

David Wainshelboim And His Family



This is our family photo, taken in Kishinev in 1940, when I became a pioneer. I am standing on the left, my mother, Nena Wainshelboim, is sitting, my father, Moisey Wainshelboim, is beside her and my sister Rahil.

Though we observed traditions and celebrated holidays, my father gave the priority to science and education. My father belonged to the progressive Jewish intelligentsia. He worked in the Jewish Health Organization, this organization was financed by the Joint. My father worked as a children's doctor there. I remember staying in his office at times. His visitors were children and their mothers. His work was much needed and so was the organization supporting poor Jewish families and mothers in Bessarabia. Mothers were provided with consultations, baby food and medications for free.

On 28th June 1940 the Red Army came to Kishinev. The Jewish Health Organization was eliminated. Its leaders, who failed to move abroad, were arrested. My father was also very nervous about the situation, particularly, when it came to his organization. He and Mama often whispered among themselves, stopping in our presence. However, my father got a job offer from the Ministry of Health. He became chief of the department of children health care. This was the first official position my father held and he was grateful to the Soviet power for this.

The Romanian gymnasium was closed. My sister Rahil and I went to the Russian general education school: she went to the tenth grade and I went to the seventh grade. It was hard for our other schoolmates to adapt to Russian as the language of instruction. It was all right for my sister and me. Our father had studied in St. Petersburg for three years. He loved Russia, often spoke Russian, read Russian poems and we could understand Russian well. I became a pioneer and my sister joined the Komsomol at school.