

Boris Vayman And His Colleagues



This photograph was taken in Leningrad in 1954. Here you see me and my colleagues near the Krasny Treugolnik (Red Triangle in Russian) factory. Now I'll tell you about my life after the end of the war.

I returned to our apartment near Fontanka River, which remained safe. Mom came back from evacuation in the beginning of 1945. It was possible for the citizens to return to Leningrad only if they had a document that your former living space remained safe. Her brother sent her an invitation and the document, therefore she returned to Leningrad together with my brothers. I saw Leningrad not right after the war, but only in 1948 (being on leave); therefore I do not remember ruins or other effects of war. By 1948 Leningrad was already repaired (for the most part) and put in order.

I returned home and became a metalworker at the Krasny Treugolnik factory. [The Krasny Treugolnik factory produced rubber goods.] I came there on November 1, 1950.

I never discussed the question of emigration and never wished to emigrate: in this country nobody ever griped me, I had no conflicts with local authorities. I was a member of the USSR Communist Party. Probably I was not a 100-percent communist, but I really believed in the bright future. Nobody from my close friends emigrated. Some of my acquaintances left for the USA. I took their departure hard: I felt like a piece of my body broke away, but the idea of leaving never came into my head.

I came to the Krasny Treugolnik ['Red Triangle' in Russian] factory in 1950 and worked there till 1991 (until I retired on pension). At first I worked as a metalworker, then as a foreman, later I became a master and then a shift chief. Already being a factory worker, I finished the Leningrad Welding Technical School, and later the Technological College (faculty of the controlling and measuring apparatus). Naturally I was a part-time student.

I came across manifestation of anti-Semitism in 1953 (for the first and the only time in my life) during the time of Doctors' Plot. Our director liked to read aloud articles about the so-called

doctors-murderers, and every time he came to me personally and invited me to listen. He insisted that I occupied one of the front seats and kept vigilant watch on me. I had to listen to those crazy articles, lampoons, and terrible dirt. Till now it is hard to recollect. His attitude to me affected my career. When I worked as a foreman, I was invited to become a head of rationalization department. It was a prestigious position, highly paid. There it was necessary to work with new projects; I liked it and wanted to be engaged in it very much. But the director rejected the suggestion. Later Stalin died and the dust settled. The only thing in my life affected by anti-Semitic laws and moods was my wish to go abroad for touring: of course they did not let me out. So first time I went abroad (to Yugoslavia) was in 1968. After that, touring became easier and I visited Austria and Italy.

I never chose friends according to their nationality. It was not important for me: I am an internationalist.