

REIGN OF THE SOVEREIGN EMPEROR ALEXANDER I

1825 yr.

124. -- June 30. **From the Senate, according to the Highest Approved Regulations [Provision/Polozheniye] of the Committee of Ministers. --**

*Additional orders regarding the removal of Jews from the border by 50 versts.*¹

The Governing Senate listened to the proposal of Mr. Minister of Justice, under which, in order to commit a proper execution of the directive, he applied a copy of an excerpt from the journals of the Committee of Messrs. Ministers, which was passed to him by the Minister of Finance: It prescribes the Highly Approved on the 11th day of the last April, Provision of this Committee, which gathered apropos the note submitted by the Minister of Finance in April of 1824, about the removal of Jews from the border by 50 *versts*. In the aforesaid excerpt, it is explained that in 1812 the Civic Governor of Volhynia² proposed that those Jews, living in the settlements owned by the landlords near the borders, as well as in the villages and in the special households of the frontier *powiat*³, should be removed to those *miasteczko-s*⁴ and *kagal-s*⁵ where they were registered according to the census.

*) See №. 59, p. 59.

136

The Emperor, having approved the Governor's proposal, deigned to order the enforcement of its execution. In 1816, Senator Sievers⁶ who performed the census revision of the Volyn Province, during his visit to the Radziwilov⁷, had noticed that on the very border, within few steps away from it, the Jews were keeping taverns and trading, which lead to the greatest violations (malversation). Therefore, Senator Sivers appealed to the Governor of the Volyn Province to make strict orders to the Zemstvo Courts, in order that such Jews, in accordance with the Highest Approved Regulations, be permanently removed within three weeks from the border into the *miasteczko-s* and *kagal-s* where they were registered according to the census. He also proposed that the Volyn Province Administration should make an order that all the Jews, except those who live where they were registered by census revision and where the *kagals* were located, would be removed to the distance of 50 *versts* from the border and under no pretext would live in settlements and/or in special households under the fear, in a case of noncompliance, of the strictest penalty (punishment) for those found guilty. By the strength of the above-mentioned Supreme decree and orders, the removal of the Jews from the border continued until 1821, and from that time on, the Jews, through the connivance of the Zemstvo Police, returned to some villages and taverns; On this occasion, the Chiefs of the bordering Western Customs Districts approached the Ministry of Finance with reports and their suspicions that Jews, under the pretense of keeping taverns, were trading illegally along the borders,

and that the border guards, despite all their zeal, did not have the means to keep them from smuggling illegal goods, and were always at risk of being held accountable although not at fault (of such violations). Above all, His Imperial Highness the Tsesarevich⁸ referred to the Minister of Finance about the complaints of the landlord Chamiec from the Volyn Province, who complained about the local administration, which allowed the Jews to live there along the border, in disobedience of the Highest order of 1812 and all the following instructions. The Minister of Finance, being convinced by many cases, that the Jews, having their special inclination for the secret smuggling of goods and conducting it, were attempting to inhabit areas at the borders, dodge and make their ways by various means, they rented houses from the owners along the border, and mills and taverns, which by their position/location did not bring any income, but Jews paid for them a considerable rent money for leases: this serves as an obvious proof that they, while at the border, are engaged only in the illegal trade and secret import of goods and shelter them in such leased places, and they also export out of state our coins, which greatly damages both the course of proper trade, and the success of domestic manufactories and factory establishments, and causes damage to the taxation income, -

thus, he supposed: for the prevention of such an obvious evil, the Highest order, given in 1812, and the following in 1816 orders prescribed to remove all Jews from the border by 50 *versts*, must be carried on to an execution on that basis, so that in these areas, the Jews would live only in towns and *miasteczko*-s, where there were established *Kagals*. This decree should be distributed, in addition to Volyn Province, to all the Western Gubernias located along the borders. The Minister of Finance recognized as necessary this measure, which was not new, but already was introduced in the Volyn Province in accordance with the Highest order, because of the explained foregoing circumstances, considering that if it was found necessary in one Province, then for the same reasons it might be necessary in other Provinces.

137

In conclusion, he added that although the Jewish affairs were handled by a special Committee, except the separate rulings presupposed for the Belarusian Provinces, however there should be no delay resolving this issue, as it has no important connection with the regular Jewish matters/affairs, and moreover, the number of Jews related to this business could not be very high/large, and the Jews, being removed from the borders, would easily be able to find means of subsistence. This opinion he, Mr. Minister of Finance, presented to the Committee of Messrs. Ministers, to which also followed the Highest behest of the Emperor: To request for this matter the opinion of His Imperial Highness Tsesarevich. In succession to this, there was a response received from His Imperial Highness Tsesarevich concluding that the proposal about removing the Jews from all Provinces along the border away for 50 *versts* from the border, except those in towns and *miasteczko*-s, where there were established *Kagals*, was very useful for the purpose of reduction of smuggling from abroad the contraband goods; although His Highness does not see whether there is made a difference between Jews who keep houses, taverns, mills, and the like for hire, from those who have the ownership of such or other real estate, as their property and belonging to them; for if such Jewish owners are found, it would be unfair to deprive them of their property.

The Committee, seeing that the proposal about the removal of all Jews in all frontier Provinces away to the distance of 50 *versts* from the boarder, except towns and *miasteczko*-s, and following the response from His Imperial Highness *Tsesarevich* regarding the usefulness of such removal for the purpose of reduction of smuggling from abroad the contraband goods –

Considered the execution of such proposition after requesting the Highest Approval; However, according to the opinion of His Highness, to add to it, that such order and action will relate/concern only to the Jews settled within the 50-*versts* distance from the border and keeping/managing/renting houses, taverns, mills, and the like for hire/lease, but it will not affect/apply to the Jews who own such properties. During the meeting-session, on April 11, it was announced to the Committee that His Imperial Majesty approved the position of the Committee of Ministers, commanding, in addition, that only Jews who live in separate households may remain within the distance of 50-*versts* from the border if they own/have in their possession houses, taverns, mills, and the like, and so on, but they may not, under any pretext, pass-on those of their own properties to other Jews, But only in a case of necessity they may admit/allow/permit, by mutual agreement with other residents, to their properties settlers/citizens of Cristian faith, but by no means of Jewish faith. By the means (in a form of) the excerpt from the Journal, the Committee provisioned to report of such decision to the Minister of Finance for the execution/pursuance.

Thus, it was ordered:

For the proper execution of the above-explained Highest order of His Imperial Majesty, To prescribe by decrees to the Military Governors of Lithuania and Podolsk, to Civic Governors and Provinces' Administrations of the Western frontier Provinces, and inform the General-Governors of Vitebsk, Mogilev and other Civic Governors, Provinces' Administrations and state Commerce Chambers in all Provinces in which a permanent residency is permitted for Jews, as well to the Minister of Finance, The Head of the Spiritual Board of Foreign Confessions and the Head of the Ministry of Domestic Affairs, To the 1st Branch of the 3rd Department, 2nd and 3rd Branches of the 5th Department of the Governing Senate – to inform/enforce. (*P. P. S. Z., Vol. XL, № 30,402*).

-
1. Verst [Верста] - the Russian measure of length = 1.06 km.
 2. Volhynia [Wołyń or Volýn, Volyn Province] - is a historic region in Central and Eastern Europe, situated between south-eastern Poland, south-western Belarus, and western Ukraine. While the borders of the region are not clearly defined, the territory that still carries the name is Volyn Oblast (Volyn Province), located in western Ukraine. At one time all of Volhynia was part of the Pale of Settlement designated by Imperial Russia on its southwestern-most border. (From Wikipedia)
 3. Poviát (powiat, Повѣт) is a former administrative-territorial unit in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.
 4. Mestéčko (Miasteczko) is one of the types of settlements in Russia, Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (on the territory of modern Belarus, Lithuania, eastern Latvia, Poland, Ukraine, and western Russia) often with a significant proportion of the Jewish population, a Jewish town (shtetl).

5. Кагáл - Kagál, Kakhal, Qáhál - is a body of communal self-government that headed a separate Jewish community in the diaspora and mediated between it and the state, in the broad sense of the word Jewish community the administrative form of community self-government among Jews in Poland and other countries of Eastern Europe in the 16th — 18th centuries, in the Russian Empire in the period 1772–93.
6. Senator Sievers - see: von Sievers on Wikipedia - Count Karl von Sievers (1772-1856) - Russian general of the Napoleonic wars, Senator, Actual Privy Counselor.
7. Radziwilov - (Radyvyliv, Радивиллов, translit. Radivilov; Polish: Radziwiłłów) is a small city in Rivne Oblast (region) of western Ukraine. It is the administrative center of Radyvyliv Raion (district), and is located south-west of the oblast capital, Rivne, In the 14th century, together with whole Volhynia, Radyvyliv became a part of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Following the 1569 Union of Lublin, the town was transferred to the Kingdom of Poland, where it remained for over 200 years. As a result of the Partitions of Poland, it became part of the Russian Empire.
8. Tsesarevich (Цесаревич) was the title of the heir apparent or presumptive in the Russian Empire. It either preceded or replaced the given name and patronymic.

Translation by Anastasia Savenko-Moore and Rick Moore, Eugene OR.

Funded by the Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture NYC, <http://mfjc.org/>.

Copyright easteurotopo.org 2019.