

Osip Hotinskiy With His Schoolmates



In this photograph are the pupils and teachers (1st row) of the 10th grade where I studied. I am the second from the left in the upper row.

We were photographed in the concert hall at school beneath the slogan 'Long live the Communist Party and beloved Comrade Stalin!', though only its second part can be seen here.

This photo was taken in Moscow in 1939.

I started school at the age of eight in 1928. I did well at school and did make much effort for it. I remember the school and the yard. There were many children living in the apartment building. We played and ran around in the yard in our free time.

Many of my schoolmates were children of the party officials who resided in the so-called 'House on the Embankment' in Moscow. I was a Komsomol member already.

We frequently had meetings where reports of the schoolchildren whose fathers were arrested were discussed. This even became a standard procedure at some point of time.

Each student was asked: 'How could you not notice that your father was against the Soviet power?' There was also a common answer: 'I don't believe that my father acted consciously, he was probably drawn into this.'

Or maybe, it's a mistake...' To give credit to our teachers, none of the children was expelled from school or the Komsomol, but they were reprimanded for relaxing their vigilance. Neither teachers nor children changed their attitude towards these children.

Everybody tried to support and help them while in other schools they were expelled from the Komsomol and the children declared a boycott of the 'son of an enemy of the people.'

I was in love with a girl from my school. Her father had nothing to do with party or business activities, when all of a sudden she told me that her father had been arrested.

A couple of months later she came to school shining and informed me that her father was back home. Such occurrences strengthened our faith in the justice of the Party, when a person was arrested as a victim of slander, but then was released when proven not guilty.

I finished school in 1939. I was fond of exact sciences and I entered the Bauman School, present-day Moscow High Technical School.