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## Blindness at the New York Times

My great-grandfather, both grandfathers, and one aunt, were killed during NKVD interrogations in the newly Stalinized Lithuania. Eight of my blood relatives were deported to Siberia to work as slave laborers, one of whom died there. My grandmother, at the age of 81, was deported to Siberia to be a lumber-jack! They were all criminals. What was their crime? They owned small family farms--nothing else!

To commemorate their suffering, and the suffering of many millions across Eastern Europe, at the hands of Stalin, I organized the HOPEandSPIRIT program and project.

Today is the 60 year anniversary of Stalin's death. When he died, the New York Times editorial staff already knew of the secret agreement between Hitler and Stalin, the Ribbentrop-Molotov pact of August 23, 1939. This pact directly led to the start of World War II, when Hitler invaded Poland on September 1, 1939.

The New York Times obituary of March 6, 1953, entitled "Stalin rose from Czarist oppression to transform Russia into a mighty socialist state", the following passage appears:

"He (i.e., Stalin) abruptly abandoned his advocacy of collective security in 1939, when he about-faced and signed a mutual nonaggression pact with Nazi Germany. It led to World War II, into which Russia later was drawn by Hitler's attack on her."

The statement "It led to Word War II" indicates that the editors fully understood that it was only because of this secret pact that Hitler invaded Poland. It was with Stalin's active cooperation that Hitler was empowered to invade Poland. However, this is only a brief expression, neither fully, nor adequately explained, and dwarfed by the remaining six pages of adoration.

In 1951 and 1952, US Congressional committees investigated and reported about Stalin's mass-murder in Katyn, Poland, of over 22,000 Polish officers. Certainly the editors of the New York Times read the news and knew of Stalin's barbarism. Yet, none of this information appeared in the obituary.

In 1951 and 1952, in US and Canada, within the Lithuanian emigrant community, the mass murder, mass deportations, and genocide committed by Stalin were well known and well documented. The same applied to most other Eastern European emigrant nationalities. Surely the New York Times editors had knowledge of the extent of these infamous events. None of this information appeared in the obituary.

Instead, on March 6, 1953, they wrote a 6 page, letter-sized, single-spaced, 12 point type size, obituary revering Stalin! There was no mention of his mass murder, mass

imprisonment, mass deportation, or mass starvation campaigns! There was no mention of any of the 20 million deaths that Stalin was responsible for.

60 years later, yesterday, the New York Times carried a brief op-editorial piece written by Mr. Samuel Rachlin.

For my entire adult life I have wondered why very few people living in Canada and the United States know about Stalin's atrocities. Now I have learned at least part of the answer. This ignorance is due, in part, to the lack of news worthiness of institutions such as the New York Times, or maybe more correctly: the news blindness of these institutions.

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