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IX. TO THE MEMORY OF SIEVA DRANOVSKAYA
ODESSA
A COMRADE WHO FELL IN THE STRUGGLE

I. FOREWARD.

Previous numbers of this Bulletin have already been issued in Hebrew, Yiddish and German. The time has now come for the English press and public - both Jewish and general to be enlightened about one aspect at least of the Reign of Terror in Soviet Russia.

More than ten years elapsed since the Government and the Communist Party of Soviet Russia began their pitiless persecution of the Zionist Socialist Movement. During this period many thousands of our comrades have been arrested and exiled to the far corners of Siberia, Central Asia, etc., and hundreds of them are being tortured to this day in "politisolators" (special isolated prisons for political offenders) - in "exile"(places in Siberia, Asia etc., where they are sent for a term of 3 to 5 years and kept under the strict supervision of the G.P.U.)- in"concentration camps" (prisons where, together with criminal offenders, they are subjected to forced labour reminiscent of the Czarist regime)- and in "minus"(places outside - "minus" - of the political industrial centers of Russia, and outside the Ukraine and White Russia where the Jewish masses are concentrated.) Here the political "offender" is sent for 3 years, either directly after exile, or after serving both in "politisolator" and 3 to 5 years in exile. He may choose his place of settlement in "minus" but he is always under the supervision of the G.P.U.).

The news published in the general and Jewish press of English speaking countries shows a lack of understanding of the situation. In spite of the political difficulties that prevent the obtaining of accurate information in time, this Bulletin hopes to provide authoritative reports on the treatment of our own and other Zionist and Socialist factions in Russia.

We trust that this Bulletin will help to call public attention to the plight of the many comrades who, although they have been suffering for years at the hands of the Soviet Government, continue their activities in the face of ever-increasing persecution.

II. NEW ARRESTS

A vast number of new arrests have taken place among the Socialists in "minus" during last year. Among them were many who had just finished their term in exile and come to "minus". Because of the serious political situation in the country and the antagonistic attitude of the workers, the Government found it necessary to remove all Socialists of the Central Districts of Russia and to exile them again for many years into "politisolators." Those who suffered particularly were the Social Democrats(S.D.), the Zionist Socialists(Z.S.) and the Social Revolutionaries (S.R.). The following is a brief account of the sentences passed on arrested Comrades in Voroniez and Kursk, and of the arrests that took place in Saratov and other cities of "minus":

a) Sentences Passed on Comrades in Voroniez and Kursk.

VORONIEZ: On the night of August 18,1930, a search was made of all Comrades who belonged to the Zionist Socialist Movement. The search of one lasted the whole night. Nineteen Comrades were arrested, although no counter revolutionary material was found. They remained imprisoned five or six months before they received their sentence. Five of them were sentenced to 3 years in "politisolators," 14 were sentenced to 3 years exile into the far districts of Siberia, Ural, Kasakstan and Central Asia. These Comrades had already spent many years in prison, exile and "minus."

S E N T E N C E S

3 years in "Politisolators"

1. COMMISSAR, MORDECHAI(Z.S.): Arrested in Krementchug in the winter of 1922. The first of the Zionist Socialists to be sent into exile. Passed through prisons, Solovki(a "concentration camp" on an isolated island in the White Sea), "politisolator" of Verchneuralsk, exile, "minus," and again prison, with but short interruptions. Very sick. Suffers with asthma. Altogether ..... 8½ years.
2. BRAILOVSKY, DAVID(Z.S.): Arrested in Yekaterinoslaw, April 1925. Prison and long "etape" (transfer of prisoners from one prison to another, with stops being made at intermediate prisons en route). 3 years of exile in the half wild district of Karakalpakya. "Minus" and again prison. In all..... 6 years.
3. OVSIEJEVITCH, ANATOLE(Z.S.): Arrested in Minsk on November 24,1925. Prison, exile, 3 years in "politisolator" in Verchneuralsk, "minus," prison. Altogether ..... 6-¼ years.
4. HALPERIN, MIRIAM(MANIA)(Z.S.): Arrested in Kief on April 18,1926. Prison, "politisolator" in Yaroslavl, "internal" prison of the G.P.U. in Moscow for participating in the Socialist demonstration of protest in "politisolator" Was sent into the Angara District(Siberia). From there into Enisejsk, then "minus" and prison. Very sick - tuberculous. Altogether ..... 5 years.
5. HALPERIN, BARUCH(Z.S.): Arrested in Cherson in February, 1926. Prison, exile, "minus" and again prison. Altogether ..... 5 years.

3 Years Exile in Ural

6. DR. LULKO, BATIA(Z.S.): Arrested in Vinitza in July, 1924. Prison, concentration camp in Solovki, "politisolator" in Verchneuralsk. After 3 years transferred for an additional 3 years into Uralsk.(Kasakstan), then "minus and again prison. Very sick. Altogether ...6-3/4 years.
7. GINSBURG, SIMON(Z.S.): Arrested in Moscow March 16,1926, when but 17 years old. Prison, 3 years exile, "minus" and again prison. In all 5 years.
8. PINDRIC, JACOB(Z.S.): Arrested in Poltava in 1926. Prison, 3 years exile, "minus" and again exile. Altogether ..... 5 years.
9. GILEADI, ZOJA(Z.S. "Hashomer Hazair" - an organisation of young Zionist Socialists): Arrested in 1926. Prison, 3 years in Kirgisia, "minus,", prison. Altogether ..... 5 years.
10. WEINSTEIN, ABRAHAM(Z.S. "Hashomer Hazair"): Arrested in 1925. Prison, one year in "politisolator," 3 years exile, "minus" and prison. In all 6 yrs.

3 YEARS EXILE IN KASAKSTAN.

11. MOROS, ALEXANDER (Z.S.): Engineer. Arrested in Kief in 1926. Prison, 3 years exile in Siberia, "minus," prison. Altogether...5 years.
12. ROTSTEIN, HERZ (Z.S.): Leader of the Jewish Labour Co-operative Association in Rostov. Arrested in Rostov in 1926. Prison, 3 years exile, "minus," prison. Altogether .....5 years.
13. NOVIKOV, JOSEPH (Z.S.): Arrested in Tchernigov in 1926. Prison, 3 years exile in Siberia, "minus," prison. Altogether ..... 5 years.
14. POKROY, DINA (Z.S. "Hashomer Hazair"): Arrested in Moscow in 1928. Prison, exile and again prison. Altogether ..... 3 years.
15. SHLIMOVITZ, MORDECHAI ("Hechalutz"): Arrested in 1926. Prison, 3 years exile, "minus" and prison. Altogether .....5 years.

3 YEARS OF EASTERN SIBERIA

16. VIGDERSON, ABRAHAM (Z.S.): Arrested in Homel in 1924. Prison, concentration camp in Solovki, 2½ years in "politisolator," 3 years in exile in Kasakstan, a year and a quarter of which was spent in a place in the desert 120 kms. from Kara Karalinsk, near the border of China, "minus" and prison. Altogether .....7 years
17. GUSHANSKAIA, GALIA (Z.S.) Arrested in Kharkof on September 2, 1924. Prison, 3 years of "politisolator", 3 years of exile, "minus" and again prison. Altogether .....6½ years
18. DAIENMAN, BATIA (Z.S. "Hashomer Hazair"): Arrested in 1926. 3 years exile in Kasakstan, "minus" and prison. Altogether .....5 years
19. KARABTCHINSKY, ZAIMAN (Z.S.): Arrested in Poltava in January, 1925, Exiled to the district of Zyrian. Severely beaten by the Tzekists in Izma (the notorious execution in Izma). In August, 1926, arrested and sentenced to "politisolator". A year later exiled into one of the farthest spots of the Turukhansk district, the village of Dubinskoye. Fell sick (skarbut) and transferred to Eniseisk, then "minus" and arrest. Altogether .....6 years.

Arrested again in KURSK August 18, 1930. Released after a hunger strike in order to undergo an operation (trepanation of the skull). Arrested again in January 1931, in Voroniez and sentenced to be exiled to Ural for a period of 3 years.

NOTE: All the Comrades were sent away on the 21st of February to the above mentioned districts. The Comrades who were sentenced to "politisolators" were sent to Moscow. On the 2nd of March they were sent away from the Moscow prison to the "politisolator" in Tzeliabinsk. Only one - Nisan Levin - was sent free after 5 months in prison, and was permitted to leave Russia.

K U R S K: On the night of August 18th a search was also made of Comrades who were in "minus" in Kursk. No suspicious material was found there either, but nevertheless 13 Zionist Socialist Comrades were arrested among them the mother of a small child. The Comrades in Kursk also remained imprisoned five or six months before they received their sentence.

S E N T E N C E S

3 YEARS IN "POLITISOLATOR"

20. NOVAKOVSKI, NISAN (Z.S.): Arrested in 1926. Prison, 3 years exile in Kasakstan, "minus" etc. Altogether..... 5 years
21. CHASANOV, AARON (Z.S.): Arrested in Moscow in August, 1926. Prison, 3 years exile in Kirgisia, "minus" etc. Altogether ..... 5 years

3 YEARS EASTERN SIBERIA

22. SHAPIRO, HANNA (Z.S.): Arrested in Moscow in August, 1926. A member of the Central Committee of the "Hechalutz" Organization. Prison, 3 years in exile in the Narim district, "minus" and prison. In all 4½ years
23. NAIDA, BELA: Arrested in Moscow on March 16, 1926. Prison, 3 years exile in Ural, "minus", etc. Altogether .....5 years
24. DUSOWITZKI, BORUCH (Z.S.): Journalist, Arrested in Kharkof on March 15, 1926. Prison, 3 years of exile in Ural, "minus" and prison. In all 5yrs.
25. KRITZEVSKI, MENDEL (Z.S.): Arrested in Moscow on March 16, 1926. Prison, 3 years of exile in Narim district, "minus," prison. In all 5 years.

3 YEARS IN CENTRAL ASIA AND KASAKSTAN

26. KUTZIN, ABRAHAM (Z.S.): Arrested in Minsk, 1924. Prison, half a year concentration camp in Solovki, 2½ years in "politisolator," 3 years exile in Kasakstan, "minus" and prison. Altogether .....6½ years.
27. KRIMKER, MOSES (Z.S.) Peasant of the Jewish Colony, Great Sda-Menucha. Arrested there in 1926. 3 years exile in Turkestan, "minus," prison. Altogether .....5 years.

28. ZEMLINSKI, JACOB(Z.S.): Arrested in 1926. Prison, 3 years of exile, "minus" and prison. Altogether ..... 5 years
29. RUBINOW, MEIR(Z.S.): Arrested in Romni in 1927. 3 years of exile in Central Asia and Chiva, "minus" and prison. Altogether ...4 years.
30. VITAVER, SHMUEL("Hechalutz"): Arrested in 1927. 3 years of exile, "minus" and prison. Altogether .....4 years.

NOTE: Comrade Jacub Hirsh was sentenced to only 6 months of imprisonment. He was permitted to leave Russia. All those sentenced to exile were sent to their destination on January 15, 1931. The Comrades Novikovsky and Chasanov, sentenced to "politisolator," are still in prison.

b) ARRESTS IN SARATOV AND OTHER CITIES OF "MINUS"

1. SARATOV: a) On December 23, 1930, fourteen members of the Zionist Socialists and the "Hashomer Hazair" were arrested. They were taken to prison from the G.P.U. quarters and placed in separate cells. Prison conditions were hard in the extreme. Fifteen minutes of exercise were permitted but once in eight days. The prisoners declared that they would answer no questions until they were given a common cell, permitted exercise daily, allowed to receive books etc. This declaration was met with threats and menaces, but the prisoners stood firm. When the prosecutor arrived, they repeated their demands. He promised to comply, but this promise was not kept. In protest the Comrades organized an "obstruction." Promises were again made and again remained unfulfilled.

On February 3, 1930, the Comrades organized a second "obstruction." The G.P.U. investigator placed one of them - Nechamtchick - in solitary confinement. Nechamtchick refused to leave his cell, but was forced to do so by warders and soldiers. In solitary confinement he continued his "obstruction" until released.

The following questions were asked of the prisoners: Had they visited one another? Had they interested themselves in the trial of the "Industrial Party? "Had they gathered in the Municipal Gardens? Had they any connection with the Left Socialist Revolutionaries, etc.? They wanted to force the Comrades to issue a declaration that they were leaving the Z.S. party. Comrade Pessee Zilberman was questioned nine hours at a stretch, from nine in the evening until six the next morning.

b) On December 8, 1930, twelve Georgian Social Democrats were arrested in Saratov.

2. CHEMKENT (Kasakstan): On October 12, 1930, a search was made of the quarters of all Zionist Socialist political exiles. Nothing suspicious was found. Nevertheless, several comrades were arrested. After a month's imprisonment, Comrade P. Silist was transferred from Chemkent to the village Suzak, near the town of Turkestan.

3. LENINGRAD: Comrade Himmelsteib was arrested early in November, 1930, on the charge of belonging to the "Hechalutz."

4. M O S C O W: a) In November, 1930, and on January 16 and 19, 1931, about 20 persons were arrested on the charge of belonging to the "Hechalutz."

b) On December 10, 1930, Comrade L. Yampolska was sentenced by the G.P.U. to 3 years exile in Central Asia.

Note: This sentence represents a new departure in G.P.U. methods. Comrade Yampolska, who was suspected of belonging to the "Hechalutz" had not even been arrested.

5. ASTRAKHAN: On December 24, 1930, Comrade Steinberg and Dr. Sherman were arrested. A few days before, the well-known Georgian Social Democrat, Sedor Rameshvili, had been arrested with various Georgian Federalists.

6. VORONIEZ: About January 10, 1931, 36 Social Democrats who were in "minus" were arrested, included some who had returned from exile only a few days before, and sent to prison.

7. P E R M: Early in January, Social Democrats and Left Social Revolutionaries were arrested. Comrade Werher White (Left S.R.) was transferred to the Sverdlovsk prison on February 13, 1931.

8. KHARKOF: In the middle of January several people, accused of belonging to various Zionist Youth organizations and to the "Hechalutz" were arrested.

9. KANSK REGION (Siberia): At the end of January, 1931, 18 Comrades were arrested at different places in this region. They included members of various Zionist Youth Organizations, Zionist Socialists, Social Democrats and Social Revolutionaries. On February 14th they were all trans-

ferred to the Krasnoyarsk prison, and within a surprisingly short time were sentenced to exile in the Turukhansk District(Siberia).As navigation on the Yenisei River will not open until the end of June, all the arrested will remain in prison until then.

10. SWERDLOWSK: On the 22nd of February,1931, two Social Democrats,Lubinow Simeon and Jacobson, were arrested. At the end of 1930 Dr. Zarchi, famous bacteriologist, was arrested. He was accused of attempting to develop a bacilla for poisoning the troops

11. TASHKENT: a)On February 6,1930, the G.P.U. made searches of all exiled Zionist Socialists, but nothing suspicious was found.
b)In September,1930, the G.P.U. requested all the exiled Zionist Socialists,Social Democrats and Georgian Social Democrats, to come to headquarters and demanded that they sign a declaration to the effect that they are not allowed to be members of Trade Unions or other Associations. They were told that if they would not sign they would be summoned to court. However, the exiles would only sign that they had read the declaration.

III.COMRADES SENTENCED TO CONCENTRATION CAMPS July 1930.

Comrades Sima Zeitlin, Sonia Khutoretzky, Skolnik, Chaim,and a fifth whose exact name we do not know, were sent to Bolshoye Michalovskoye,a village on the outskirts of the District of Akmolinsk, in Kasakstan. There, until December 1929, they were able to procure food and lodging from the peasants, for which they paid.

Then compulsory collectivization commenced. The bread supply of the peasants ran low and they were forced to tell the Comrades that they could have no bread, even for money. The Comrades requested bread cards of the local authorities, but were refused. In protest they stated that they would not come to the G.P.U. to register. They were immediately arrested,and accused of resisting the village policy of the Soviet Government and undermining the foundations of collectivization.

Two months later these Comrades were transferred to the G.P.U. dungeons in Akmolinsk. Their case was referred to the headquarters of the G.P.U. in Moscow and on July,1930, they were sentenced for three years to concentration camps for "undermining the foundations of collectivization." Comrades Zetlin, Khutoretzky, and a third Comrade,were sent to the camp at Alma-Ata, and Shkolnik and Chaim to the one at Kara-Karalinsk, both in Kasakstan. August,1930, with an "etape" on their way to Alma-Ata, Comrades Zeitlin, Khutoretzky and the third exile,passed through the Tashkent prison. The severity of prison life there, and the treatment of the Administration, forced them to declare a hunger strike, which lasted six days. At the end of the strike they were ordered to continue with the "etape" They refused. Half naked they were forced out of their cells and taken to the railway station from where the "etape left.

These Comrades, as well as Shkolnik and Chaim, were all between the ages of 21 and 23, and had already been in prison and exile for three years.

The G.P.U.,under pressure of the world-wide Socialist movement, which had been strongly stirred by the killing of Socialists in the Solovetzky Concentration Camp (December 1923),desisted from sending political prisoners to these camps, and at the beginning of 1925,transferred them to the "politisolators." During the past year, however,the G.P.U. again began sending political prisoners to the Concentration Camps, on the ground that they had given criminal offence.(It should be mentioned that hitherto even in Solovki political prisoners were under a separate regime, that is, they were not sent to forced labour, etc. However,they were now in all respects reduced to the status of criminal offenders).

IV. HUNGER STRIKES.

a) PAVLODAR: In March,1930, an investigation of employes in the Soviet institutions was made, resulting in a general clean-up.Penina Grundfest(Z.S.-"Hashomer-Hazair), who was working in a Soviet institution, was accordingly summoned to appear before the "Cleansing" Com-

mittee. After a series of questions, it became apparent that she was a political exile. She was asked to explain the aims of the Zionist Socialist Movement and why they were persecuted by the Soviet Government. She answered briefly, and finished with the words, "I do not believe that the methods and prisons of the Soviet Government will enable Russia to attain Socialism." Her words made a great impression on the listeners. The Commission immediately stopped her, declaring that she was turning the session into a free political platform for counter-revolutionary propaganda. A few days later, on March 30th, agents of the G.P.U. came to Penina Grundfest and to other Zionist Socialist exiles,(Elkin, Melnik and Meltzer) and arrested them. The Comrades requested the G.P.U. to give reasons for their arrest. The G.P.U. did not answer them. Four days later, they declared a hunger strike and demanded their release. The strike lasted from April 4th to April 13th.G.P.U. Investigator Lipkin came daily to the prison to persuade them - with jeers and threats - to end their strike. However, the Comrades declared they would not cease until they were released from jail. On the eighth day of the strike,Lipkin promised to free them on condition that they immediately end their strike.The Comrades would not agree to this. Lipkin then appealed to a woman exile of the S.R.Party and asked her to use her influence with the Comrades. She succeeded and they stopped their strike. On April 13th three Comrades were temporarily released - Elkin, Melnik and Meltzer. They were required to register each day at the offices of the G.P.U. Penina Grundfest, however, was not released. The Comrades came to demand her release, but Lipkin told them that her case had been sent to Moscow for consideration. "I do not accuse her of purposely coming to the investigation with any ulterior motives, but I do accuse her of holding a counter-revolutionary speech." Penina Grundfest remained in prison until October,1930. The G.P.U. withdrew permission for her to go to Palestine, and she has now been exiled to the village of Kolpashevo, District of Narim, Siberia.

b)CHELIABINSK: Comrade Dan Walter was released from "politisolator" where he had served three years. When the "etape" brought him to the Cheliabinsk prison, the Administration kept him there,together with other Georgian and Armenian Socialists, for a number of months.The exiles protested against this, requesting that they be transferred at once to the new place of exile. Their protests did not help. Comrade Walter declared a hunger strike on July,1930, that lasted ten days. A number of exiles struck with him in sympathy, and at the end of the ten days he was sent to the new place of exile - Village Lubinino, District of Yrkutsk,Siberia.

c) K U R S K: On August 23,1930,Comrade B. Dusovitsky appealed to the G.P.U. to free his sick wife who had been arrested with him on August 18,1930.The G.P.U. refused and Comrade Dusovitzky declared a hunger strike in protest, which lasted 12 days. On the 8th day of his strike he became so weak that the G.P.U. was forced to take him to the prison hospital. On the 12th day, when Comarade Dusovitsky learned that the doctor had been instructed to feed him forcibly, he ceased his strike.

V. LIFE OF AN EXILE IN KUBAN(NORTH CAUCASUS.)

"After a three years exile in Ural,I was forced to go in "minus" for an additional three years. I went to Krasnodar, North Kuban.I Could obtain no work because the Government employment exchange - where 15,000 unemployed were registered - would send only members of the Trade Unions. By chance I found temporary work as an economist and statistician in a Soviet office. When at the beginning of 1929 a clean-up of Soviet offices was made in Krasnodar, I too was discharged,together with a Left S.R. I applied to the Central "Cleansing" Commission, requesting the elementary right of work. Nine months later I received a negative reply. The Central Commission, confirming the action of the local "Cleansing"Commission,stated that I, as a member of the Zionist Socialist Party,could not be permitted to work in Soviet, Co-operative and Economic Offices. Such an exclusion from work in Soviet offices makes it impossible for those discharged in "clean-up." to procure remunerative work. I remained unemployed for one year.

Then began the Five Year Plan. The peasants were severely oppressed. The Soviet Government mobilized the members of the Communist Party, the "Comsomol" (Organisation of young Communists), and the Trade Unions, to force the peasants to provide bread. Kuban, as an agricultural district, rebelled against this demand. In the years 1929 and 1930, it sowed a smaller area than any other district of Russia. Many peasants left their villages, organized partisan bands, and coming down from the mountains, attacked the troops and agents of the G.P.U. In February, 1930, the bands succeeded in holding Piatigorsk and Kislowodsk for two days. Prices on all living commodities rose. The lines before the Co-operative stores grew steadily longer. After a year of unemployment, and after much suffering, I found work in a Soviet agricultural community near the largest Cossack village, Chernomorskaya, consisting of some 400 homes.

The entire procession of the "voluntary" collectivization passed before my eyes. At a general meeting held to establish a Soviet Agricultural Community Center the peasants did not attend, but sent their wives instead. The Communists put the question as follows: "He who is against the "Colchos" (a collective settlement) is against the Soviet Government." Under the heavy pressure of the Communists and the "Comsomol," who participated in the meeting, a "Colchos" was established. However, a few days later, the leaders of the "Colchos" were attacked and severely beaten by the peasants when they attemped to take their horses, cattle and poultry from them. Immediately a G.P.U. military division arrived. The peasants were beaten and arrested. Fourteen of them were brought to the Krasnodar prison and their entire possessions were publicly sold. I was obliged to leave the village and return to Krasnodar. I found that living conditions for the worker had grown ever worse. Half starved - compelled by the "Socialist Wager" to strain every nerve toward speedier production - the worker found himself sapped of his last bit of strength. At a meeting of the Local Soviet, a delegate who was secretary of a factory called the "Red Founder", guardedly observed that the worker should not be forced to work beyond his strength. As a result of this remark it was decided at the meeting to expel him from the Soviet. And as one leaning toward the "Right" he was also expelled from the Communist Party, and exiled.

When the trial of the "Industrial Party" was held in August, 1930, more than 20 professors of the Agricultural Institute of Krasnodar, and many of the local Intelligentsia, were arrested. Most of them were exiled, but the fate of some remains unknown to this day. The people are hungry and dispirited. Also the mass of communists are not satisfied with the policy of the Government and many such communists are exiled. Seventy-five per cent of the Communist Party in Krasnodar had to be renewed by the new Stalin "Communist" mobilization during the last year.

June, 1930, a second clean-up took place. Once more I was dismissed. I remained unemployed for five months until I left Russia."

VI. A "CLEAN-UP" DOCUMENT (An Exact Translation from the Russian)

N.K.R.K.I.(* R.S.F.S.R.(**

An excerpt from Protocol No. 51 from the Central Commission for "cleaning-up" the Soviet organisations. November 20, 1929.

33. For Hearing: The case of B.M. Rutman. Forbidden to work in Soviet, Co-Operative and Economic Organisations, as adhering to the Anti-Soviet element. (According to the decision of the G.P.U. sent to Siberia because of active work in the Zionist Socialist party).

33. Decision: Confirming the decision of the North Caucasus District Commission, Citizen Rutman is forbidden to work in Soviet, Co-operative and Economic Organizations.

Secretary of the Central Commission
of R.S.F.S.R. for "cleaning-up" the
Soviet Organizations.

(Signature)

(*Peoples' Commissariat for the inspection of the workers and peasants.

(**Russian Soviet Federation of Socialist Republics.

VII. IN THE SOUTH COLONIES

A Comrade of ours, who visited the Jewish Colonies, Yephingar and Great Sda-Menucha, in South Ukraine, writes us the following:

a) YEPHINGAR: February 10, 1931

"Yephingar is considered one of the largest Jewish Colonies. In 1926 its total population was 2400. Today it is 1300. Many homes are vacant. A large house can now be purchased for 600 rubles and even less - a sum which would scarecely suffice to buy two suits of clothes from a Co-Operative. Compulsory collectivization has laid the colony waste. The Jewish peasants, protesting, speedily left the place, going to Donbass (District of Donetz) and to the cities along the Volga. They also went to Caucasus with the hope of finding work near the railroad, Suchum-Noworosseysk, which is in the process of being built. Those who were skilled workmen went to Cherson and Nikolaief and found work in various workmen's associations there. Many of these colonists are now employed in the large steamship building yards of Marti, in Nikolaief.

What drove the peasants to leave their homes to wander and seek work in strange places? The intolerable methods with which compulsory collectivisation has been conducted. At the beginning, when the peasants saw that there was nothing for them to do but to join the Collective, they managed to kill their cattle first. As soon as Collectivization methods were changed somewhat and the pressure lessened a little, the majority left the Collective.

Farming on a partnership basis was next instituted. The local government promised to give the peasants advances on their wages, which were to be from two to four rubles a day, and a small quantity of bread. Peasants, together with their families, worked for months, some of them earning from 500 to 600 rubles. But they were paid not one ruble by the Government, nor did they receive any bread.

In August, 1930, a rebellion almost took place. All peasants in the fields stopped work. A representative of the Government, Klesterny, was called to the fields and the peasants demanded that he cease torturing the colony with hunger. Each peasant then took a sack of wheat. The mill - which had been closed the entire time - was opened for them and wheat was ground for a day and a night without interruption. After being half starved for months, the peasants were given bread which was scarcely enough to last them several weeks. In the Co-Operative no products could be bought - the managers had three times emptied it!

The majority of the youth has left the colony. Inhabitants between the ages of 18 to 35 are seldom seen. There have remained on the whole only the weak and the old, and the children. Where did the youth go? They went to study - some of them to the Jewish section of the Second University of Moscow, some to the Institute of Pedagogy and to the Technical Institute of Odessa, and some to other middle and higher colleges in Kharkof, Kief and Minsk. Thus we are faced with the sorrow of seeing our youth leaving the colony for a long time, and perhaps - who knows? - forever. There is no social life here. The Club of the Communist Youth is no longer lit at night. From 40 members there remain but eight. The one ray of light - the one glimpse of progress - may be found in the local seven-year school. The teachers there are devoted to the education and culture of their pupils.

The beginning of this year has brought a renewal of compulsory collectivization. A new tax of 10 "pood" (1 "pood" equals 16 kilogrames) has been placed upon the colonists who have not joined the Collective, although they had previously paid taxes three times. As the colonist does not own wheat, he must buy it in the city at the high market price. To do so he is forced to sell his all."

b) THE GREAT SDA-MENUCHA: January 25, 1931.

"Conditions in this colony are extremely strained. The colonists are again being forced to join the Collectives. They have no choice - they must join. If they do not, such heavy taxes are imposed upon them that they cannot possibly pay. They have not yet joined, but indications are that they will have no alternative but to give in and join.

A new order has been issued then. The colony must supply meat! Two cows are taken from each peasant. It is impossible to imagine what a blow this is, for these animals are their chief source of income today. Without milk the colonists will be unable to procure sugar, salt, kerosene, etc. They see no way out of their plight."

VIII. THE INQUISITION METHODS OF THE "MOBILIZATION OF MEANS"

Information has come to us from many cities and small towns in Russia about a series of new arrests. The Government is arresting not those in debt, but those whom it suspects of having means. A new watchword for the Five Year Plan - "Mobilization of Means!" This "mobilization" is conducted with extraordinary cruelty. We publish below a letter from Kief, received sometime ago. What it relates is so gruesome that it will be difficult to believe. We have, however, received new information which confirms this letter.

a) K I E F: The Government has seized in lieu of taxes all that still remained in the homes of many residents - even the beds. Lately searches were conducted which included even members of the Trade Unions. The searches and new arrests were explained on the ground that the Government needs large resources for the Five Year Plan. Government employes spy out those who still possess anything of value. Suspects are arrested and imprisoned by twos in narrow cells which at one time were called "stone sacks!" There is room enough for standing only - the prisoners cannot sit down. Here they are kept on an average of three days. They are not permitted to leave even to attend to their natural needs. They are allowed half a pound of bread a day, and no more. At the end of three days G.P.U. agents come and ask if they are ready to give up their hidden possessions. When the prisoner, in desperation, promises to do so if only they will permit him to go home, he is told that he must first write his wife or children instructing them to give up everything. Only then is he released from prison. When a prisoner refuses to divulge where his valuables are - or actually has none - the agents have a remedy for his stubbornness. Steam is poured into his cell, until through faintness and suffocation, he agrees to the demands of the G.P.U. and turns over all his possessions just to save himself. Bitter indeed, however, is the plight of the prisoner who really has nothing. He is tortured further."

The following is a brief account of similar facts that have been disclosed from Odessa, Vinitza, Kalinowka, Yanoff, Pekof and Ribnitza:

b) O D E S S A: February, 1931. During the last months arrests have been made of citizens suspected of having money. In order to force them to give up their money they are tortured in many ways. (1) The prisoner is made to face the wall with bound hands. Behind him stands a soldier who does not permit him to make one movement. Should the prisoner attempt to move his head, the soldier immediately strikes him over the head with his gun. (2) The prisoner is seated upon a high bench which has no back, and he is not permitted to fall into a doze. As soon as he begins to nod his head, the guard wakens him. (3) The prisoner is forced to stand on one foot and to place the other on the back of a high chair. He is kept in this position for a long time. Inquiries are held night and day, without interruption. (The G.P.U. agents change often). After days of such torture the prisoner breaks down and gives up all he possesses.

c) V I N I T Z A: On February 17, 1931, nearly 60 citizens were arrested. The G.P.U. demanded money of them, torturing them mercilessly. They were forced to write to their wives, instructing them to turn over their money to the G.P.U. A Dr. Fishelson was taxed the sum of 10,000 rubles.

d) K A L I N O W K A (Podolia): On February 25, 1931, 10 citizens were arrested. One was suspected of having money in the form of dollars. As a punishment he was forced to kneel and to remain in that position for a long time.

e) P I K O F F: (Podolia): In the middle of February, llwere arrested and taken to Kalinowka

f) Y A N O F F: (Podolia): " " " " " 13 " "
and taken to Kalinowka

g) R I B N I T Z A (Podolia) On the 23rd " " 18 " " ,
among them a 67 year old man.

Money was demanded of all those arrested and all of them were cruelly tortured.

IX. TO THE MEMORY OF SIEVA DRANOVSKAYA, ODESSA, A COMRADE WHO FELL IN THE STRUGGLE

December 30, 1930, marked two years since Comrade Sieva Dranovskaya, (Z.S."Hashomer-Hazair") committed suicide.

The G.P.U. wished to secure from Comrade Dranovskaya a confidential statement, made to them in writing, confessing her affiliation with the Z.S."Hashomer-Hazair" and declaring that she would cease her work with them. In order to accomplish their ends, the G.P.U. worked through Comrade Dranovskaya'a parents, forcing them by divers threats to use their influence with Sieva. Unable to withstand the pleas and tears of her father and mother, Comrade Dranowskaya finally agreed to write the statement on condition that it should not be made public. However, no sooner was it in the hands of the G.P.U. than it was immediately handed to the papers and printed in the form of a statement exposing the counter-revolutionary character of the Z.S."Hashomer-Hazair" and Zionism, and urging the Comrades to leave the Movement as she had done. This declaration - issued in her name - was a grievous blow to Sieva. She protested strongly against the disgrace forced upon her by the G.P.U., but her protests went unheard. True to the Movement and the Zionist Socialist ideal in her heart, the conflict, the disgrace and the shame, proved too much for Comrade Dranowskaya and she decided to comit suicide - throwing herself from a fifth story. Both her legs were amputated in an effort to save her, but blood-poisoning set in. Within a week she died. In the last hours of her life she called the Comrades to her and begged them to continue their work and struggle for the Zionist Socialist ideal.

Comrade Sieva Dranovskaya was but 18 years old.

Comrades and friends:

Again a tremendous number of arrests have been made of our Comrades in Russia, and arrests continue to this day. Many Comrades - altho they have served years in prison and exile - are once more being sentenced to "politisolator" and exiled to remote corners of Siberia, Central Asia, Ural, etc.

Their plight is a critical one, immediate help is urgent for these strugglers for our cause in Soviet Russia.

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