

Visa For Palestine In Liselotte Teltscherova's J-Passport



This is my visa for Palestine, which I got in Rome in 1940. My father was called to the emigration office in 1940 and told to leave the Protectorate [Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia] and the Reich within one week. I don't know why this happened, but it certainly saved our lives. I was talking with my father about it later, and he said he also didn't know why. My father was a very charitable man, and I think that sometime he had probably helped someone, who later got a special position with the Germans and then helped us in return. It wasn't easy to leave the Protectorate after the beginning of World War II. It was impossible to get a visa to any of the allied states if you were in the German area. There was only one place in the world where it was possible to go with a J-passport - Shanghai. All you needed was some money. I don't know, there may have been organized transports to Shanghai, but my parents went individually. We got the money from my father's brothers who had already gone to England. We took a train to Opatija, Italy, and waited there for the boat to Shanghai, which only went once a month. So we were there for nearly a month. During that time I was very lucky because I received a student certificate to study in Palestine - I got it from my uncle Richard, who got it in England for me. He sent it to Italy by post. So I had the opportunity to study in Palestine, which was better than going to the ghetto in Shanghai. Palestine was a British mandate and I couldn't go there with the J-passport. However, somebody told us that there was an old German consul in Fiume, who was very kind and gave passports without a 'J' to Jews. I went there with my father. We told him that I had crossed the border illegally to Yugoslavia and then to Italy and he really gave me the new passport. I went to Jerusalem to study biology, and my parents went to Shanghai with my sister. My studies in Palestine were an interesting experience. I got the certificate and everyone with the certificate got a scholarship for two years. It wasn't much but it helped. There were many Czechs with the certificate. Some of them were married, had left their wives at home and wanted to get them over to Palestine as well, so they renounced the scholarship and bought the certificate for them. I know

that it worked in one or two cases. But still we had to work. I had to pay for the room I rented and I had to eat something. We were doing the cleaning at Jerusalem University, but there were too many applicants, so everyone only got the job for three months. I also cleaned in houses. At first I thought I could teach languages or something like that, but there were too many educated people. There were many doctors, who were selling eggs instead of working in their profession.