C centropa

Ota Gubic As A Typesetter In The Straz Print Shop



That's me on the right, working. The photo was taken in the 1960s in the Straz print shop in Karlovy Vary. I don't remember the man beside me. After the war I started working at the Patria printing house as a typesetter. I had this childhood dream, as a typesetter I wanted to study typography in Leipzig, because Leipzig was the biggest typographic power in Europe. I knew that it was only a dream and that I couldn't get over there, so I accepted a position in Prague. So in 1945 I set out for Prague in the back of a truck belonging to Carpathia. The Heumans, the owners of the jam factory, had given me an address to go to. Surprisingly, I found it very easily. I got a room on Liliova Street. There were three of us living there. I, the Heuman's son, and some woman. Heuman then moved away, so I remained alone. I was close to work, all I had to do was cross the courtyard, and I was in the print shop. It was a good thing for me, I was being paid 4500 crowns. I was single, I was five minutes away from the National Theater and the Estates Theater, the Vltava River was also five minutes away, and my window looked out over Bethlehem Square, so for me the years 1945 and 1946 were beautiful. In 1947 I arrived in Karlovy Vary, and here I met my wife, who used to come here to visit a girlfriend. One thing led to another, and on St. Nicholas Day in 1947 we were married. I started working as the secretary of the regional committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia. I held this position for five years, and then was a cultural officer at the Regional Committee. This is a sad chapter of my life, even though my hands are clean. I don't have even a smidgen of blood behind my fingernails, neither was I persecuted after the revolution, because I acted normally. I can look back at those five years with a clear conscience, but on the other hand, it was after all no smooth ride being a secretary of the Communist Party. There were enough of all sorts of Communists here, so it was quite difficult. I also had a lot of enemies. Finally I had to leave my position and then worked only as a typesetter, from where I went into retirement.