

Bela Muller



This picture was taken sometime in the 1960s in Kolozsvár, when I was elected success worker. The award I got on this occasion is on the left crease-edge of my suit. After the war, I sympathized with the communist movement, because this was the ideology I considered I could regain my human dignity as a Jew. I believed in the ideas communism propagated. Unfortunately, it took me some time to make sure that ideology and practice are two different things. I joined the Party in 1945, but in 1949 they excluded me because they considered that my activities after the war as craftsman were against the class. I had no regrets for this. I was proud I was working honestly and I didn't have to stay in line with those who used their 'red booklet' to idle their time away and to jaw at the meetings. I kept quiet, but worked honestly. I never requested them to allow me to rejoin the Party. In 1953 people still believed in the communist ideology. They were sorry Stalin had died.

Later, they discovered that nothing the regime had promised was accomplished in reality. I watched closely through the radio and the newspapers the events of 1956. I was listening to the radio stations from Budapest and to Radio Free Europe. In 1949 I got a job at the state hosiery in Kolozsvár, the Somesul, and that was the first time I worked as an assistant master, and later as a fashion designer. I worked in this factory for 33 years, until 1982, when I retired. People have always respected me for my work. In the communist era there was a covered nationalist spirit, but I never felt an explicit, public discrimination towards me as a Jew. I did my work honestly and they respected me for that.