

Michaela Vidlakova At The Israeli Embassy



This photograph is from the Israeli embassy in Prague, and was taken on 17th May 1949. I'm the second person from the right.

After the war my mother didn't return to school as a teacher, but taught at home, privately, mainly languages. At that time there was a great shortage of language teachers, and my mother knew English, German, French and Latin. Upon our return my father made a living as a business broker. After the war, lots of military material remained here, and some sort of use had to be found for it, to sell it, offer it or manufacture something from it. I remember parachutes from beautiful silk. But what to do with so many parachutes? I know that my father found some company that colored them and sewed fantastic winter jackets from them.

My father basically looked around for who was offering what and how it could be utilized and sold. That's how he made a living until 1948, when the Israeli embassy opened in Prague. The first one to start working there was actually my mother, who taught the first ambassador Czech and also worked there as a translator. But after some time she left, because it was too much for her. Work at the embassy, caring for me and the household. And I also think that she missed teaching. My father knew English, German and mainly Hebrew well. About two months after my mother, he also started at the embassy and began working there as a phone operator.

My parents were planning to leave for Israel. But right after the war my father was still recuperating from tuberculosis, and the doctors were saying that if he arrived into that heat, the illness could return. On top of that my mother had kidney problems, so my parents wanted to get well first. Then they wanted to leave when they started working at the Israeli embassy, but back then the embassy asked them to wait a while, that they needed them here.

Right then a massive wave of aliyah was taking place. A final date was set after which emigration would no longer be possible, but my parents were promised that the Czech employees of the embassy would be allowed to leave even after this date. But it was a promise from Communists, and when my parents began to pack, saying that they'd like to leave now, they weren't issued passports.