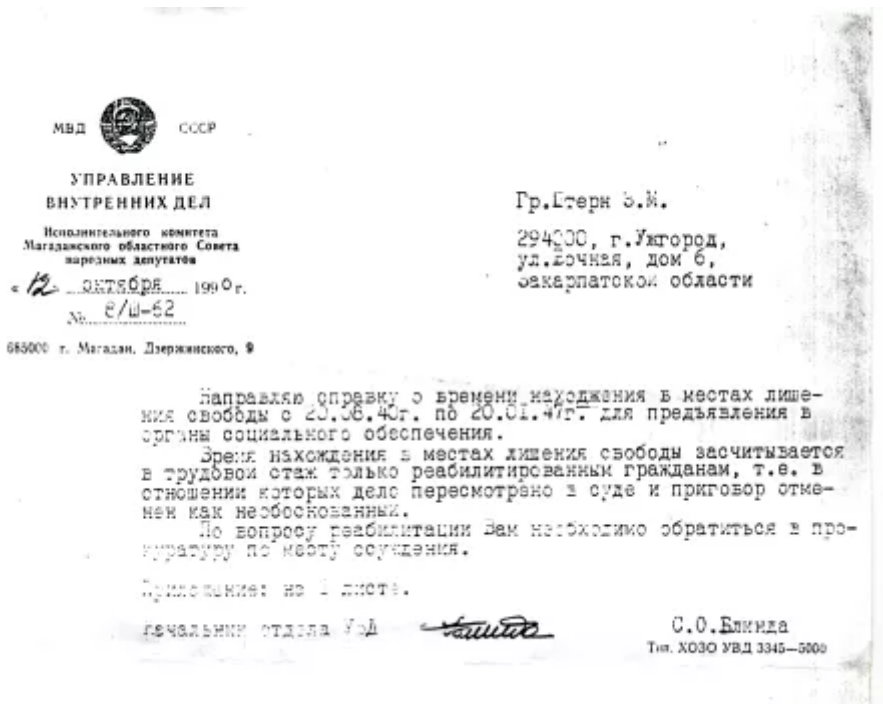


Zoltan Shtern's Letter Of Rehabilitation



This is my letter of rehabilitation issued by the department of internal affairs of the executive committee of Magadan council of people's deputies on 12th October 1990. We heard about life in the USSR after the Revolution of 1917. Unfortunately, we only had access to the official propaganda: radio and newspapers. I imagined the USSR to be a country of equal possibilities, freedom and justice. On 20th August 1940 I left home without even saying goodbye to my parents. On the night of 21st August we got to the border with the USSR. The guide took us to the border, showed us the way and returned home. We crossed the border, took a nap and decided that we had to look for a frontier guard. The frontier guards found us before we found them. We were glad at first, but then our joy ebbed away when they ordered us, 'Stand up, line up, a step to the left, a step to the right shall be considered as an effort to escape and then we shall apply our weapons'. I will never forget these words. My other life began on 21st August 1940. I was in various Gulag camps until 1948. In December 1947 I was summoned to the office of the mine. They told me that I was allowed to leave. I was so happy to get this offer. I obtained an official certificate saying, 'Released from the camp and is allowed to go to the continent' [the European part of the USSR]. I was rehabilitated in October 1962. The regional court of Lvov reviewed my case and determined that I was subject to oppression in fascist Hungary as a Jew and there was nothing criminal about my crossing the border to the USSR.