergen on the street, who was walking in civilian clothes. We decided not to shoot him, because this death would have been too easy.</p>
<p>far alemen hobn mir im oysgeton naket un arayngezetst in turme. di gantse nakht hot men zikh gemisht oyf tsu shlogn im.</p>	<p>We stripped him naked in front of everyone and locked him in jail. All night long he was beaten by people taking turns.</p>

**Page 263**

<p>yeder hot zikh gelernt boksn... akht azeyger inderfri hot er oysgehoykht dem letstn otem.</p>	<p>Everyone learned to box... At eight o'clock in the morning he breathed his last.</p>
<p>in tsvey vokhn arum hot men mikh mit nokh tsvey khaveyrim ibergeshikt in a</p>	<p>After two weeks, I together with two comrades were sent to a village to take</p>

dorf, az mir zoln dort vern di balebatim.

glaykh vi mir zaynen ahin gekumen, hobn mir farnumen dos shenste hoyz fun dorf. mir hobn bakumen tsvey mototsiklen tsu der reynikungs-arbet, velkhe mir hobn gedarft adurkhfirn in di arumike derfer.

dos ershte hobn mir arestirt ale gevezene soldatn, velkhe hobn zikh ibergeton in tsivil-kleyder. di soldatn flegt men avekshikn oyf arbet keyn Frankreykh.

dos iz geven inmitn nakht. mir drey firn finf soldatn in shtetl. di soldatn zaynen gebundn eyner tsum andern. ale geyen zey tsufus. mir forn. ven mir zaynen gekumen in mitn vald hobn ale finf ongehoybn tsu loyfn tsvishn di gedikhte tsvaygn, in der fintsterkeyt. mir hobn zikh shnel gekhapt tsum gever un oysgeshosn ale koyln in der fintsterkeyt. mir hern nont fun undz a veynendik krekhtsn. mir geyen tsu. ale finf lign farflokhtn in tsveytn. drey zaynen toyt. tsvey- shver farvundet.

mir bashlisn tsu brengen di farvundetze in shtetl un meldn der militerisher komendatur vegn fal. biz mir hobn di tsvey gebrakht in shtetl, iz shoyn eyner geshtorbn oyfn veg. mir hobn es gemoldn un tsu morgns hot men ale finf bagrobn in vald.

mir hobn bakumen a farordenung fun komendant arumtsuforn iber di arumike vegn un gefinen ale dershosene khaveyrim. di velkhe men hot gekent brengen tsu kvure oyfn besoylem hobn mir gegeben a farordenung di poyerim zey optsufirn in shtetl. di andere velkhe me hot shoyn nit gekent rirn fun ort, hobn mir baerdikt oyfn plats.

nokh drey khadoshim frayen, shturmishn leben, gezetikt mitn gefil fun nekome, hot men undz ale drey farufn in yustits-ministryum. men hot undz forgeshlogn tsi mir viln onemen di arbet fun geheym politsyantn un ufzukhn ale natsis, velkhe mir kenen. mir hobn glaykh ongenumen dem forshlag mitn grestn fargenign.

der leytenant velkher hot zikh mit undz farnumen iz aleyen...

over the rule there.

As soon as we got there, we took the most beautiful house in the village. We were given two motorcycles for our "cleaning work" that we were to do in the surrounding villages.

The first thing we did was to arrest all the former soldiers who had put on civilian clothes. They were usually sent to work in France.

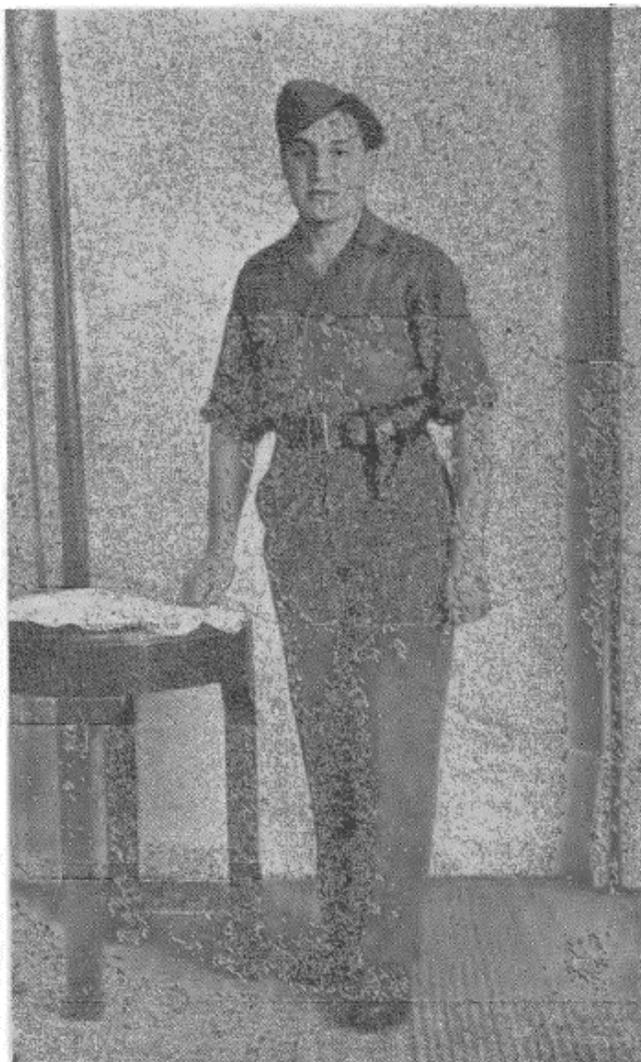
There was one incident during the night. The three of us were bringing five soldiers to the little town. They were tied together, walking on foot. We were driving. When we reached the forest, all five fled in the darkness among the dense branches. We quickly drew our weapons and shot all the bullets into the darkness. Near us we heard a whimpering croak and went there. All five were lying there, entangled with each other. Three were dead and two seriously wounded.

We decided to bring the wounded to the town (**village**) and report the case to the military command. Before we had brought the two to the town, one of them had already died on the way. We reported it, and the next morning all five were buried in the forest.

We received an order from the commandant to drive over the surrounding roads to find all the comrades who had been shot. In accordance with our order, those who could be taken to the Jewish cemetery for burial had to be taken by the peasants to the small town. The others, who could not be moved from the spot, we buried in their place.

After three months of free, tumultuous life, saturated with the feeling of nekome, all three of us were called to the Justice Ministry. There we were proposed to take over the work as secret police officers and to search for all Nazis known to us. With the greatest pleasure we immediately accepted the proposal.

(see page 265...)



אלם סאלראט אין דער פראנצויזישער פאליציי

*caption: As a soldier in the French police*

Pages 265

(der leytenant velkher hot zikh mit undz farnumen iz aleyn...) geven gefangen finf yor in Bukhenvald un derfar hot er undz ongezogt tsvey verter (1) velkhe mir veln eybik nisht fargesn:

gedenkt di letste verter fun undzere brider un shvester!

mir hobn zikh genumen aktiv tsu der arbet. yeder politsey-instants hot undz gedarrt tsu hilf kumen. yeder fun undz hot gehat mototsikl un gekrogn a gehalt. mir forn fun dorf tsu dorf un arestirn yedn fardekhtikn yungn mentshn, onemdik im far an SS.

di arbet iz undz gegangen mit derfolg. mir hobn gefunen fil farshtelte SS oyf velkhe mir hobn gemakht onklages. oykh hobn mir zikh dervust fun eynem an SS-man, az men hot undz gevolt oyfraysn ven mir zaynen arayn in sheyer. men hot es geshtelt tsu opshtimung un mit finf shtimen iz bashlosn gevorn undz nit umtsubringen. der lager-firer hot durkhoys gefodert men zol oyfraysn dem sheyer tsuzamen mit undz.

oykh dem ofitsir velkher hot gegeben dem bafel baym dershishn di 22 partizanen hobn mir gekhapt. dos iz geven in ban. mir hobn im derkent un glaykh arestirt. er hot gekrogn toyt-shtrof durkhn militerishn gerikht.

di arbet iz far undz geven a derkvikung. keynmol nisht tsu shver. tog un nakht oyf di fis.

eynmol bin ikh avekgefornt keyn Shtuttgart, in der nord-amerikaner bazetsungszone. glaykh vi kh'bin arop fun ban hob ikh derkent a gevezenem untersharfirer fun di SS, velkher iz gegangen ongeton in tsivile kleyder. dos iz geven eyner fun di shreklehste sadistn. a volga-daytsh velkher hot gelebt in ratnfarband.

im hob ikh bashlosn glaykh tsu arestirn un ibergeben der amerikaner Si.A.Si.(2) in di hent. kh'hob opgeshtelt a militerishn oyto un mir zaynen avekgefornt in der hoypt-kvartir. dem merder hot men glaykh arayngezetst in bunker. ikh bin arayn

The lieutenant who spoke to us had himself been a prisoner in Buchenwald for five years, and so it was him who gave us deep-felt (1) words that we will never forget:

Remember the last words of our brothers and sisters!

We actively set to work. Every police authority had to come to our aid. Each of us had a motorcycle and received a salary. We drove from village to village, arresting every suspicious young person we thought was an SS man.

Our work was met with success. We found many SS men in disguise, against whom we filed charges. We also learned from an SS man that they wanted to blow us up at that time when we went into the barn. There had been a vote, but thanks to five votes against, it was decided not to kill us. The camp leader, however, had at that time very well demanded to blow us up together with the barn.

Also, we grabbed the officer who had given the order to shoot the 22 partisans. This happened on the train. We recognized him and arrested him right away. He was given the death penalty by the military court.

The work was refreshing to us. Never too hard, although we were on our feet day and night.

Once I went to Stuttgart, in the American occupation zone. As soon as I left the train, I recognized a former "Unterscharführer" of the SS in civilian clothes. He was one of the most terrible sadists; a Volga German who lived in the Soviet Union.

I decided to arrest him immediately and turn him over to the hands of the U.S.CAC (2). I stopped a military vehicle and we went straight to the headquarters. The murderer was immediately detained in the bunker. I went in

<p>tsum ofitsir velkher iz geven a yid un im gemoldn, az kh'hob gebrakht a merder velkher hot farpeynikt tsendliker yidn.</p>	<p>to the officer, a Jew, and reported to him that I had brought a murderer who had tormented dozens of Jews.</p>
---	---

(1) lit.: "two words"

(2) U.S. CAC = United States Army Combined Arms Center [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United\\_States\\_Army\\_Combined\\_Arms\\_Center](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Army_Combined_Arms_Center)

**Page 266 and 267**

<p>der ofitsir hot mir geheysn brengen nokh mentshn, velkhe kenen deroyf eydes zogn. ikh bin glaykh avek in lager un genumen zeks khaveyrim, velkhe zaynen geven in lager Doytmergen un hobn dem merder gut gekent. elf azeyger hot zikh ongehoybn di oysforshung. der ofitsir hot undz farbotn mir zoln im shlogn, nor dan ven er vet undz heysn...</p> <p>men hot arayngefirt dem merder. glaykh vi er hot undz derzen, iz er gevorn veys vi kalkh. hent un fis hobn im getsitert. der ofitsir fregt im tsi er veyst vos es badayt „kni-boygn“? -yo, ikh veys,-iz geven der entfer. -nu, zets zikh.</p> <p>der merder hot zikh gezetst oyf „kni-boygn“, ober nisht azoy vi er flegt dos ton mit undz. hobn mir im gevizn vi men darf dos ton...</p> <p>der ofitsir hot im fargeleyent di onklage, velkhe mir hobn kegn im gemakht. der merder leyknt. er veyst fun gornit, dos iz alts a lign. er iz gor nisht geven in der SS. er iz nor geven a gefangener rusisher soldat in a gefangenen-lager...</p> <p>oysherndik di reyd fun merder zaynen mir gevorn oyfgetreyslt vi er redt dos mit aza zikherkeyt. az er iz gor nisht der vegn vemen men redt do. di oysforshung hot zikh getsoygn biz tself azeyger. etlekhe mol hot im der ofitsir geshtelt dem revolver tsu der shleyf un er entfert alts dos zelbe, az er veyst fun gotnisht.</p> <p>yeder fun undz hot im gegebn tsu por klep un dos hot oykh nisht geholfn.</p>	<p>The officer instructed me to bring in people who could testify to this.</p> <p>I immediately left for the camp, taking six comrades with me who had been in the Dautmergen camp, knowing the murderer well. At 11 a.m., questioning about the crime began. The officer forbade us to hit the <b>defendant</b> unless he ordered us to...</p> <p>The murderer was led in. As soon as he saw us, he turned as pale as lime. His hands and feet were trembling. The officer asked him if he knew what "knee bends" meant. "Yes, I know", was the answer. "Well, get started!"</p> <p>The killer began to do knee bends, but not in the way he had instructed us to do. We showed him how it had to be done...</p> <p>The officer read him the charges we had brought against him. The murderer denied. He knew nothing about anything, it was all lies. He had never been in the SS and had only been a captured Russian soldier in a prison camp...</p> <p>Listening to his speech, we were shocked at how confidently he made this statement. As if it were not him who was being talked about. The hearing dragged on until 12 noon. Several times the officer put his revolver to his temple, but the defendant always answered the same, that he knew nothing.</p> <p>Each of us gave him a few blows, but that didn't help either.</p>
---	--

-nu oyb du vest itst zikh nisht untershraybn oyf der onklage, vel ikh dikh ibergebn in di hent fun yidishe lager un zey veln mit dir ton vos zey veln nor veln, hot tsu im gezogt der ofitsir mit a shrayendik kol.  
dan hob ikh im nokh gezogt, az ven mir veln im hobn in undzere hent, veln mir im di tsung opshnaydn un zalts onshitn.

terrn hobn zikh im bavizn in di oygn. er iz oyfgeshtanen un mit a tsiterdiker hant untergeshribn di onklage.  
in etlekhe teg arum hot men im ibergegebn der rusisher N.K.V.D.(1) tsuzamen mit der onklage...

in etlekhe teg arum hobn mir vider gekhapt eynem a rusishn merder, velkher hot gedint der daytshisher makht. im hobn mir shoyn aleybn batsolt far zayne merderayen.  
der ruf tsu nekome iber di merder fun undzer eybik geroydeft folk iz gevaksn fun tog tsu tog. kh'hob derfild in zikh a dursht nokh natsish-bestyalisher blut. mit yedn derhargenen SS-man, hob ikh gefild a derlaykhterung in mayn shvern gemit.

akh, ven undzere zeks milyon farpeynikte kedoyshim voltn gezen vos fun di „oybermener“ iz gevorn! vi pakhednish zey shteln on di oygn, betndik bay undz gevezene heftlinge, rakhmim far zeyer velfish (2) leben.

di groyzamkeyt(n) fun lager-leben hobn oysgemekt rakhmim-gefiln fun yidishe hertser.  
a toyt dem soyne!- dos iz gevorn der shtral fun glik, vos hot baloykhtn mayn aynzam leben oyf der blut-ongezafter daytshisher erd.

**tsum glik hob ikh shpeter bagegnt mayn khaverte un lebns-bagleytern, Rokhele Zakheim. nokh fil shverikeyt n hobn mir zikh dershlogn keyn Uruguay, vu mir hofn fortsuzetsn a normal, fray, mentshlekh leben.**

"Well, if you don't sign the indictment now, I will give you into the hands of the Jewish camp, and they will do whatever they want to you," the officer shouted at him.

I then added that if we had him in our hands, we would cut out his tongue and pour salt **on the wound**.

With tears in his eyes, he stood up and signed the indictment with a trembling hand.

After a few days, together with the indictment, he was handed over to the Russian NKVD (1).

After a few days, we caught another Russian murderer who had served the German power. We ourselves paid him his wages for his murderous deeds.

The call to nekome on the murderers of our eternally persecuted people grew day by day. Deep inside, I was feeling thirst for the blood of the Nazi beasts. With each SS man killed, I felt a relief on my deeply laden mind.

Oh, if only our six million holy people could see what has become of the "supermen"! How fearfully they turn their eyes on us, begging us, the former prisoners, for mercy for their lives as beasts! (2)

But the cruelty of camp life has erased feelings of indulgence from our Jewish hearts.

"Death to the enemy" - this had become the ray of happiness capable of illuminating my lonely life on the blood-soaked German earth.

**Fortunately, I later met my friend and life partner, Rochele Zakheim. After many difficulties, we made our way to Uruguay, where we hope to live a normal, free and humane life.**

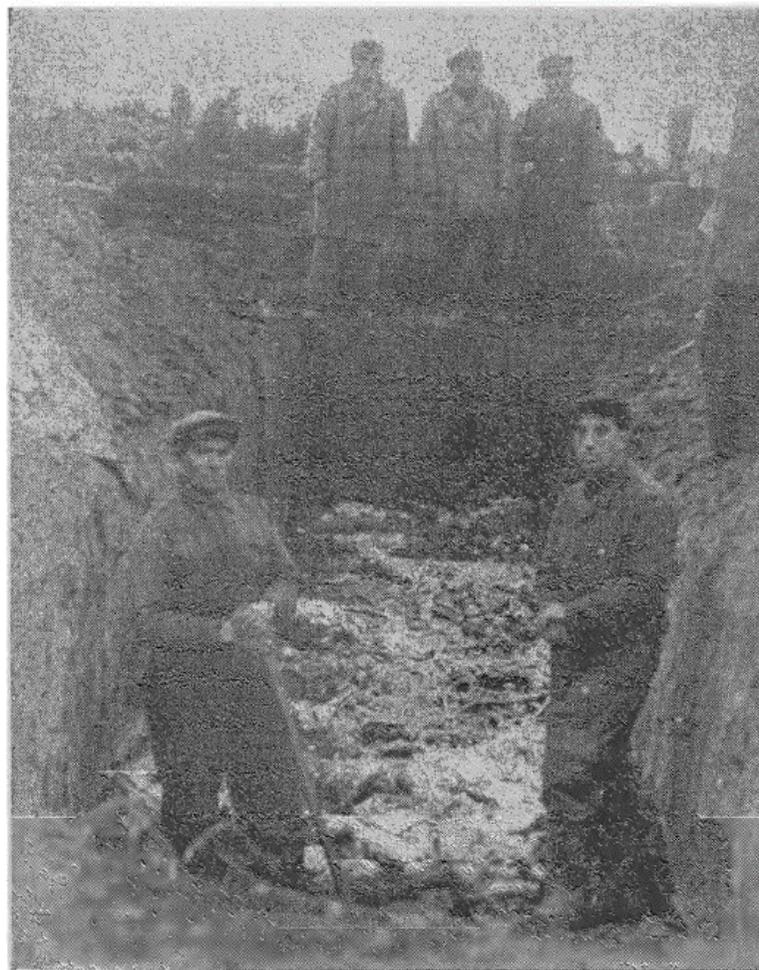
(1) NKVD = The People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs, the interior ministry of the Soviet Union, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NKVD>

(2) lit. "wolves"



די עסקומאציע פון די 32 קדושים, ביי שמערל דעם קאטליער אויפן הויף, הורכנעפירט דורך  
שמואל וואַלף, אין דער באַגלייטונג פון דעם נייעם קאָמענדאַנט אין קרינקי,

*caption:* The exhumation of our 32 holy people in the yard of "Shmerl the Kotlier", carried out by Shmuel Wolf, accompanied by the new commandant in Krynki



אויפן בית-עולם פארן באערדיקן די קרינקער קדושים

*caption:* At the Jewish cemetery, before the burial of our holy people from Krynki



קבר־אחים לחללי הטבח של ערב־פסח תשי"ב, שברחוב בית־  
המרחץ, עת נפתח למען העבירים לבית־הקברות היהודי הכללי  
עקסהומאציע פון די קדושים, וואָס זענען אומגעקומען בעת  
דער שחיטה ערב פסח, תש"ב.

*This photo I found in the other Yizkor Book, Krynica Wieś, with this capture: "Exhumation of the holy people who perished during the massacre on the day before Passover, in the year 5702" (1942).*