

David And Ilia Lempertas



These are sons David and Ilia Lempertas. The picture was taken in Petach Tikhvah, Israel in 2002, when Ilia came over to see David. I am happy in my private life. I met a wonderful Jewish girl at the university. Polina Aibinder was the student of the medical department. In 1951 we got married. In 1952 our elder son came into the world. We named him David after my brother. Our second son Ilia was born in 1957. Our family lived the way all common families lived by the soviet regime- from check to check. We did not have any riches, but our life was pretty decent. My wife worked as a doctor. Children, like others, went to the kindergarten, then to school. David graduated from the Mathematics Department of Vilnius University. He was an excellent student, but still he had problems with a job. He was given a mandatory job assignment teach mathematics at the elementary school, though he ranked the 2nd of the 3rd best student and was dreaming of scientific work. Finally I managed to find a place for him - to perform research at the University, but David was dissatisfied: the salary was skimpy, there was no way for the growth and he could not work on his own. He had a family - his wife Liza, a Jew, who worked as an accountant and two daughters, Elena and Anna born in a row in 1982 and 1983 respectively. In early 1990s David and his family left for Israel. There he does well. He is a mathematician/programmer. His wife is working as an accountant. My favorite granddaughters served a full term in Israel army. Now both of them study at Haifa University. My son's family lives in Petakh Tikvah. I visited him for couple of times. I am happy he managed to achieve what he sought. My younger son Ilia also finished Vilnius university. He is a historian. His wife Larissa is a Ukrainian Jew. During soviet regime she came to Vilnius to enter the institute like many Jewish young people as it was much easier in Lithuania as compared to other republics. [There was relatively less discrimination against Jews upon entering higher education in Lithuania than elsewhere in the Soviet Union.] Larisa finished university, Russian philology department, defended candidate theses. She is the candidate of science now. Larisa is currently dealing with Judaic. Ilia has two children- the elder Olga, born in 1986, entered Moscow university, Judaic department. She studies Jewish philology. My only grandson Alexander, whom I call Sachenka - I call all my grandchildren tender names: Lenochka, Anechka, Olenka - [Russian diminutives for Elena, Anna and Olga] born in 1989 is finish Vilnius Jewish school this year. By the

way, Jewish school in Vilnius is not private, but state. I had worked in the university by 1989, before the outbreak of perestroika. I had defended candidate theses [Soviet/Russian doctorate degrees]. When the independence of Lithuania was restored I confirmed my title. Now I am the doctor of History. I should say I did not accept perestroika at once. It was hard for me to object all those ideas I was sincerely devoted to- the ideas of socialism and communism. Being the nee of Lithuania I understood very well that Moscow was alien in our country. Now I completely agree with the term 'soviet occupation, when it goes about soviet regime. I support the independence of my country, its membership in European Union. I hope that Lithuania will overcome temporary obstacles and become a flourishing European country. The most important thing for the Jews is the revival of Jewish life, which became possible with perestroika and independence of Lithuania. Now I came back to the life I used to have so many years ago. I am proud of Israel and I am happy that my son lives there. I do not think of immigration. I cannot split myself for each of my sons and for each of my motherlands. Let things remain the way they are. Besides, my Polina is very sick. Couple of years ago to had to retire because of her poor health. Now, she rarely leaves the apartment.