

Leon Moshe Seliktar With His Sister Adela Moshe Levi



My sister Adela Moshe Levi (nee Seliktar) and I in Sofia. The photo was taken around 1942-43.

The first more serious limitations for Jews started after the Law for the Protection of the Nation was passed. 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.

When we heard that the Jews from Sofia would be deported to Poland on 24th May 1943, in the Iuchbunar Synagogue, which was later destroyed in the bombings, rabbi Daniel Zion said during the prayer, 'Brothers, let's go to the king and ask for his protection.' I wasn't present at that prayer. So, a demonstration started which reached Vazrazhdane Square, where it was stopped by mounted policemen. They started beating and arresting people. So, they detained a few hundred people and took them to the Konstantin Fotinov School.

Some time after that, a decision was taken to intern the Sofia Jews in different cities. We were interned to Dupnitsa. We left our house and our possessions and took as much as we could carry.