

Iosif Gotlib



This is me, Iosif Gotlib, was photographed for my Party membership card. This photo was taken in Lanovtsy in 1956.

I demobilized in early 1946. My wife and I arrived at Sambor and went to my house: and there were strangers there. They told me that my family moved to Israel in 1945. I felt distressed and bitter about it. I didn't know that I could claim my house to be returned to me and nobody told me there was this opportunity. My wife and I were accommodated in the hostel of the railroad depot. I went to work there as a locomotive operator.

I submitted my application to the Party and obtained recommendations. Chief of depot authorized me to organize an amateur club. I spent a lot of time organizing a choir and an orchestra. We began to perform at parties and in contests. My wife didn't like it that I spent there my time that I could spend with my family. Later she confessed that she was jealous. Whatever, but she posed an ultimatum: a family or an orchestra. I chose a family, of course, but I had to give up my orchestra. When the Party bureau was reviewing my application, they blamed me that I didn't accomplish my Party task: that I gave up this amateur activity. They didn't admit me to the Party. I became a member of the party only in 1956. I was a convinced communist and a convinced atheist. Religion has been alien to me.

In 1950 I was sent to work in a depot of Lanovtsy station [360 km from Kiev] where I became chief of the depot. In 1952 I received a dwelling in Lanovtsy and my family moved in with me. Locomotives were gradually replaced with electric locomotives. I finished a locomotive school with honors and they sent me to a depot in Chanyzh station [460 km from Kiev]. My family moved to Chanyzh with me.

In 1966 I was transferred to the depot in Uzhhorod [700 km from Kiev], in Subcarpathia. We received a small 2-bedroom apartment called 'khrushchovka' and said it was to be our temporary dwelling and that we would receive another apartment. We lived in this 'temporary' dwelling for 12 years and only recently we got a comfortable apartment.