

Leon Moshe Seliktar As A Student In The Jewish School In Sofia



This is me (up with the peak cap) as a student in the Jewish school in Sofia, around 1941.

The first more serious limitations for Jews started after the Law for the Protection of the Nation was passed. Firstly, my father was no longer allowed to work. Until that moment we worked in private companies. Then, a notice saying 'A Jewish house' was placed on the door of our house. Some restaurants and cafes in Sofia put up notices reading 'Entrance Forbidden for Jews' on their doors. We were obliged to wear the yellow stars. There was a curfew: I don't remember the exact times in the morning and evening when we weren't allowed to go out. I don't know how we managed to make ends meet. My parents sold what we had and we already had some savings. But, by the way, in accordance to the Law for the Protection of the Nation, there was a new tax where Jews had to fill in declarations on what possessions they owned and on that basis they had to pay a special tax not related to the other taxes. Everything more valuable in the house was included in that declaration: furniture, carpets, etc. All Jews had their radio sets confiscated and so did we.

At that time I was a high school student. There were Brannik, Legionaries, and Otets Paisii All-Bulgarian Union members among my classmates. I wasn't made to discontinue my education. There were some anti-Semitic incidents in my high school: students from other classes sometimes chased Jews and beat them up. But there were no such people in our class; on the contrary, the Bulgarians in it protected us. Maybe this was because all the students in the class were from poor families. We were four Jews in our class. There were Branniks and Legionaries among the students, but they didn't beat us or harass us.