

Fleischmann, Gisi

(1897--1944), Jewish leader in Slovakia. Fleischmann was a leader of the Women's International Zionist Organization and of the Working Group.

When Slovakia's Jewish Center (*Ustredna Zidov*) was established in 1940, Fleischmann took over its *aliya* (immigration to Palestine) department. She used this section as camouflage for Zionist youth activities and job training. In early 1940 she helped bring 326 men from Sosnowiec, Poland to Slovakia, and ultimately got most of them to Palestine. Fleischmann's position provided her with the opportunity to obtain an immigration certificate for Palestine. She sent her daughters, but declined to join them in favor of staying to help her community.

Early in 1942, it became painfully clear to Slovakian Jewish leaders that their community was to be deported shortly. Fleischmann and others created a semi-underground rescue committee called the Working Group, which made attempts to prevent and later halt the deportations. That summer, the Working Group approached Adolf Eichmann's representative in Bratislava, Dieter Wisliceny, with a bribe of US \$40,000--\$50,000 to stop the deportations. Fleischmann worked on raising the money for Wisliceny. When the deportations were stopped in October, Fleischmann played a major part in creating an even bolder rescue proposal, called the Europa Plan. This plan called for the termination of all deportations from German-occupied Europe to Poland in exchange for huge amounts of money. However, these negotiations petered out in the autumn of 1943.

Fleischmann was soon arrested and held for four months. She refused to allow her friends to get her out of Slovakia, and upon release, devotedly continued her work. In the fall of 1944 she once again tried to persuade SS leaders to stop the deportations, which had been renewed. She was unsuccessful, and was arrested by the SS on September 28. She was allowed to stay in Bratislava for a short time to wind down the Jewish Center's affairs. In October, she was sent to the Sereď camp and then on to Auschwitz with the instructions "return undesirable." She was sent to the gas chambers upon arrival. (see also Jewish Center, Slovakia.)

