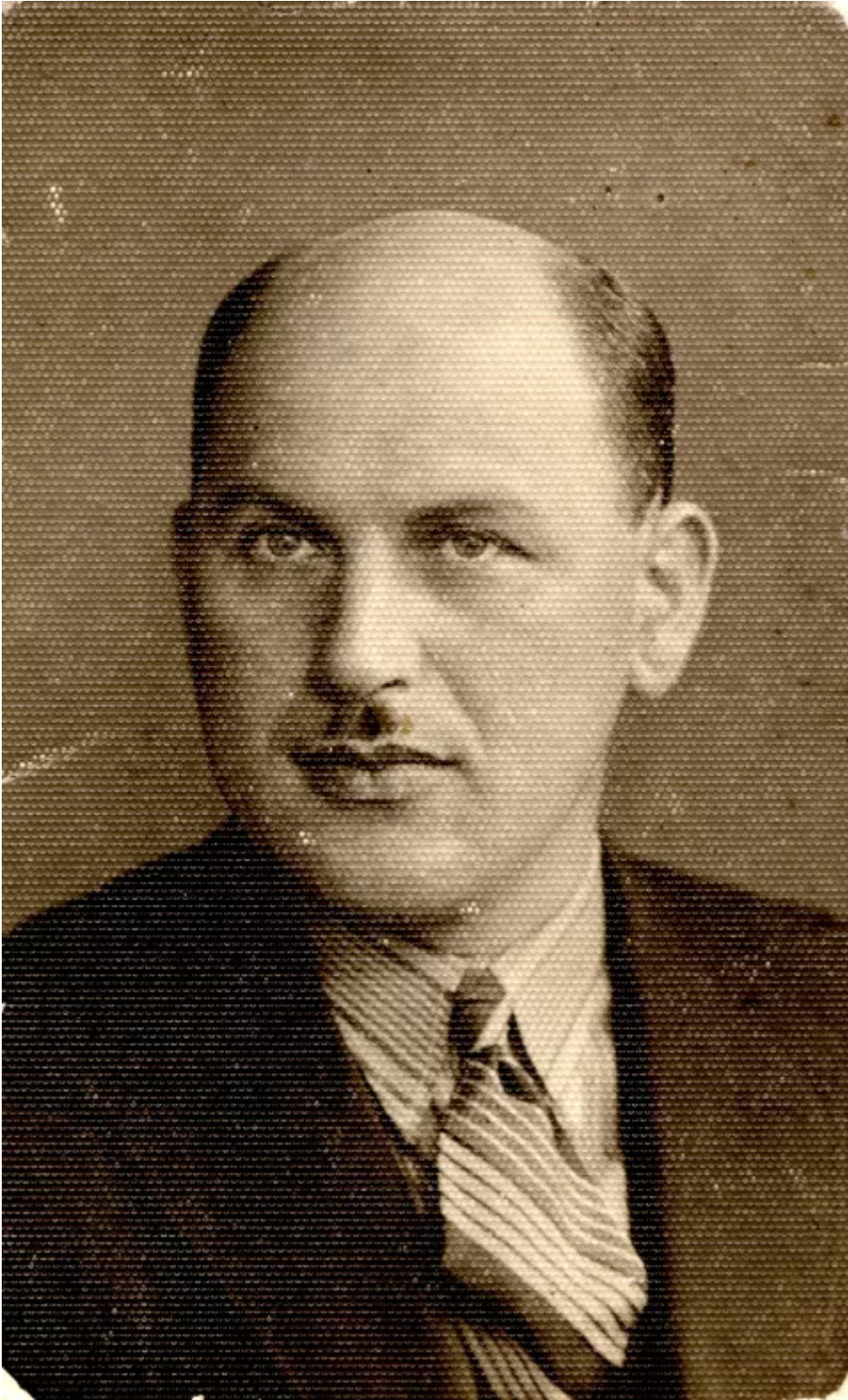


## Jakub Fischbein After His Return From Prison



This is my father, Jakub Fischbein. This picture was taken at a photo studio in Tysmienica or Stanislawow after he had left the prison in Bereza Kartuska [today Belarus] in 1937. His parents sent this photo to their sisters, who left for America in the 1920s. After the war these aunts of my father's sent it back to us, because during the war we had lost our family pictures. My father was a

member of the Communist Party of Western Ukraine, called KaPUZa, for short. All this information is so shallow? My memories are totally vague. I must have been four, five or six when he put some papers under the mattress of the bed in which I slept. That happened at night. Before 1st May, I remember panic, commotion, and then knocking on the door: "Police! Open up!?" Occasionally they summoned my father preventively for 24 or 48 hours. I know that he was in hiding for a while. Someone must have warned him that they wanted to arrest him, so he left home and when he came back it was in the middle of the night, only to leave again before dawn. In the little town everybody knew everything about everybody else. In those times when my father would disappear only to come home at night for a few hours. Several times my father was in jail in Stanislawow. I visited him there with my mother. We went by train, and then walked or took a carriage to the jail which was certainly not situated in some isolated place. I remember when my father was taken to Bereza. He was taken in the evening. It was around my birthday, some time in November. Next day my mother woke me up at dawn and we went to the police station. My grandmother was already there. There was a carriage. We stood on the street. They brought out my father and another man ? I don't know who that was ? both of them in handcuffs. And then, I remember my grandmother, who threw herself at the police like a lioness: how dare they treat my father like that, handcuffed, like a criminal! This is one of the images still very strong in my mind: my grandmother with dark hair and then, cut, and my grandmother gray-haired very soon afterwards. My father spent eleven months in Bereza. My father's imprisonments were very hard for my mother. She was very scared. She had no profession, she was totally dependent. One day I felt like singing and dancing. My mother walked up to me and pinched me very hard: "Your father is in Bereza and you feel like singing and jumping around?!" For many years later she kept on apologizing for that. In 1937, I sent to President Moscicki my picture attached to my grade report from the 1st grade; I remember it was a very good report. I asked could I please have my daddy back. Some months later, my father came back home. Polish authorities decided that the KPP was not a threat any more, since it ceased to exist. [Editor's note: in 1937 Stalin decided to dissolve the KPP and it was finally disbanded a year later]. My father came back in the fall of 1937.