

Roza Anzhel Playing Chess



I (on the left) am playing chess with Margarita Chouparinova, a popular journalist at the time. We are in the town of Panagyurishte (in South Central Bulgaria), in a sanatorium and the photo was taken there. There is an inscription in pen on the back of the photo: 'Panagyurski Bani (Baths), November 1951.'

The photo was taken after my dismissal from the Ministry of the Interior because of my Jewish origin. Here I had lost weight. I got severe Grave's disease. I couldn't sleep at night. I couldn't overcome what happened easily and that's why I went to Panagyurski Bani for a four-week treatment. There the water is quite healing.

I worked in the Ministry of the Interior until 1951 and then I was dismissed for having connections in foreign countries, as was stated in the order for dismissal. I want to declare that wasn't true. All my relatives - my brother and sisters - at that time were here in Bulgaria. In fact, I was dismissed due to my Jewish origin.

I started work in 'Voroshilov' works as a chief controller. I had already become a member of the BCP in 1944, immediately after 9th September. The works was new, it was near our apartment and that was good for me because of the children. I knew that I would have spare time. I started work there and they appointed me a secretary of the Party despite my dismissal because I had been a member of UYW before 9th September. And things were going very well, they called upon from the Party and cited us a model because we were working very well.

One day Todor Zhivkov came to attend a big meeting and they seated me next to him, on the platform and I was so grieved at what had happened in the police that I told him all about it. I sat next to him and told him everything: 'Before 9th September we were victimized for being Jewish. We were in disgrace and I was working here for seven years, my work was excellent and still I was dismissed for being a Jew.' 'Such were the times,' he started explaining. 'Those were the events, there was no other way?' Because a lot of Jews were dismissed. There were no consequences after

that conversation, but at least I told him everything and felt much better.