

Eshua Almalech's Daughter Zelma Almalech On Her High School Graduation With Relatives



My daughter Zelma Almalech some hours before going to her graduation ball with the whole family in Sofia in 1968.

My children grew up in a democratic atmosphere at home. In the old passports issued to all Bulgarian citizens when they become 16 years old, there was a column 'nationality'. When they were old enough to be issued passports, they both wrote 'Jew' in it.

Zelma is very proud of being a Jew. And she has always believed that it is more important for people to be wise and to live with dignity.

She was an excellent student, always ready to help the others. Zelma completed her university degree in journalism with excellent marks at the Sofia University in 1974. While she studied at the university, she often worked for the Bulgarian National Television and the documentaries department wanted her to start working for them full-time. During that time there was a personnel department in every company, which researched every potential employee in order to find out if he or she was suitable. The research was done mainly for political reasons and for a media such as the Bulgarian National Television the selection was even stricter. They told my daughter that she could not work in the television as an editor unless she changed her name. She flatly refused, saying that she would find another job. But her colleagues and immediate editors-in-chief were very angry when they heard about that and after much insistence on their part, she was given the job. After some time it became known that there was an unwritten order that the recruitment of people with non-Bulgarian names was not advisable, even though they were Bulgarian citizens.