

Anatoly Blinkov, Russia

Anatoly Blinkov was sent to Chernobyl as a liquidator in 1987. He prefers not to speak about his experience but he made an exception when he gave Julia Seeleva an interview. Today, he is the director of an organisation that helps men in his area (Tomsk) who suffer from the consequences of Chernobyl.

Anatoly was born on November, 25th, 1949 in village near Tomsk. He was the only child in a family, therefore has been surrounded by love and care. His mother Maria Ivanovna was a dentist, and father Nikolay Stepanovich an officer, he still participated in the Second World War. When Anatoly was 5 years old, his father was transferred to the Caucasus to a new place of service, there Anatoly ended school.

From childhood on he wanted to become a pilot and so Anatoly applied to Krasnokutsky flight school of civil aircraft. He was accepted in 1967 despite the big competition. But after two years of study Anatoly was ill very badly and he was excluded. But education is necessary anyway and Anatoly went to study at Adygea teacher training college. He explains his choice that he got on well with children, and exact sciences didn't give in to studying. He became a teacher of Russian and literature after he graduated from the institute.

Two years after finishing university he got married and two children then were born: a daughter and a son. The first work experience Anatoly remembered with a smile was working as the projectionist at a cinema. Anatoly says that he cannot say about himself that he is a religious person. Regarding the political views concerning the Soviet period, he considers that at this conjuncture carrying out such policy was required and it was necessary. And he never felt oppression or pressure during the Soviet period of life.

Today, Anatoly is the director of non-commercial organisation "Conjunction of Chernobyl", the branch which is in the city of Tomsk. This organisation helps Chernobyl men living in the area, spends active educational activity.

Before the catastrophe, Anatoly knew nothing about the Chernobyl NPP, as the majority of citizens of the USSR. But he knew about the force and danger of atomic energy. When he studied in the flight school his speciality there was a chemist-scout. They would be the first to enter into the infected territory to investigate it.

Censorship in the USSR was very strong, it was one of the reasons why in newspapers was nothing about Chernobyl failure at first, and then was said that all is under control and all is good.

The information about the danger of the atomic power station and nuclear particles people whose trade was not somehow deal with it knew nobody, those knew only who has been connected with it. At schools nothing was said about it, on work places did not spread the doctrine concerning danger of nuclear explosion, all trusted in the light future. Anatoly saw also documentary films about security measures and what was necessary to do in case of explosion, and knew about evacuation plans about their presence and the maintenance, and about risks, but it owing to only speciality. Earlier he did not work in similar circumstances and did not live near to polluted territories.

As Anatoly did not live in the polluted district and did not become a liquidator in the first days of the catastrophe, he couldn't say anything interesting about 26<sup>th</sup> of April 1986 - it was an ordinary day. At the time of the catastrophe Anatoly was 36 years old, he lived in Maikop (city in Caucasus) with the family.



About the catastrophe he learnt from other people who discussed this news. As well as the majority of people he trusted, in that that was told in news and was in newspapers. People especially did not know anything, therefore and gossips any were not, all knew only the official information. State reaction was fast enough, for that level of development of the USSR.

Certainly, Anatoly understood that all that was told was only a part of the truth, but he cannot judge people, for that that they tried to avoid a panic and excitements among the people that tried to keep calmness of people.

In 1987 he was called to a military gathering and was ordered to the Chernobyl atomic power station and the polluted territory as the chemist-scout. He was one of those who came on a new site of the polluted territory first, carrying out gaugings, and soldiers who cleared territory then came afterwards.

About that time, Anatoly not so wants to speak. He said he very much was sorry and felt pity for those people who have appeared in a difficult reality situation. Many people did not understand all danger and they had to explain.

There were also those who did not want to go on liquidation which thought out the reasons. But for the others it was performance of a debt to the country.

Having arrived there as Anatoly has told, no changes were visible, but every evening after the performed work, they took a special shower, drank many medicines. The first understanding of



what occurred came only two years after, when there were first problems with health. When they were all told what level of radiation they received, Anatoly received 9,98 X-ray, and then critics said that official figures should be increased in 10 times.

Chernobyl has affected his life, because soon after returning to his family, his family broke up and he returned to сибирь and has begun here life in a new fashion.

Anatoly tries not to remember Chernobyl, remembers when meets companions and pass tragedies. He is not afraid today of radiation, he sees in it the future and power development. Illnesses, certainly are, but he cannot confirm that it is all from Chernobyl, doctors do not put such diagnosis.

Anatoly considers that today it would be very important to tell to children, students and adults about Chernobyl, about danger of atomic energy. It is necessary that people knew.