

Imre Lunczer As Platoon Commander In The Hungarian Army



This is me in the army in Dunaszerdahely in 1940. I was recalled into the army regularly as a reservist, and I was taken into forced labor from the regular Hungarian army. I joined the army in October of 1935. I did my military service in Fehervar (Szekesfehervar). In Fehervar I got into a reserve officer's course in the military school. There weren't many Jews, just three or four of us altogether, but at the beginning they mustered out two of them immediately, back to the ranks. Later on in the Arrow Cross era, the school's commander became the commander of the Arrow Cross's Hunyadi Armored Army Corps. Nevertheless he wasn't roshe (evil). He would just say, every time we were on a military exercise, that the two Muslims ? he called us Jews ?Muslims? ? should never be put in the advance guard. The chief roshe wasn't him but the lieutenant. He had us confined to barracks for three weeks without any reason. In the end the commander was the one who released me, because I appeared at a hearing and complained to him that I was confined to barracks. ?I humbly? ? because at that time one had to report ?humbly" that was the rule ? ?report, and I beg you to release me from confinement, sir.? The first big anti-Semitic discrimination affected me there, when I got out of the officer candidate school. I went back to my squadron from the school. The officer candidates were upgraded to sergeants selected for promotion to lieutenancy. For that one had had to pass a trumped-up practical examination, the battalion exercise. And there the commanding officer of the battalion did the following: during the

battalion exercise he found fault with everything. In the end they didn't upgrade me to sergeant for promotion to lieutenancy, but merely to "officer candidate sergeant first class" a rank that was never used before or after that in Hungary. I was discharged in 1937. I went back to my job, but I got no peace, because I had hardly arrived when I received the so-called SAS summons, which meant an immediate start. I had scarcely been discharged again when I started to work, and after two or three weeks, a new SAS summons came. This is how it went on; there was no uninterrupted work-time, because I was always called up to Upper Northern Hungary. There in Vagvecse, they put me on frontier duty. This was a swindle, because they put the Jews at the borders, far from any settlement. And at the Czechoslovak border, this was certainly not the most relaxed circumstances. They discharged me from the army, but put me into forced labor service. As an inmate of the forced labor camp in Dunaszerdahely, I still wore a uniform. I remember that we when went to Dunaszerdahely we sang as we marched. There was a whole Jewish squadron. The devil only knows what we did with our time there. They sent us out here and there, to football grounds, and we went everywhere singing, because we had to.