

Jacob Mikhailov



This is me.

The picture was taken for the board of honor at the Moscow Scientific Research Institute of thermal appliances where I worked in the year 1978.

In 1947 I entered the preparatory faculty of the Moscow Mechanics Institute, which became the engineering physics institute.

I entered the institute the following year. Though there were some problems.

I was given a considerably lower mark for the entrance exam in mathematics.

I still was accepted, in another department though. I submitted the documents for the engineering and physics department and

I was accepted to the instrument making department, where the competition was lower.

In December 1952 I graduated from the institute.

According to my mandatory job assignment I was to go to the ministry of defense industry and armament.

I was sent to the closed institute of defense industry and armament in Izhevsk, located 1,000 km away from Moscow.

In 1957 I left for Moscow, my home.

When I came back to Moscow in 1957, I wasn't able to find a job.

My name was Russian, and I didn't look very Jewish. When I came to the human resources department

I was offered a job, and after I filled in my nationality in line #5 I was apprised immediately that the position wasn't vacant any more,

and that they'd just forgotten about it. I took pains to be employed by the construction bureau of the non-ferrous metals plant Tsvetmetavtomatika.

Then I was assisted in the transfer to the scientific and research institute of heating appliances.

My non-Jewish surname complicated my life. Very often I was offered interesting and more lucrative jobs

and when they saw the line with my nationality, they backed off.

I had trouble in my life for telling the truth all the time. Many people disapproved of it.

If I heard about things impartial I always stood up for justice to prevail. I couldn't ask for myself, but if others needed my help I fought tooth and nail.

Of course, there were a lot of ill-wishers because of that. Now, to crown it all I can say: no matter that I haven't achieved anything in life,

my conscience is clean. I did no malice, and was not envious. My mother takes credit for that. It was she who taught me those things.

There is a certain moral boundary that I will never step over. Any decent person is a friend for me, I cut indecent ones dead,

I just don't communicate with them. I can understand and forgive many things, but not betrayal.