By HARRISON E. SALISBURY

Twenty-three years after the event, Soviet sources have finally disclosed details of the autopsy and other medical reports on the death of Hitler.

An exhaustive Soviet inquiry established positively, according to a book to be published today, that Hitler’s death was due to cyanide poisoning. Identification of the body was made through detailed examination of dental evidence.

The Soviet version of Hitler’s death contradicts earlier versions, including those of William L. Shirer and H.R. Trevor-Roper. Both historians concluded that Hitler shot himself and that Eva Braun, his mistress, whom he had married the day before, poisoned herself.

The Soviet reports, suppressed completely by Stalin and to an extent by his successors, have been compiled by Lev Aleksandrovich Bezynensky, a former Soviet intelligence officer and translator and historical journalist. They are being published here today, under the title “The Death of Adolf Hitler,” by Harcourt, Brace & World, and are being published simultaneously in Europe. The price here is $3.50.

Mr. Bezynensky’s account confirms evidence, long known in the West, that Hitler died on April 30, 1945, in his Reichachancellery bunker in Berlin with Eva Braun.

What had not been previously known was that a Soviet counterintelligence team found the bodies believed to be those of Hitler and Eva Braun on May 5 in a shell crater where they had been put in a shallow grave.

The Smersh team was headed by Lieut. Col. Ivan I. Klimenko, chief of counterintelligence with the Soviet 7th Rifle Corps. “Smersh” is a

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BODY IDENTIFIED BY DENTAL RECORD

Book to Be Published Today Contradicts Earlier View That He Shot Himself

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name by which Soviet counterintelligence forces were known colloquially in World War II and is an acronym for the Russian words “smerch shpionam,” which mean “death to spies.”

On Hitler’s instruction, according to historians, the two bodies were burned with gasoline in the shell crater.

The bodies, badly charred, were taken from the crater adjacent to the bunker, wrapped in blankets and placed in wooden boxes along with the bodies of two dogs found in the same shell crater. They were transported, the counterintelligence headquarters of the Soviet Third Shock Army at Buchen, a northern Berlin suburb, the Bezymensky account says.

A topflight Soviet medical team, headed by Dr. Faust I. Shkaravski, chief of forensic medicine for the Byelorussian Front, was assembled at Berlin-Buch, where the bodies of the Goebbels family and that of Gen. Hans Krebs, Acting Chief of the German Staff, had also been transported. All of the bodies came from the Reichschanzlelery bunker.

The forensic team performed autopsies on each body, examining those that proved to be Hitler’s and Eva Braun’s on May 8. The corpse believed to be Hitler’s was badly burned. However, the medical examiners recovered fragments of a potassium-cyanide capsule from the mouth. They found no sign of wounds on the corpse but part of the skull was missing. Part of a cyanide capsule was also found in the mouth of the Braun corpse.

The verdict of the Soviet post-mortem was that death in both cases had been caused by cyanide poisoning.

Jaw Well Preserved

The upper and lower jaws of the corpse believed to be Hitler’s were well preserved. The jaw bones, teeth and den-
what had happened to Hitler.

Mr. Bezimensky believes that Stalin first kept the evidence secret in order to use it in case of any trick, should someone try to masquerade as Hitler.

Smersh was ordered to check the possibility that Hitler could somehow have escaped from Berlin. If it took into custody everyone it could find who had been in the bunker or close to Hitler — his adjutant, Otto Gunsche, his pilot, Hans Bauer, and the chief of the bodyguards, Wilhelm Mohnke. They apprehended Linke, and a bodyguard named Harry Mengenhausen, who had witnessed the burning of the bodies, and many others.

held Prisoners for Years

These individuals were interrogated again and again. They were held secretly in prison in the Soviet Union for years. As late as 1951, they were still being questioned by Smersh and were being compelled to sign new detailed declarations about Hitler's last moments.

In the end, Stalin never divulged a word of the evidence. It was locked in the archives along with the charred jawbones, the dental work, the charts, the photographs and possibly even the remains of the corpses. The full record, even now, has not been published in the Soviet Union. Although Mr. Bezimensky has written several popular works dealing with the last days of the Third Reich and has included excerpts from some key documents.

In fact, he spoke cryptically to Prime Minister Churchill and President Truman at the Potsdam Conference in July, 1945, as if he did not know with Hitler's jaws and teeth in a box, searching for dental specialists to complete the examination.

Now, the volume published today presents the full text of the Hitler autopsy, the autopsy of Eva Braun and the Goebbels family, photographs from Soviet archives of the bones, the charred bodies and extensive extracts from the interrogation.

According to an official of Hazcourt, Brace & World, Mr. Bezimensky, with the knowledge of the Soviet authorities, sent his manuscript to Christian Wegner Verlag, a major West German publishing house in Hamburg. Wegner Verlag assigned the book and serial publishing rights to publishers in the United States, Britain, France and Italy.