

Hertz Rogovoy



This is I, Hertz Rogovoy, a graduate of medical institute. My picture was taken by fellow-student. It was the time when I walked on crutches. The picture was taken without crutches as I put them aside. The picture was taken in Kiev on October 5, 1948.

In the winter 1943 near Kursk was my last fight, I was wounded, and sent to the hospital. After I was discharged from hospital I came to Semipalatinsk [Kazakhstan, about 3000 km from Kiev], where my parents was in evacuation. I began to work at school as a military training teacher. I finished 9 grades before war, but I could not be studying and sponging on my parents. I asked my colleagues for assistance. They helped me out to get the certificate for 10 grades. The time I spent in hospital influenced by choice of the future profession. I was firm - if I were to survive, I would become a doctor. In August, 1944 I went to Kiev to enter the Kiev Medical Institute.

All those years I got excellent marks. Of course it was difficult. I had been walking on crutches for all those years. Often my wound was open, and the splinters were coming out, causing acute pain. Of course I was young, and I wanted to appear a hussar in front of girls, and leave the crutches. I made a stick with a handle myself so I could prop on it with both hands. I had used by the fifth year. At that time I was able to walk, not only without a crutch, but even without a stick. There were 850 ladies and 40 men in my graduation year. Those guys were mostly handicapped like me. Those who were healthy then in 1944, were at war. There were armless and legless people among us. I entered psychoneurotic department. I had studied there for years. Then it was closed down, and I became a therapist. There was no other way out.

I was given a room in the hostel of the medical institute. The handicapped in war were given the whole floor. During the last courses we were given the cards for dinner. But it was later. At the beginning, we just used to starve. I being unsettled, feeling hunger and cold by all means decided to graduate from school. So, I kept on learning hanging on by skin of teeth. I was good student, remaining the monitor of the group through all students' years. The clothes that I had was ill-kempt - my military uniform from war. I wore military jacket, received at war in 1941. I never took off my jacket, even during the classes, because my army pants were torn on the back side, and on the knee area. I was not ambidextrous at that time, so with my left hand I sawed patches made from my green tunic on my black pants. I did not have any other clothes. My scholarship was enough to buy the beans, the cheapest product at that time and a little bit of fat. The bread given by cards was not sufficient, 300 or 400 grams.

I joined the communist party in 1951. I have not done it because I was stickler of the party's ideas. Everybody knew that the person who was not the member of the party, did not have any prospects, and could not even dream of career. I wanted to become a doctor and achieve something in my profession. That is why I joined the party.