

Alexander Tsvey



This is I, Alexander Tsvey (at left) and rector of the Moscow Road Automobile Institute Evgeniy Gavrilov is next to me in 2004. The picture was made on the occasion of 70-year jubilee of Institute, where I had worked all my life.

In 1951 I got a mandatory job assignment to the trust 'Stroitel' as a mechanic. It was a small-scale plant. It looked like a construction site, where automobile plant named after Stalin, later Likhachev was being build. I did not get along with the director of the plant. He was a semiliterate man and an inveterate anti-Semitist to boot. In 1952 I was transferred to the construction trust to the department of the chief mechanics. After Stalin's death I got an invitation letter to the post-graduate department of my dear Engineering and Construction Institute. In 1954 I was admitted there and in 2 years I brilliantly defended my dissertation. In 1959 I began teaching at Moscow Road Transport Institute, Construction Mechanics. I had worked for that institute all my life. I am still employed there. I was promoted rather rapidly. Soon I became senior teacher. Then I defended doctorate theses and became a professor. I am respected both by my colleagues and peers in spite of my reputation of being strict, reserved and a man of principle. There were cases when my colleagues asked me to put good marks either to their children or acquaintances and I had to refuse them as those students knew hardly anything. My reputation was important for me and I could not prevaricate. Pro-rector of our institute did not want to talk to me when I refused him in one of those requests. In spite of that when there was a secret vote of the academic council for conferment the title of the senior staff scientist, there was a unanimous vote. The vote had taken place for 4 times and I was elected unanimously all the time. My jubilees are always celebrated in our chair. People always sincerely greet me. I am keen on poetry. I compose my own verses, write

recollections about war. The Institute assists me in publishing my books and prints them in its typography. I never came across anti-Semitism at work.

When in 1948 the state Israel of founded I was beaming with joy. Figuratively speaking I think of Russia as mother and of Israel as father. I have always followed the history of Israel. I would not like to live there. I am Jew in my blood, but Russian in my soul. My mother and wife are buried here. I cannot imagine myself not hearing Russian language. I love it very much. Nobody spoke Yiddish in my family. I was raised in the Russian speaking environment, in the family where people were thinking in Russian. Russia is as dear to me as Israel. During my first visit to Israel in 1991 I was rapt by the country, but I did not think of staying there, I felt homesick.

Like most people I took perestroika and social democratization with joy. I consider breakup of USSR [1991] to be despicable. In my opinion our government should be blamed for that as they followed their career interests. I think that perestroika could be more fruitful if our country was plundered in the most savage way. As a result there was a de-stratification of society, the top was practically merged with oligarchs, the gangsters.

My lovely wife died in 1988. Since then I one. As for material side, it is pretty good, especially as compared with most of my coevals. Teachers got a pay rise. I got 5000 rubles, which was less than 200 USD, now my salary is 7000 rubles. Of course, it is not big money, but I also receive double pension, 6000 rubels. It is quite enough for me to get by, and still there is enough for making presents for my grandchildren.