

Leon Lifsches On An Excursion Of The Jewish Youth In The Mountains



This photo was taken during some excursion in the mountains in 1935. You can see me, I'm first from right in the upper row. There are also my brothers and sister on this photo. First from left in the second row is my brother Iziek, third from left in the same row is my sister Hanna, forth from left in the first row is my brother Michal and in front my brother Heniek.

I had four brothers and a sister. Michal was born in 1905, Heniek in 1906, my sister Hanka, or Hanna, in 1911, I in 1915, Iziek, or Izajasz, in 1917, and between them there was one more brother who died.

We lived in Chrzanow until 1932, and in 1932 our whole family moved to Bielsko. Henryk's brother worked in Bielsko, he was a commercial representative for the fruit product company Parol. We lived at 24 Rynek. The landlord was a German. We had a four-room apartment on the second floor, there was a bathroom, a kitchen, everything. I no longer went to school, I was already on my own. I had completed a textile college there.

In Bielsko, I was a member of the Communist Youth Union and, on its orders, an activist for the MOPR, which was a KPP affiliate. Before that, I was a member of the Jewish Worker Cultural and Educational Association. That was purely Jewish, and then, in Bielsko, I began my political activity in the communist party. Later I linked up with the left-wing movement. Being active on the communist party meant taking part in manifestations, in strikes, the whole political life.

We were divided into three-person cells that met secretly, and the police knew about them only if they had informers inside. There was a division into districts, neighborhoods, and then into cells. The party activity took place on three levels: the cell, the neighborhood, the factory. The cells usually met at the factories. At the time, I worked as a dyer at a textile plant, and that's where I conducted my activity as a communist.

My mother knew I was a communist but my father did not. She was very progressive. She only kept telling us, 'Alright, everything's fine, but just don't get yourself arrested.' We were all very involved, my sister, too.