

## Lea Beraha On A Visit To Israel



This is one of my favorite pictures and it is very indicative. The photo is from Israel from the 1960s. My niece, my brother's daughter, was a member of an Arab-Jewish socialist organization. During one of my visits to Israel, my niece took us to an excursion organized by that society. The first two men to the right are Arabs, the rest are Jews. The two women are me and my niece (first from left). My brother is sitting in front of us. The writing on the left side of the ribbon is in Russian and it means 'Welcome' but I don't remember what the '20' above the ribbon signifies. It looks like an anniversary of something, though I am not sure. This photo is the actual proof that in the beginning Arabs and Jews used to live in peace. Jews didn't chase Arabs, neither did Arabs stroke. Later, different lobbies provoked the Jewish community to become a part in this conflict, rise in arms and so many people, both Jews and Arabs, were killed. I have visited my relatives in Israel more than

ten times. It was only difficult in the first years because then even letters weren't allowed. I was among the first people who visited Israel. I wasn't able to 'warn' my relatives about my arrival. They were at the cinema when it was announced that Jews from Bulgaria had arrived at the airport. They heard my name and immediately rushed to meet me. My mother hadn't seen me for seven years and she fainted at the airport. Regarding the Israeli wars, I am definitely on Israel's side. At first I was more inclined to understand the Arabs, but it is no longer like that. I think they are intolerant in terms of politics and reaching of agreements. Maybe it's simply that a new leader should come and replace Arafat. It's a pity that young people from both sides die or become disabled for life.