

September  
39

# END ERLANDS

## Brotherly help

October 1939, Vilnius residents listening to a lecture on life and work in the USSR



### Allies

Heinz Guderian during a conversation with the political commissioner Borowiński on the demarcation line between German and Soviet armies

cupation meant bloody rule in the Borderlands, arrests by the NKVD, deportations to labor camps, and compulsory exiles of hundreds of thousands of people. Point 2 of the secret pact concluded by Ribbentrop and Molotov stated that „the question of whether it would be in the mutual interest to maintain an independent Polish State and what the borders of this state would be, could only be finally clarified in the course of further political events” and that “in any case, both governments will settle this question in a friendly agreement.” It literally meant that Hitler and Stalin would not fight for us. They would just share us impassively. Even the Polish government did not react uneasily to the official document. After all, they could have guessed that if the two powers sign a non-

aggression pact without having a common border, it means that they have just established such border be-

### Passportization

From November 1939, Polish citizens were forced to hand over documents issued by „former Poland” and to accept new papers confirming the citizenship of the USSR. It was a so-called passportization. People who did not receive a Soviet passport or refused to accept documents confirming foreign citizenship were arrested or deported to labor camps.

tween themselves. Two days after the Red Army entered Poland, London „The Times” hinted at the agreement on the partition of Poland on August 23 in Moscow. On September 17, while the Red Army was spreading across Poland, the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs informed the Polish ambassador in Moscow that „the Republic of Poland ceased to exist.”

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### Arrests and executions

NKVD arrested 110,000 Borderlands residents, regardless of their nationality. So far, it has not been established how many of those arrested were executed and how many were deported. About 20,000 parliamentarians, landowners, industrialists, and other representatives of the elite of Polish society were sent to prisons.

In September 1939, 250,000 Polish soldiers were taken prisoner by the Soviets. The officers were under the „custody” of the NKVD. Prisoners of war were imprisoned in three camps: Kozielsk, Starobielsk, and Ostashkov. Their executions lasted over a month in several NKVD headquarters and in a recreation center owned by the police. over 22,000 soldiers and civilians were killed with a shot in the back of the head from a German Walther pistol.

### Enlisting in the Military

Two military drafts had been carried out in the Borderlands: One in autumn 1940 and one in spring 1941. Up to 210,000 men aged 20 to 23, born between 1917 and 1920 were enlisted into the Red Army. Most of them died during the battles with Germany during the great patriotic war.

