

COPY OF A LETTER RECEIVED FROM JERRY. dated 22/3/33 received at Tzaneen
Dated Kharkov 20/4/33

Dearest Leivi & Israel,

Today is the last day of my viza in USSR.

I called this morning at the Foreign Department of the Soviet here and was told that the lengthening of my viza rests not with them but with Lugansk "GORSOVET", i.e. that to night I am leaving back to where I came from to apply for viza extension ! There was thus no need for my coming here at all !!! Thus again I had a free trip to Kharkov !

I want to tell such a lot and I really have the information and perhaps even the time. But I am sitting in a Railway station buffet with noise and the rattle of the dining room. It is very awkward and annoying.

I am in somewhat a bad mood, for the Stanitzka has spoilt me. Queues always dishearten me and those I saw here today and those I went through made me sick!

I arrived here early this morning and quickly enough got out of the station. On the opposite side of the square one has to hand in one's packages to the cloak room. We were only some 20 or so men and due to Russian sluggishness I only got fixed up in some 40-50 minutes here.

I went to the "Spartak" Hotel I was last time and was told that I must go to some baths and then pass through the disinfectant chamber before they can talk to me. They gave me an address. The train journey is always here a nightmare, today in the early morning it was the limit.

When I arrived, I learnt that today only Militia men are admitted. I, a plain citizen, cannot be admitted. Such is the law !

I went to another "BOD" only to find there such a huge crowd of screaming humanity, that out of sheer disgust I left and thus spent today without "SHELTER". I ~~must~~ am leaving tonight.

To have a ticket, or a free ticket, is not all here. One has to book a seat, so I went to the "GORODSKAIA STANCHIA ?" to book it. There are 18 windows for the different directions and at every window stood a shouting queue ! It almost made me vomit at the sight of 18 lines and amongst these a motley of humanity such as one only sees here. . Blind, one legged woman, "Beshprizhorni" children naked almost begging and stealing. Mothers and children ~~snapping~~ sleeping amongst heaps of sacks and luggage.

By the way, it is Spring ~~time~~ here. The snow is melting and the streets are either clean or muddy, but no snow is left.

I could not persuade myself to wait. I went to the Station Master in a broken terrible Russian said that I am a foreigner and begged him to help me. He fell. I got my ticket ~~booked~~ booked in two seconds ! When I left the Station happy with the "platchkart" in my bag, I saw a sight that only Beile has seen before. It was a bread line at Store No48 on Engels street !

I have seen many lines here, but this one never before. It was one deep, guarded by Militiamen along its entire length of some four street blocks !

Why ? -- here you are .

The province of Kharkov has just (very late !!) carried out its bread tax and is allowed to trade in bread. Here you are you have bread on commercial prices, 15 times that of standard state prices, but 7 times cheaper than the forbidden trade with bread on the market !

People took their places at midnight yesterday and herring like ~~snapping~~ stood patiently all morning today.

Interesting faces, these women with infants, strained faces these are. Very interesting ! I stayed there a good half an hour !

The militia men endeavouring to maintain order, hit those that try to get in without the line ! On the whole you have about 30 militia-men doing no useful work, let alone those in the queue ! A very low productivity of labour, this is !--

Of those in the queue, one half or more are from the villages, where bread shortage is worse than in the towns !

I am off the point.

The last three weeks in Luganskaia Stanitzka were vile.

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152 HX
PMAA

I worked mostly through nights of threatening floods and breaking ice ! So these two days are glorious !

About myself.

I am leaving tonight back to Lugansk and I expect that an extension of my viza will be granted. It will be granted "till the completion of the job I am engaged upon". And here I wish to say that this does not suit me, for really and trully I want to go to Nizni-Novgorod to see great Russia. I shall thus on receipt of my extension write to Moscow to get me transferred. Although I shall be here under false pretenses, - I am sure that by the time my viza will again be up, they shall have forgotten how I have arrived on my other bridge !-----

It is all gos (or GOSH) !-----

I do not know whether Bobrikov, chief engineer of Mostotrest will carry out his promise !

The "Machainik Rabet" will not let me go, I know.

The "Prozhviditel Rabet" will go soon. That I know for a fact. I can almost be certain of it .

So I will go with him !-----

On the whole my future is uncertain.

Conditions in Russia must undoubtedly improve this Summer, for many reasons. I'd love to tell you why.

My own life in the Stanitza leaves nothing to be desired. The manager of the Stelovaia gives me food without waiting. The Chairman of the workmen's committee rushing in, pushing everyone aside and pushing me forward and shouting :-

"PUSTU EVO, ON ODEN, A RABOCHIK MASSA" -----

This is equality !-----

I shall write again.

JERRY