

Mimi-Matilda Petkova And Her Colleagues At Energoprojekt



This photo was taken on 1st June 1982 in Sofia. I (second from left in the first row) and my colleagues at Energoprojekt - we organized a farewell party for a colleague, Mateev, who was promoted to another department. I had many problems at work for being a Jew, but my name protected me. On 10th November 1989 I was already a pensioner; I retired in 1982. Before that I worked in 'Energoprojekt' [a state firm] as control specialist. I was also in charge of the party affairs; the party secretary was my boss, in the 'political prison' department. I had a colleague, who was filling in for me when I was absent, whose brothers immigrated to Brazil in 1939. So, he wasn't allowed to leave the country at all. In 1981 his eldest aunt died in Macedonia. He wanted to go there, but he wasn't allowed. So, I went to the personnel department and asked them who was in charge of Energoprojekt. They told me, 'State Security'. After calling a lot of my friends, I found out who was the person in charge there. I asked him, 'Why don't you let Mitsakov go? He is a very useful employee. He has a daughter and a mother, and Macedonia is close.' 'What will he do in Macedonia? He can't go, comrade!' 'And what do you think he will do?' 'He will persuade his brothers to come back?' 'How can you think that? They left in 1939, they already have families, work, children, grandchildren etc?' 'No, he can't go.' I told him, 'Listen, boy, here is my party ID. If Ivan Mitsakov doesn't come back, do what you like with my family and me!' They let him go. I warned him, 'If you don't come back, I will kill your daughter!' He came back, but on his way home his car radiator broke, and he stopped in a forest to repair it. When he finally passed the border, he stopped in the first village to call me. And he said, 'Mimi, I'm in Bulgaria, don't worry!'