

## Grigoriy Fihtman



This is me, Grigoriy Fihtman, reading my report dedicated to an anniversary of the Soviet army at locomotive operator school. This photo was taken in Odessa in 1984.

In my report I spoke about the history of the Soviet army and about my participation in the Great Patriotic War.

We moved to Odessa in 1977. We bought this apartment where my wife and I live now. It's our property. In Odessa I worked as a teacher at the railroad training school for locomotive operators. I taught political economy, basics of political studies and civil defense. I worked there teaching these three subjects for 12 years. I retired at the age of 62 in 1988.

When in 1985 Gorbachev came to power and perestroika began I was working as a teacher in the school for locomotive operators. My salary was 180 rubles before Gorbachev and it remained 180 rubles during his rule. Nothing changed in material way, but it was a different story when the USSR broke up in 1991. This was liquidation of people's lifetime savings. When my wife turned 55 in 1982 she began to receive a beggar's pension of 15 rubles. We decided to deposit this pension to a bank when the USSR burst apart and so did our savings. Everybody in the country suffered at this time. Now the situation is different: there is mass unemployment and it has its impact on every family. A big state was created through centuries: by fair means or foul they managed to make it, but then they broke it apart. Ukraine became independent, but does it move ahead? What's going on now? Chairman of Verkhovna Rada [Ukrainian Parliament] Has to close up their session because they begin to fight. They really begin to fight! Now they are thinking of having a group of police officers to help out the deputies who interfere with the legislation generation process. So there we are: this is independence.