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Subject: TSERRY, Evheniya of Brussels, Belgium

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(Interviewed in Belgium)

Subject is a 42-year-old woman from the village of Vilshanytsya Vysoka near Drohobych (her birth certificate states it is
in Hlynskyy rayon). She is divorced. S. met her former husband
while both were farm workers in Nazi Germany, then returned
home. After none or ten years of married life her husband left
her, and she remained single for the past nine years. S is currently
seeking a husband, and upon arival in Belgium, received a two-way
visa to the United States.

The village of Vilshanytsya Vysoka comprises about 500 buildings. The former chairman of the village council, who was illiterate, was replaced by a man from the neighboring village. The local police is made up entirely of Ukrainians, except the chief, who presumablly is a Russian. The local church had been renovated in 1956, and the old parish priest was replaced by a new one -- a 52-year-old orthodox priest "from beyond Lviv." The people are saying that he is a better preacher than the former priest. The new priest lives in Lviv, and commutes for church services. He has two sons in high school, and a house in the city. Asked why the priest does not live near the church, the answer was: "He's no fool, in case of any trouble, he won't perish in the city, he can always get a job there."

The Church

The church is forb¢dden from issuing any documents. Baptisms, weddings and funerals may be conducted in the church, but only after permission is granted by the authorities. This is hard to get. The church bells have been removed. Teaching of religion is forbidden, both in the schools and at homes.

The propagandists says that "Lenin gives everything," and add "if God exists, then why does he not punish us?"

After a drought whine oblasts, the women in the fields would say: "Where is your Lenin? Why does he not bring on rain?"

They are told (in Russian): "It's all nature's work."

And the women: "Nature! It's God who is punishing you."

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Some children refuse to pray. Church services are held only in those \mathbf{x} villages which had a priest assigned to them, and he can say only one mass per Sunday. No services may be held in the other villages.

The School

Compulsory education is not the rule. "If a kid wants to learn, let him. If he doesn't, that's OK too. Then he'll work in the kolhosp."

Both Russian and Ukrainian are languages of instruction in the schools. If a teacher is Ukrainian, he teaches in his own language, but there are few of those. Thus, very often arithmetic, science, history are taught by Russians in Russian. Ukrainian language is full of Russifizms, which are encouraged. Pure Ukrainian is considered "the old way of speaking."

Reading.

S. said there is no shortage of books, but she herself did not read them, because there people talk, rather than read in their free time. They know nothing about the Ukrainian poets and writers, except Shevchenko. No one reads the newspapers, because "it's all propaganda, which the people do not believe, and politics, which everyone fears."

Students

They **keak** have to read in order to be smart. These students are "crazy", because they always "are making pranks, and no one knows who did it." S. a ded that the students are not making these pranks collectively, but singlehandedly, otherwise someone would have squeeled to the authorities long ago.

At times the students even talk back to the police, but then they know how to do it, what to say, because they know all the laws and by-laws. For example, during the export of grain abroad which had cause a lot of commotion, and even women in the fields openly cursed the system, the students defaced a statue of Lenin.

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(There is a big statue of Lenin in their village, as in many other places. S. was surprised that she had not seen one statue of the Lelgian king since coming to that country).

During the export of wheat from the village, the students hung a large sign on Lenin's neck during the night. The sign read:

Vstan' Volodya podyvysya Shcho toy lysyy narobyv Vsyu pshenytsyu za hranytsyu A nas bobom i horokhom nakormyv.

(Arise Volodya and take a look
At what Baldy has just done
All the wheat he sends abroad
And us he feeds with pulse and peasw.)

In the morning the people read this and laughed quietly, while the authorities removed the sign. They searched for the culprit, but could not find him, saying "it must have been someone who did this on his own."

There is bread, but of such quality that it cannot be sliced. It's made of bean, pea and corn flour, and falls easily apart. One woman **t** hit a kolhosp supervisor on the head with such a loaf saying "dere's your bread."

The Kolhosps.

One day the women were harvesting beets in rain, "with mud up to their ears." This made them angry, and while they were eating their lunch (pulse flower bread and onions) they yelled at the supervisor: "You are saying that we have beat America in the production of butter, eggs, milk and bread -- but what do we eat on a job like this? Where is all that? You call that bread, damn you." Despite this putburst, there were no reprecussions.

There are very few young people in the kolhosps: some were attracted by the emigration to the virgin lands others, as soon as they grow up "beat it" to the cities where there is more freedom of movement and better life.

No one really knows how much he will be paid at the kolhosp. For one year's work at the kolhosp 5. received about one cu. metre of whet, a half cu. metre of rye, a little peas, beans and corn. All this depends on the decision of the kolhosp management or on the prevailing conditions. It may amount to more or much less.

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Protests or demands for more remuneration are out of the question. People jugt do not dare, instead, women remain on the fields after work and steal ears of corn. All this is in accordance with the generally accepted slogan -- "if you don't steal, you die."

There is no shortage of "stool pigeons". Often people turn stool pigeons out of envy, when they see better clothing on others, received from the capitalist countries. Such parcels from overseas often lead to loud quarrels among neighbors and end up in courts. Some persons write to their relatives not to send any more parcels because they only cause trouble.

Moonshine is being made on large scale -- "just like before the war" -- and the authorities pretend not to notice. There also rumours of much bribing.

When the atheists come to a village, people simply remove their icons from the walls in order not to get involved in long discussions. Or they tell the atheists: "Te are just simple folk. We work, and have no time for your politicking. It's too late for us to learn anything now."

S. has heard strong arguments among the propagandists themselves but then they know all the laws, and know how far they can go in an argument. At times the more intelligent persons in the village start an argument with the propagandists. They quote official works and often "push the propagandist to the wall."

Racial Question

In places where local populace has emigrated, "yellow race, Mongols etc." are brought in. You can't lead a normal life with such people around, they are savages. They attack the helpless the and even very young. Some adult women want to find out for themselves what these new arrivals are like, but "often they have hardly any strength to get back, while others say that its worsh than death."

Recently in Moscow a whole quarter was set aside "for those yellow people" -- thousands of them live in the newly-erected buildings. A number of floozies run away to live with those barbarians. In other words there is much discontent, which demonstrates itself in street brawls, fights at dances and murders.

S. herself has heard, when she was in Moscow, hateful remarks by the whites against the 'yellows'.

In recent times many of such immigrants have been arriving in the western provinces also.

Emigration

There are quite a few cases of Ukrainian population trying to emigrate to where there are better wages, such as Donbas or Zaporozhe. The men usually leave their families behind, and very few of them return. This is because morals are very low in those places — much worse than in the western provinces. As the result, marriages are frequently broken up. She herself had been divorced nine years ago, after her husband was talked into emigrating east. (He had to pay the divorce costs).

Before she emigrated, friends advised her against going away. "Don't go, or you'll be sorry," they used to say. "Here are your own people, and there you may find poverty. After all, it may be true that the capitalists exploit the people."

S had 10,000 rubles from the sale of the house, but she had to hand over all but 1,000 rubles. She asigned the 9,000 to her relatives who stayed behind, but doubts that they will ever receive it.

She was carefully examined "strand by strand" to see whether she was not exporting any gold "to make the capitalists richer."

When S arrived in Belgium and saw the plentiful department stores, she said she must have been dreaming or else it's all propaganda "where did it all come from?" At first she wanted to run away from a department store, now she says she cannot write now plentially things are in the West even to her closest relative, because they won't believe this miracle and simply say that she had been paid to write those things.

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