

Arnold And Melania Leinweber



The photo was taken in Bucharest, in the street, in 1946. On the left is me, Arnold Leinweber and next to me Melania Leinweber [nee Reischer]. It was the very day when I started courting my wife-to-be. In 1948 I worked as a head of the administrative service of the district committee of the Romanian Communist Party. Then I moved to the Ministry of Trade, where I worked as a financial inspector until 1951. I did these things because I was given the opportunity to. The Party and union leadership were impressed by these achievements, which belonged, after all, to a man who had only been to a vocational school. I met my wife while working for the Party. She was a very quiet and decent girl. Her father was rather old and they had no means of existence; they had been bombed during the war and were as poor as a church mouse. At a certain point, Comrade

Secretary got me cornered: 'Listen, when are you going to pull yourself together? When are you going to get married?' - 'Get married? With the money I'm making, Comrade Secretary?' I lived with my parents, dined at the canteen and had a tea in the morning. 'Look at me', the secretary insisted. 'I'm married and I have two children'. I refrained myself from reminding him that it was I who was paying for his extra money - this was our duty. There was this saying: 'Who will climb the barricades in the name of the revolution?' - 'The activists.' - 'Who are the activists?' - 'The members of the district's Party bureau!' We, the others, were cattle; we were nothing compared to them, the seven hotshots, the great Party officials of the district. They would get bonuses, benefits, all sorts of assistance loans that were never paid back. So I shut up. But I had to admit that bachelorhood wasn't a good idea. So I started looking for a wife. I searched in the 27th precinct, in the Progresul quarter, in the 26th, 23rd and 24th precincts, at this or that factory, but I couldn't find someone right for me. I met quite a number of girls at balls and parties - we all had our balls and parties. So I narrowed the area of my search and I got to the Party staff and to my administrative department - and then I saw my accountant from a new perspective. We both left to attend a meeting at the City's Party bureau, and I dragged her into a cinema against her protest. 'Comrade Nicu, we can't be doing this! Let's go back!' - 'Oh, forget about them, they'll wait for us. Right now, let's see a movie!' And this is how the courtship began. My wife, Melania Leinweber [nee Reischer], was born in Roman, in 1926. She had three siblings: Herman Reischer, Iancu Reischer and Rebeca Saper [nee Reischer]. Herman worked as a photographer in Focsani, then he went to Israel, where he was a cook on a ship, and he died in a sanitarium. The younger brother worked at the 'Vulcan' [Plant in Bucharest], and then he left for Israel, where he worked with the lathe in Haifa. He died a tradesman there. Rebeca died in 1996, in Israel. Melania went to high school and became an accountant. It was with difficulty that we managed to have a child together - she miscarried several times. She spent three months and a half in bed when she gave birth. She worked as an accountant for the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party until she had the baby, and then she moved to a food store. When I was in high school [evening classes], she used to translate to me book fragments from Latin or French into Romanian. She had a good reputation, so the Ministry of Light Industry appointed her head of a millinery department. Then she moved to the knitwear and ready-made clothes department, where she was in charge with all the centers countrywide. Knitwear contracting was her responsibility - she had become an expert. She retired in 1981. She died in 1990.