

Rahil Shabad With The Members Of The Group 'Russia-Israel'



The picture was made on the 9th of May 2000 in Jerusalem in Israel. This is our delegation, invited to celebrate the victory day in Israel. These are the members of the group 'Russia-Israel' of the Committee of the Veterans of War. I am dressed in a white suit in the center of a picture. To the left from me is the chairman of the group Peter Bograd.

I was multi-field doctor. I had worked at the hospital for 23 years as a common surgeon with intermission during oncology courses. Having finished oncology courses, I became oncologist-surgeon. In 1976 the most terrible thing happened in my life:- my daughter died. My husband was taking it very hard. In 1982 he passed away.

I had worked for the acqua hospital until 1970. It was hard for me to conduct operations and be on duty in the hospital. I was employed by the policlinic and I had consulting hours with patients. I had worked there until 1984. I had stayed by myself. I decided there was no need for me to earn money and I just would get by with the pension. I had other tasks: to get the tombstones done and attend the cemetery. It is hard for me to get over my solitude. I am like a fish out of water. I would like to breathe, but there is no way I can inhale. Old age and loneliness are the hardest when you are ailing and when you are not capable of doing things you need.

When in the 1970s mass immigration of Jews to Israel commenced, I was not willing to leave. If my loved ones were alive, I would think that over. For me to be far away from the graves of my close relatives is like death in itself.

When I was retired I took up social work in Moscow Committee of Veterans of War. The 'Russia-Israel' group was founded and I was offered a job in it. We are part and parcel of Russian Committee of Veterans of War. We correspond with each other and exchange opinions. I also receive magazine from them. Now the book 'The book of memory' is being published. There is a search of those who perished during the war and their documents. Artificial limbs are made in

Israel. We come to each other for a visit. I organized a group in 1991 and remained its leader for 4-5 years. Then I understood that it was hard for me, so another leader was elected, viz. Peter Bograd. We have a lot of work to do. Several people from our group were invited to celebrate the Victory day in Israel. I also was in that delegation. We get together at least once a month to discuss different issues. The Committee of War Veterans is contented with our work. We do not get any funding. Each of us annually contributes 100 rubles. There are 36 people in our group. So, this is all we have got. I was deeply impressed by my trip to Israel. I consider Israel to be a great state. It was a real feat to make a true oasis from a bare desert. It is blooming now. I worship that country, its peoples. From the bottom of my heart I wish them peace and welfare.

I do not resort to the help of Jewish charitable organizations. I think their assistance is not sufficient and humiliating to a certain extent. I have enough money for myself. Since childhood I had been taught by my parents that my expenses should correspond to my income. That is why I do not even crave for things I cannot afford. The worst thing for me is to feel sorry for myself. I think at any age you can overcome hardships if you have a head on your shoulders. So far I can get over my ailments and feebleness. I have to do everything by myself. Of course, I feel my age, but I am telling everybody that I am well. I am getting tired but I do not want to burden anybody with my maladies.