

Remma Kogan's Father Moisey Kogan And His Co-Students



This is my father Moisey Kogan (first on the left) and his students in a classroom in the Communication College. My father is on the left. This photo was taken in Odessa in 1939.

In 1934 my father became dean of Electric Engineering Faculty of Communications College. I was 12, but I remember well how in 1937 [during Great Terror] my father's cousin brother on my grandmother's side Michael who was the town prosecutor was arrested. My father, who was a member of the Party had to inform the Party unit of his college of his cousin brother's arrest. He did and they started a case against my father right away and formed an investigation commission. This commission began to receive reports that my father had ties with trotskists in Kirovograd when he worked in the regional Party committee and that being a dean at the Electric Engineering College he developed 'saboteur curriculum', kept silent about his bourgeois origin and so on: there were numerous reports. Some colleagues were turning their back against him demonstratively at work and some were just ignoring him. My mother feared that my father would be arrested. Every night she waited for a 'Black Maria' car looking out of the window.

When I grew older my father told me about the meeting where they were reviewing his personal case in college. Most of his colleagues were sitting looking downward and many had a look of fear in their eyes. Many of them made inculpatory speeches. The meeting took a decision: 'For losing his watchfulness, for his ties and cooperation with enemies of the people we expel him from the Party and submit the investigation material to NKVD'. My father was fired. His acquaintances avoided him. Only his closest friends remained with him in the trying times: assistant professors David Isaacovich Oigenzicht, a Jew, and Yuri Robertovich Lang, a German. They stayed in our house until late at night trying to support my father. Considering the circumstances their conduct was heroic. To support the family my father had to take up miscellaneous jobs; he worked at a plant and on construction sites. He submitted two claims of appeal requesting the town party committee

bureau to reconsider his case. My father was very surprised that he was not arrested at that time. In November 1939 my father resumed his membership in the Party and got back his job.