Diatlovo

(in Polish, Zdzienciol; in Yiddish, Zhetl), town in Belorussia. At the beginning of World War II, Diatlovo was annexed by the Soviet Union. At that point, 4,000 Jews lived there.

In June 1941 Germany invaded the Soviet Union. German troops entered Diatlovo on June 30; over the next three weeks, they murdered more than 120 Jews. About 400 Jews were sent to a labor camp in Dvorets, while Jews from other towns were brought into Diatlovo. Soon, the Germans established a ghetto, formed a *Judenrat*, and appointed Alter Dvoretski its chairman.

In late 1941 Dvoretski formed an underground with 60 members, whose goals were to revolt if the Germans staged an *aktion* against the Jews, and to promote escape to the forest. On April 30, 1942, 1,200 Jews were removed from the ghetto and executed. The underground did not start an uprising because the Soviet partisans in the area would not cooperate. Dvoretski then tried to establish a strong Jewish partisan force to save the ghetto's remaining Jews, but he was killed by the Soviet partisans.

Another *aktion* began in August 1942. About 600 Jews attempted to escape to the forest; some who survived founded Jewish partisan units. About 370 Diatlovo Jews survived the war, most by escaping to the forest.