

Teodor Kovac In The Army



This is me when I was in the army in 1945.

I only became a graduating student after the war. I left the army, and reported at the headquarters of the army in Novi Sad. It was in July or August 1945; when Tito or the state issued the order that the war was over, and that everyone who had been a graduating student needed to be demobilized in order to go back to his studies. I went to the headquarters for demobilization. I handed over the papers to lieutenant commander Jure Mihajic, and later on I read in the newspapers that he had been a Yugoslav military attache in Bucharest. He told me: 'Stay here and help me with demobilization.' I stayed another six weeks to help with demobilization because at that time, being

a graduating student was much more rare than today. I demobilized hundreds in order to help my lieutenant commander. He was an honest person.

In Belgrade I stayed in the Jewish students' dormitory. I stayed there from the first day up until I received the papers for my diploma. No doubt, I would have stayed in Belgrade after graduation, but I didn't have an apartment, and in those times getting an apartment was something you could only dream of. Then I left for the countryside. I stayed and I worked here and there. I came to Novi Sad, because an opportunity arose to come here and also to get an apartment.

I was not a member of the party, and my opinion about the regime was the same as everyone else's who politically didn't stand out. I could never stand Stalin, even though I was still a child, I remember those trials in Russia. They always looked to me vague. All of Stalin's associates, by the time, became spys and agents of foreign countries, that even as a child I didn't like. Then, when he made a treaty with Hitler on the eve of the war, he caused trouble for me, and I have had enough.

I cannot say that I had problems only because I'm Jewish. I've always had problems. I had problems because I wasn't a party member, it wasn't a plus at that time not being a party member. Probably I could have achieved more if I had been in the Party, but it didn't bother me. I went to our village to see if we could get any money for the house, since it hadn't been nationalized but expropriated for some more important needs of society.

The house had been demolished and they ordered a small amount of money to be paid. Those times even that little money meant a lot for me. I went to the party secretary. First they told me that he was in a meeting, but when he heard that I had come from Novi Sad, he came out. He was a short person. I told him that he should pay for the house. He was first looking at me and then said, 'What do you want? You should be happy that you stayed alive!' I became angry and wanted to hit him. It was the time of the Informburo Resolution and he would have filled me with more holes than Swiss cheese has, so I only swore at him and left. It was an anti-Semitic incident, other than that I didn't experience anti-Semitism.