

Solomon Manevich



This is me, Solomon Manevich, photographed during the ceremony of oath of allegiance in Saratov. I mailed this photo to my mother in Kiev. This photo is signed 'To my dearly loved mother from Solik, Saratov, 10 December 1940. I am taking an oath'.

I finished school in 1933 and entered the Industrial Rabfak. This was a free educational institution for workers. To be admitted young people had to work and my mother's acquaintances helped me to get a position of apprentice of mechanic at a shop. I didn't have to go to work, but was on the list of employees to be able to enter the Rabfak as a worker. I joined Komsomol at school. It was mandatory to be a Komsomol member to be able to go to work or enter a College after finishing studies at school. I finished the Rabfak in 1935.

I was aware of the actual situation and knew that historians manipulated with the history and I decided to stay aside from any political or social sciences and go to study at the Industrial College (that became Polytechnic College after WWII). I entered the Faculty of Chemistry at the Industrial College in 1935. Efimov, the rector of this college was arrested and executed as a Trotskyist when I was a 1st year student. Then every year there was another director of the college assigned. Nobody asked where a previous one disappeared. [Editor's note: each year the actual director was arrested, then killed. So while Solomon studied there the college had 4 directors, from which 3 was killed.] We were all aware that they were exterminated as 'enemies of the people' and that they were innocent victims. I remember the Komsomol meetings conducted in the biggest conference hall of the College. They started after the lectures and ended at 2-3 at night, or at 6-7 next day, in the morning. There were streetcars waiting at the entrance of the building. The main issue on the agenda was identification and denunciation of 'enemies of people'. It was impossible to believe that people who had recently protected their country from fascism were traitors. Party and state officials and common people suffered from repression. Besides, this was a beautiful time of my youth. I read contemporary and classical books, went to the cinema and theaters - of Ukrainian

Drama, Opera and even Jewish theater. I met with girls and often went out with my fellow students: Jewish and Russian.

After I finished the first year of studies of our military classes in the summer of 1940, which were mandatory in all technical higher educational institutions of the USSR, the training was cancelled. This military training allowed graduates to receive a military rank. I finished College with honors in November 1940. Before graduation I was called to the military registry office where I got an assignment to serve in the army in Saratov, a big Russian town near the Volga after I defended my diploma thesis. In December 1940 I arrived to Saratov. The headquarters assigned me as a machine gunner to the rifle regiment no. 110. I suffered all intimidation of a private of the army there. Any commanding officer could abuse or hurt us especially the first sergeant.